

Faculty Senate-Liaison Meeting

Wednesday, October 17, 2012

Senators Attending: Melzer, Cavitt, Conroy, Kimmel, Furney, Hindson, Blount, McClellan, Feakes, Wilson, Czaczevska, Ash

Liaisons Attending: Montondon, Upchurch, Irani, Burnette, Ploeger, Ali, Nelson, Stone, Moczygemba, Shanmugam, Montgomery, Taylor, Bach, Eicler, Lee, Lopez, Russian, Hawkins, Pino, Niekamp, Covington

Guests: Sigler, Elmiaari, Cartul, Blair, Smart

1. Call to Order & Introductions
2. Open Discussion
 - a. Workload policy
 - i. Department Chairs are still waiting on workload reports from Faculty Records.
 - ii. The current status of individual departmental policy development was discussed by the liaisons, addressing the following two questions.
 - Is there a policy?
 - If so, is it being applied fairly and equitably?
 - iii. Concerns about summer teaching (which may be required by outside accrediting agencies for some disciplines), of independent studies, and thesis supervision without compensation were shared.
 - iv. It was noted that the goal of the Workload Policy Task Force was NOT to create reports that showed everyone having 12 workload credits, but instead to represent people's workloads accurately.
 - b. Faculty Issues
 - i. Outsourcing of Custodial Services: The concern about the outsourcing of custodian services was shared. One concern was that this decision was made without consulting with departments and department heads. This change will have a detrimental impact on the worklife of those we worked with. For instance, the outsourced employees will have benefits, but their families will not. There is no retirement program. There were concerns about the ethics of this decision, not only in terms of the treatment of workers, but also in terms of outsourced employees' access to offices and issues of safety, since cost will likely be the primary focus of those undertaking the contracts, rather than fairness and insuring we have enough custodians to perform the required students. Some departments are considering a letter requesting a moratorium on this action, until further consultation with faculty, staff, and students. The chairs have written a letter to the Provost

and the Associate Provost concerning the issue. Concerns about the quality of custodial work with high worker turnover and late night cleaning schedules were also shared. It was noted that the University is still advertising openings for custodial positions.

- ii. Treatment of Adjunct Faculty: the Adjunct Faculty Committee (chaired by Senate Vice Chair, Michel Conroy) has been created in the model of the Faculty Senate, and one its first initiatives has been to put a link to Adjunct Faculty Issues on the main University home page, in the Faculty & Staff drop down menu. There is also a task force working on a draft policy for a Part-time Faculty Teaching Award, which has been verbally approved by the Provost. The first meeting with the department liaisons to the committee is this Friday. Concerns were shared about lack of job security in the face of current budget constraints, the low level of adjunct pay, and about adjunct faculty teaching 2-3 courses a semester without benefits. There was a discussion of an ongoing collection and analysis of departmental policies related to or affecting adjunct faculty (initiated by the Adjunct Faculty Committee).
3. Research Profile – Dr. Mike Blanda (ill, did not attend)
 4. Work Life Advisory Council – Dr. Roseann Mandzuik
 - a. Dr. Mandzuik (rm07@txstate.edu) discussed the origins of the Work Life Advisory Council, arising out of the 2004 Work Life Task Force (led by Drs. Mandzuik and Blanda) and which led to the creation of a position for the Coordinator of Work Life Issues, Rose Trevino (rt24@txstate.edu).
 - b. She also came to inform the Liaisons (and other key constituencies on campus) about the Bobcat Balance Program (an Employee Assistance Program, <http://www.worklife.txstate.edu/>), which was funded for only 2 years by the Administrations; however, funding for the program ends in August of 2013. Dr. Mandzuik urged all in attendance to advocate for ongoing budget support for this program is appreciated, which costs roughly \$55,000 a year.
 - c. The program is available for all benefits eligible employees (including staff and graduate teaching students). Bobcat Balance also includes five counseling visits for a member of your household for no cost. It was suggested that Senators and Liaisons could access these resources on behalf of newly hired faculty before such faculty are officially employed by the University.
 - d. Dr. Mandzuik offered to come speak to departments and or groups of people about the benefits available through Bobcat Balance.
 - a. 3920 employees have accessed the benefits through the phone lines, and the usage rate for the counseling services is 3.5%.
 5. Safety Presentation – Dr. Mary Ellen Cavitt
 - a. Dr. Cavitt shared a handout on safety information, created by the University Safety Committee. She suggested that all faculty register with

the RAVE Mobile system
(www.emergencyinfo.txstate.edu/TxStateRAVE.html).

- b. Faculty need to establish a safe zone in their buildings, and make this safe zone clear to students. Materials designating such safe zones are to be posted in each classroom soon.
 - c. Faculty need to learn their ACTUAL street address for the building (NOT 601 University Drive) for use if 911 calls are necessary.
 - d. Faculty need to identify their designated safety officer for their floor and/or for their building. If additional safety officers are needed, then departments should designate them.
6. Parking/Transportation Issues – Drs. John Blair and Dennis Smart
- a. Dr. Blair (one of three faculty members: Rebecca Montgomery rm53@txstate.edu, Jaymeen Shah js62@txstate.edu, John Blair jb20@txstate.edu) from the Parking and Transportation Committee noted that the Parking and Transportation Committee is now simply an advisory committee for the Director of Transportation, Joe Richmond (jlr190@txstate.edu). The members of the Committee were just informed of the change immediately before it was implemented. In the past, the committee created policy.
 - b. The Transportation Advisory Committee has discussed concerns regarding the health and safety issues connection to bird and bat waste in the Alkek Parking Garage. Most members of the committee found that there was a lack of communication between the faculty and Transportation Services on this issue. Possible solutions discussed ranged from closing the garage to expensive bird exclusion netting.
 - c. Dr. Smart shared his petition, which asks the Advisory Committee to investigate the Parking Garage issues. Dr. Smart is requesting a specific study be done, so that we are better aware of what can and cannot be done, as well as about the health issues about the waste.
7. Executive Session
- a. Presentation of Piper Professor Recommendations, B. J. Friedman, Chair
 - i. Applicant numbers were low; the Senate urged the Committee to explore ways to ensure more faculty apply.
 - ii. The rules were suspended to allow for a vote to accept the recommendation of the Piper Selection Committee.
 - iii. The Senate thanked the Committee for its work.
8. Old Business
- a. The UCC recommendations (amended to remove the recommendations for a GNST 3150 course so it can be discussed at a later date) were approved.
 - b. Minutes for 10/3/12 were approved. Minutes for 10/10/12 were re-sent.
9. Adjournment