

Faculty Senate/Senate Liaisons Meeting
Wednesday, February 26, 2014
4-6 p.m.
Alkek 105/106

Senators present: Elizabeth Blunk, Mary Ellen Cavitt, Michel Conroy, Barbara Covington, Maria Czyzewska, Debra Feakes, Steve Furney, Ted Hindson, Jesus Jimenez, Emily Payne, Vedaraman Sriraman, Susan Weill

Senate Liaisons present: Moonis Ali, Ulrich Bach, Teresa Bachman, Mike Boone, Robyn Diaz, David Falleur, Xingde Jia, Omar Lopez, Margaret Menninger, Patricia Pattison, Jim Peterson, Kristen Ploeger, Chris Russian, Amy Louise Schwarz for Farzan Irani, Ram Shanmugam, Chad Smith, Greg Spencer, Gary Upchurch

Guest: Kelsey Bradshaw, *University Star* reporter

4-5 p.m. Joint Meeting of Faculty Senate and Senate Liaisons

The meeting was called to order by Senate chair Michel Conroy.

- Introductions and information items
- Committee preference survey

A survey has been sent via email to all eligible faculty requesting volunteers to serve on Senate and University committees. This year, information on committee activities and responsibilities is available through links on the survey. There are 16 Senate committees and 17 other University committees that need members replaced on a regular basis.

Senators and liaisons were encouraged to follow-up with colleagues on the survey and advocate for volunteers to serve on committees. Completed surveys are due for submission by March 10.

Part-time teaching awards

A part-time teaching award, distinct from the Presidential Excellence Awards for full-time faculty, has been approved. The Senate Adjunct Faculty Committee will submit recommendations for an award from each College. Winners will receive \$1,000.

Upcoming Senate elections

Of the 15 Senate seats, six are open for election/re-election in 2014: Education (1), Fine Arts and Communication (1), Liberal Arts (2) Science and Engineering (1) and Business (1).

All eligible faculty will be asked prior to the election about their willingness to be included on the ballot. The election will then be held via email sent to all eligible faculty voters during the spring '14 semester.

Invitation to April 2 PAAG meeting

Liaisons were invited to attend the April 2 PAAG meeting. RVSPs were requested so that space needs can be met. Liaisons and all other faculty are also welcome to attend weekly Senate meetings.

Prioritizing staff positions

Most school and department representatives said increased department/school administrative staff is necessary based on enrollment and faculty growth. It was also noted that with increased grant applications and success, more staff is needed to assist with administration of these grants.

The work done by administrative staff is sometimes done by faculty and graduate student assistants because of staff shortages, but there is an issue of GAs having access to confidential student information. Some departments need to give teaching workload release to faculty in order to meet departmental needs that could be addressed by more administrative staff.

The four issues of concern related to departmental administrative staff are retention, recruitment, retirement and customer service. There is concern about disparity of salaries among these administrative staff. Liaison Omar Lopez offered to analyze data from Texas State HR and report back on staff/faculty/student ratios across the University.

It was suggested that a needs assessment be done to analyze department/school staff needs across the University. No process for this assessment was determined.

A straw vote was taken about whether meeting attendees believed department/school faculty would be willing to give up faculty lines for administrative staff lines. The vote was unanimously no.

A discussion of whether faculty would be willing to forego a merit raise in order to hire more department staff was met primarily with resistance. One concern was that upper administration raises were not included in the question.

Intercity transportation

Time limitations did not allow for a discussion of intercity transportation. Instead, senators and liaisons were asked to send their gathered faculty comments to Senator Conroy.

Around the table discussion items

Building a culture that is more inclusive of Round Rock is a Senate priority. In this regard, referring to faculty across campus will no longer be used in referring to faculty who teach at Texas State. Instead, all faculty will be referred to as faculty across the University.

Parking Ticket Appeals Committee recommendations

Professor Bill Peeler in the Department of Theater & Dance has volunteered to serve on this committee.

5 p.m. Break

5:10 p.m. Faculty Senate meeting continues

Information and Follow-Up Items

Continued discussion of need to hire staff and whether using a faculty merit raise for those hires is appropriate or fair.

Council of Academic Deans 2/25 meeting report (Conroy)

A SACS accreditation requirement is that faculty teaching online classes at Texas State be certified by taking workshops related to principles of good practices. This must be documented and on file for SACS. Other topics included Learning Commons in Alkek Library and the replacement of Windows XP on computers across the University.

Old Business

The summative review of chairs draft proposal presented by Senator Sriraman was unanimously approved. The revision to the PPS 1.10 includes a faculty senator from outside each College working with deans by attending meetings during chair/director evaluations. Senators will also assist with the preparation of review documents.

New Business

President's Academic Advisory Group (PAAG) agenda for March 5

A discussion of a class cancellation schedule for university delayed start days, the impact on 9:30 classes, make-up days and the maximum number of cancelled classes allowed.

A discussion of including adjunct faculty representation on the University Council

A discussion of a needs assessment of administrative staff across the University

Other

A discussion of the University smoking policy and enforcement of it

There are concerns about whether a Smoking Education program offered through the Student Health Center, community service hours, disciplinary probation or suspension from Texas State are effective and reasonable in relation to the University smoking policy.

Other new business

No other new business was suggested.

5:55 Approval of 2/26 minutes

6 p.m. Adjournment

Minutes submitted by Senator Weill