

January 18, 2012 Minutes

Members present: Sanders, Kimmel, Stone, Hindson, Furney, Ash, Cavitt, Feakes, Wilson, Morey, Sriraman, Conroy, Czyzewska

Guests: McKenzie (Star), Anderson

Meeting called to order at 4:00.

Announcements:

The Chair met with the Dean of Fine Arts and Communications to discuss proposal review procedures for the University Arts Committee.

The Registrar will remove from Banner an option that allows students to cite “incompatibility with faculty” as a reason for dropping a course.

Ten \$20,000 supplements were awarded for Development Leave this cycle, rather than the expected five.

Senate Items and Scheduling for Spring:

1. PAAG Dates: Feb. 8, March 7, April 4 and May 2.
2. Dr. Opheim will visit the Senate on Feb. 1 to discuss her duties as Associate Provost, as well as to consider changes to the process for selecting awardees for Presidential Excellence Awards.
3. The first meeting of the Adjunct Faculty Committee is scheduled for Feb. 10.
4. The spring meeting of the Texas Council of Faculty Senates takes place on Feb. 17 and 18 in Austin. That same weekend, the Texas State University System meeting will also be held in Austin. For that reason, System officers will meet with Texas State University representatives on Feb. 10. The Chair is seeking Senators to serve as representatives at these meetings.
5. The Strategic Planning cycle is beginning. As part of the process, Deans will present their plans at open forums on March 21 and 22, from 2-4 PM. The location has yet to be announced.
6. *Annual activities:* During spring semesters, the Senate holds elections, which must be initiated by March 1, with the entire process taking roughly three weeks. Second, near April 1 the Senate will distribute faculty perceptions surveys on Deans, the Provost and the President. Third, the Committee on Committees interest survey will be distributed to faculty in early February; one issue for the Senate to consider is that some faculty may have to resign from assignments, and this situation is exacerbated by an early date for the interest survey.

Revisions to Senate Standing Rules: So that the Senate’s current procedures for URCs are matched by Senate policies, changes were suggested for the Senate’s Standing Rules. The

Senate will vote on these suggestions at its next meeting. The Chair asked that Senators review all the standing rules to insure their accuracy.

Faculty Development Leave Wording Request: Regarding PPS 8.02, the Administration has asked that the Senate add to its review rubric for proposals “commercialization and entrepreneurial activities” as acceptable scholarly endeavors for Leave. Senators wonder whether such activities should be funded by Leave, and so asked for clarification of such activities as well as definitions of the terms.

Senate Website Revisions: The Senate’s Administrative Assistant, Valerie Anderson, shared her recent revisions to the Senate website.

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Campus Safety: Concerned about the evident lack of progress by the Administration in developing a more effective safety plan – particularly the training of faculty – the Senate discussed ways to make the issue more of a priority. Much of the discussion centered on ways to create online training modules for those faculty and staff designated as safety officers, as well as how to make classrooms safer in case of emergencies. The chair will revisit this issue with Dr. Ron Brown, charged with coordinating University efforts on campus safety.

New Business:

1. The Campus Master Plan Update is available in the Senate office.
2. TRB priorities: The Administration now lists the following construction projects as having highest priority: 1) the Science and Engineering Building and 2) the Health Professions I Building. The University is also collecting funds on its own to finance the Science and Engineering Building.
3. A Senator shared a faculty concern that housekeeping duties at student housing facilities will be outsourced, wondering what effect such a decision will have on University staff and the local economy.
4. The Senate discussed whether the Administration is following the published procedures for awarding equity adjustments, as outlined in current PPS documents.
5. Banner does not monitor course prerequisites. In addition, if a department does not note a grade requirement for its course prerequisites, Banner merely checks that a needed course is listed on a student’s transcript, whether or not that student actually passed the course or even completed it. This is allowing many unqualified students to enroll in courses, as well as creating considerable work for faculty and staff who must monitor the eligibility of students in their courses.

Minutes of 12/8/11 approved.

Adjournment.