

Senate Minutes for 2/01/12

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

Guests: McKenzie (**Star**), Opheim, Sigler

Meeting called to order at 4:00.

Announcements:

1. At the 1/31 CAD meeting, several handouts were distributed. The first outlined suggested changes to the General Education requirements, initiated in response to the Coordinating Board's rule that the core be reduced to 42 hours; the General Education Council is working on the revision. The second handout provided the final version of the call for applicants to serve as faculty liaisons for the PACE Center. The last handout detailed the University's processing of over 281 million dollars in financial aid and scholarships.
2. The Texas State University System meeting takes place on February 10, and the Texas Council of Faculty Senates meets on February 18 and 19. The Chair is seeking Senators to attend the TCFS meeting in Austin.

Associate Provost Duties and Presidential Awards: New Associate Provost Opheim visited to share with Senators the nature of her job, as well as proposed changes to the procedures for selecting Presidential Excellence awardees. Of her job, the Associate Provost noted that her main duties center on ad hoc hiring issues such as emergency and temporary hires, along with such projects as supervision of the process for awarding Supplemental Leave funds, distribution of Merrick Endowment funds, analysis of legislative bills to insure the University is in compliance, and taking part in the Provost's Strategic Planning process. Currently she is also working on getting PPS reviews up-to-date; thirteen are now behind the review schedule, and she plans to revise six or seven this semester, with the remainder revised this coming fall. Another of her duties is serving as a liaison between the Provost and the Faculty Senate, so she plans to attend Senate meetings often.

The Associate Provost made two suggestions for changes to the way Presidential Awards are selected:

1. End the practice of naming recent winners of Presidential Awards to the review committees;
2. Create a rubric that will guide committee members in their review of nominees' materials, so that there is consistency across colleges and disciplines. The Associate Provost asked the Senate for assistance in creating the rubric.

Dr. Opheim asked the Senate to reconsider its request that committee chairs be elected from the membership, since she feels that current chairs have undertaken their duties objectively.

Revisions to Senate Standing Rules: The Senate reviewed suggested revisions to the Standing Rules. A final vote will be taken at the Senate's Feb. 8 meeting.

University Committee Representation:

1. Distinguished Professor Selection Committee: The Chair asked Senators to consider serving.
2. Read-Across Plans Committee: As part of the Strategic Planning process, the Provost is asking that four read-across plans committees examine strategic plans as they promote the following University initiatives:
Internationalization, HSI Status, Distance Learning, and Research.

The Chair will ask for volunteers at the Feb. 8 Senate meeting.

BREAK

Sub-Committee Report: This sub-committee was charged with reviewing several PPS documents governing the proposing and review of proposals for new courses and academic programs (PPS 2.01, 2.03 and 2.05). Of particular interest was whether the PPS documents included language explaining what occurs when proposals are rejected by those groups tasked with reviewing them. The sub-committee recommended several changes to clarify the process and the documents, arguing that more explicit language on the procedures governing rejected proposals be added. Senators asked that the PPS documents also state clearly that faculty control curriculum.

PAAG Agenda Development: For the PAAG meeting on Feb. 8, Senators offered the following possible topics:

1. A review of methods for assessing distance learning.
2. A discussion of the Administration's management of Faculty Perceptions of Chairs surveys. Faculty have access to only the most recent survey results, and the Senate would prefer that surveys for the past several years remain available for review.
3. Possible effects on the University of reaching an enrollment of 40,000+ students in five years.
4. Opportunities arising out of achieving Emerging Research University status.

New Business:

1. While the Senate values and takes into account the input of Chairs in reviewing Development Leave proposals, the enabling legislation requires that an elected body (i.e. the Senate) be responsible for evaluating and ranking proposals.

Minutes of 1/25/12 approved.

Adjournment.