

Senate Minutes for 3/6/13

Members present: Blunk, Hindson, Sriraman, Covington, Feakes, Wilson, Furney, McClellan, Czyzewska, Cavitt, Lasser (for Ash)

Guests: Sigler, Trauth, Bourgeois, Nance, Autrey, Supancic, May

Meeting called to order at 4:00.

PAAG :

1. *Student Counseling Services* – The President argued that the budget for Counseling Services over the past five years “looks pretty good” compared to other units and given constraints on the university budget. There have been increases from money generated by the Student Service Fee, as well as a 50% increase in full-time employees. She also noted that it is important to distinguish between mental health issues and the effects of stress; most students who visit the Counseling Center think they need one-on-one counseling sessions, but group sessions have been successful for stress-related issues. Other aspects to investigate are what sorts of students have been turned away and whether the screening process is effective. The Provost wondered whether the university should explore processes for effective triage so that students get the right sort of help. A Senator noted that some universities have decentralized how students make initial contacts with counselors by posting staff in dorms and refining phone-automated triage, for instance. The Senate also urged the administration to consider the needs of the students at the Round Rock campus.

2. *Faculty Input on Concerns Outside Academic Affairs* – Sensing a change in the way faculty input has been sought and respected in decisions about transportation and parking services since the unit was reorganized, the Senate is interested in insuring that there is a central role for faculty in decisions across the university. The President agreed that it is important to preserve avenues of communication for students and faculty. The new administrative model is based partly on financial realities, but is also a matter of governance. About ten years ago, parking services were subsidized, but the unit is now expected to be self-supporting. The university hopes eventually to monetize every parking space on campus. This requires a different way of governing parking services, which may preclude decision-making at the committee level. Even so, the President concluded, faculty input must be facilitated, and any administrative model must respect an active faculty role in the process.

Mr. Nance noted that there are discussions undergoing with private companies who might offer a tram service to Austin at their own expense. The President believes the ultimate solution to parking and transportation is mass transportation. For this reason, she is active in efforts to develop it in the corridor.

3. *Update on Legislature* – The President has a meeting with the State Senate to

discuss the university's TRB requests. In the last several months, the university and Texas A&M have developed a partnership to share space in the planned Health Professions building; the proposal increases the cost of the building from 48.8 million dollars to 56.3. This is a pilot collaborative project that would not count against either school's ledger. Texas State will benefit because A&M has a medical school and thus is a higher priority for state funding.

On Hazlewood expenses, the System Chancellor spoke to the Legislature recently. The President believes many in Austin are surprised by the cost of the initiative for universities. A number of bills seeking to refine the program are being proposed.

BREAK

University Curriculum Committee Report: The Committee met several times to review and modify PPS 2.01, 2.05 and 2.22, which concern such topics as coursework and new courses. The Committee worked to create a consistent process across the various documents.

2.01: The Committee combined two forms into one to reduce duplication, and added information needed for the Banner system. The policy now states clearly a faculty role at each stage of review. It also allows for submission of changes to courses when needed, rather than once a year.

2.05: Often changes to programs and degree plans require immediate response; the practice has been to request a memo. The goal of the Committee's revision was to establish a consistent procedure and to create user-friendly forms.

2.22: This document governs certificate programs. The Committee made revisions that allow students enrolled in such programs to apply for financial aid.

A Senator asked that due dates for documents be added to the flow chart created by the Committee.

Rules were suspended so that the Senate could approve the Committee's recommendations, which were accepted.

TCFS and TSUS report: Attitudes seem positive about the potential outcomes of the current Legislative session. The TCFS lobbyist is looking for anecdotes about the benefits of faculty interaction with students. In addition, there is hope for some relief from the impacts of Hazlewood. Other topics of interest to faculty included the possibility of a concealed handgun law for university campuses, bills to standardize course offerings across the state, bills for fixed tuition rates, and proposals to increase transparency within the Board of Regents. Dr. Moore has not heard of a proposal regarding the handgun issue, and the deadline is March 8.

ACC report follow-up: The Senate approved the Committee's recommendations for funding proposals.

Minutes of 2/27/13 were approved.

Adjournment.