

## **April 4, 2012 Minutes**

Members present: Sanders, Feakes, Wilson, Hindson, Kimmel, Melzer, Sriraman, Morey, Czyzewska, Ash, Conroy

Guests: Clark (Star), Sigler, Opheim, Bourgeois, Trauth

Meeting called to order at 4:00.

### **Announcements:**

1. Senate elections are nearing completion. Perceptions surveys will begin soon after.
2. The Chair of the University Lecturers Committee forwarded the Committee's recommendations on the thirteen proposals they received. He will visit the Senate to report on the recommendations and the Committee's review process.
3. The Associate Provost asked whether the Senate would want to remove seats for past winners on the committee that selects the presenter of the Presidential Seminar.
4. Following-up on several issues explored at the recent joint meeting of the CAD and the Senate, the Chair of the Senate spoke with the Provost and Associate Provost. To encourage colleges to make their selection process for Presidential Excellence Awards faculty-driven, they will revise the relevant PPS to reflect the need for nominating committees. Regarding College Council meetings, they will recommend that all Deans post the agenda, date and time of meetings so interested faculty can attend.
5. The Provost has approved awarding nine hours of workload credit to the Chair of the Senate during long semesters, as well as one course assigned time during the summer.

### **PAAG Agenda:**

1. Dean of the Graduate College – President Trauth first reminded everyone of Dr. Willoughby's distinguished tenure as Dean of the Graduate College. She and the Provost then outlined the sort of candidate they will be seeking in a national search to fill the post: someone 1) with experience working in a Graduate College, perhaps as an Associate Dean; 2) with the credentials that will allow the person to make judgments on others' credentials; 3) who is a tenured full professor. The President expects many good candidates for the position. By June 1 the Provost will have named a search committee, and the ad for the position posted in the summer. Candidates will be interviewed in the fall, with a start date of September 1, 2013.
2. Doctoral Programs – The President noted that current fiscal constraints, as well as the possibility of more cuts being enacted in the next Legislative session, mean that the University must move slowly in developing new doctoral programs so that Texas State can afford what it proposes. That said, there is considerable need for new doctoral programs in our region. The Provost anticipates that three proposals will be sent forward for the 2016

timetable, and that one proposal – for a Doctorate in Nursing Practice – may go forward out of cycle. However, an MS in Nursing may be proposed before the DNS. There are several other doctorates the Administration supports for development, and for which a number of faculty have been hired so that departments build a qualified faculty in support of proposals. The most important key to the University's success in obtaining new doctoral programs, the President explained, is how many students we graduate from our current doctoral programs.

3. Graduate Instructional Assistantships / Scholarships – Both the Provost and the President agreed that stipends across campus are too low, but explained that the funds for increases must come from the same pool as money for new faculty lines and staff positions. Low stipends affect the quality of students we can attract for our graduate programs, as well as how quickly students can progress through their programs. The Provost plans to stress at his April 10 Strategic Planning forum the need for increases, but cannot make promises in this economic climate. Even so, a few programs such as the MFA in Creative Writing are nationally competitive and thus have unique needs for stipend increases; he plans to explore this in coming months. Asked about the possibility of increasing scholarships for graduate students, the President explained that most donor dollars are for undergraduate scholarships. However, TRIP money, which provides matching funds for donations to Emerging Research Universities, is available for graduate scholarships. For instance, the University has submitted a request for TRIP funds to supplement the recent Rose Endowment for the MFA program.
4. Student Debt – Among the issues the President believes may be of interest to the Legislature in future is the perception that students leave college with exorbitant student debt. She noted that in the last cohort to graduate from Texas State, the average debt of those who had student debt was \$20,000, and the average for all students was \$12,000. She further noted that the disproportionate amount of student debt in the US was among students graduating from private institutions.
5. Other issues – A Senator urged the President and Provost to consider in their Strategic Planning the needs of adjunct faculty. The President thanked faculty for their participation in the Family Campaign, which is ongoing.

## **BREAK**

**PAAG Follow-up:** Discussions centered on the Administration's plans for doctoral programs and the issue of GA stipends.

**University Curriculum Committee Recommendations:** The Senate voted to approve the UCC's recommendations.

**Chair Evaluation Results:** The Council of Chairs is concerned about how rankings are determined, since they are based upon the response to one survey question in the Perception of Chairs Survey that asks respondents to offer an overall rating of their

Chairs. The Provost oversees the survey and thus decides which information is used for rankings, as well as what is posted. The model used for the surveys is based upon the IDEA survey, developed by the most respected educational survey service in the US.

**New Business:**

1. A faculty member requested that nominees for Presidential Excellence Awards have the option of submitting materials in hard copy rather than online.
2. A faculty member noted that a call to HR regarding maternity leave did not provide information that reflects recent revisions to the relevant PPS. Moreover, University documents on the topic are not as clear and consistent as they should be. The Chair of the Senate urged faculty to contact their Chairs with questions on maternity leave. In addition, the Chair will urge the Faculty Handbook Committee to state policies clearly in the new edition of the **Faculty Handbook**.
3. A faculty member inquired about University plans for enforcing non-smoking policies on campus.

**Minutes of 3/28/12 were approved.**

**Adjournment.**