**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**

**April 10, 2024**

**4:00 - 6:00 p.m.**

**JCK 880**

**Members Present:** Vaughn Baltzly, Stacey Bender, Dale Blasingame, William Chittenden, Rachel Davenport, Peter Dedek, Dave Donnelly, Farzan Irani, William Kelemen, Lynn Ledbetter, Jo Beth Oestreich, Adetty Pérez de Miles, Michael Supancic and Alex White.

Member Absent: Rebecca Bell-Metereau

**Guests**: Thillainatarajan Sivakumaran, Vedaraman Sriraman, Jeremy Bohonos, Alex Burnett-Hayes, Valentina Glajar, Lauren Goodley, Lauren Ibarra, Kevin Jetton, Samantha Krause, David Levy, Aimee Roundtree, Piyush Shroff, Karen Sigler, Lois Stickley, Bob Vásquez, Toni Watt and Michael Wilson.

**Chair Ledbetter opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m.**

The first item on the agenda was an **update by Thillainatarajan Sivakumaran, Vice President for TXST Global, on the Online Programs, Round Rock, Regional Locations, International Locations, Study Hubs, and other programs.** Sivakumaran stated that TXST will launch twenty new programs in fall 2024 with departments across campus and twenty-one programs in spring 2025. The marketing campaign for these programs will go live on June 26. Registration for these programs will also open at this time. Sivakumaran held multiple meetings with academic partners to launch new programs in the fall of 2024 and spring of 2025. Instructional Designers were assigned to each college to build rapport with faculty and to construct the courses for these programs. New program codes for online offerings will be developed, and a pilot test for registration will be conducted during the first week of June 2024. He also stated that workshops would be offered to faculty members who wanted to learn best practices for teaching online. Sivakumaran stated the online MBA will begin in the spring of 2025, and the DBA will launch in the fall of 2025 or the spring of 2026, depending on completing needed approvals. TXST Global provided faculty lines to programs requesting them. A Senator inquired if students could register for the TXST Global section of an existing program that offers online classes but has a student enrollment cap. Sivakumaran stated this would be a decision per program. If the program agrees to this option, it needs to inform TXST Global of this student option. A Senator asked how the students would be coded if they took the TXST Global online course. Sivakumaran stated there were separate codes for San Marcos, Round Rock, and the Auxiliary Online Program (AOP). A companion section would be created with the San Marcos course but would be kept separate. Separate documentation would also be applied to billing and revenue sharing for TXST Global, but the credit hours for both programs would belong to the department. Computer Science will go online in the fall of 2025.

**Round Rock (RR)**. Sivakumaran stated that ten new undergraduate programs and one doctoral program were added to RR, and faculty lines were given to programs at the RR campus. One goal of TXST Global will be to mix and match some online classes with face-to-face classes at RR. TXST Global plans to review these new programs but does not plan to add any new programs for the next few years. A Senator stated concern about face-to-face courses being negatively impacted by online course offerings. Sivakumaran stated that the responsible departments will determine how courses would be offered.

**Regional Locations**. **Collin College** approached TXST to offer a four-year degree on their campus. In the first two years, students would earn their associate degree; in the last two years, they would earn a Bachelor of Science (BS) from TXST. The goal at Collin College was to provide courses in electrical engineering with a computer engineering concentration, engineering technology with an electrical engineering concentration, computer science, and exercise sports science. TXST selected the engineering program because Collin College had the equipment for this program and was willing to fund any additional equipment for the program. TXST would fund the faculty lines at Collin College. Three other institutions partner with Collin College: Texas A&M University (engineering academy), but these students must transfer to College Station, UT Dallas, and Texas A&M University-Commerce. **Dallas College** would like to have a similar partnership with TXST. TXST will work with Hanover’s Research firm to determine if Dallas College’s market and program offerings would be a viable partnership. TXST partnered with **Laredo College** and signed a Memo of Understanding (MOU) before Sivakumaran joined the university, and he will follow up with this institution on program options. **Lake View in San Antonio** was another interested institution wanting to partner with TXST to help their students earn their BS or Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree. A Senator asked how students in these various programs would get the full Bobcat experience in these partnerships. Sivakumaran stated students participating in these programs were not looking for the same Bobcat experience. Many students seek financial savings and choose to forgo on-campus living and sports events, etc., offered at TXST. TXST would like to attract these students to these types of program options.

A Senator asked how TXST Global and Julie Lessiter, Vice President of RR, would measure student success of courses and program offerings at the RR campus and through TXST Global and if any new courses and programs would be placed on a minimum enrollment expectation. Sivakumaran stated there would be a three-year evaluation period for the programs to determine financial viability and whether they are self-supporting and effective. There would not be a limit or minimum expectation of enrollment for these online offerings in the first year, but it would be expected by year three to hit a twenty to thirty cohort number. A Senator asked who would be responsible for marketing beyond a department or school and if RR would conduct marketing of the programs that begin in the fall of 2024. Sivakuraman stated a firm was hired to do the marketing campaign for the fall offerings at RR and will evaluate the firm’s effectiveness this summer. Marketing goals specific to the unique program offerings of Collin College and Laredo College will be implemented.

**International students.** This spring, 1,030 international students attended TXST. To attract international students, TXST has hired several recruiting companies from all over the world. Recruiting for some majors will target certain populations. TXST plans to utilize recruiting companies from Africa, Latin America, Canada, Asia, and Europe. More undergraduates attend from certain countries, i.e., Japan and South Korea, and often based on students’ particular interests. There was an increase in undergraduate applications and a decline in graduate applications at TXST this past fall from international students.

TXST Global also established another international opportunity for a **Study Hub or Education Hub** as a pilot testin Italy, where faculty can teach a three-week course at a partner university with our students.It was designed as an immersion program. The soft launch of this program occurs this summer, with thirty-two students going to Padua, Italy. TXST Global plans to expand this program in the summer of 2025 to Scotland, Spain, Japan, and South Korea. For interested faculty, TXST Global organizes all the arrangements with the partner university, including dorms, bus transportation to and from campus, and airport pick-up and drop-off. The faculty member’s responsibility will be to teach the class and be an emergency contact for students. A Senator asked Sivakuraman to explain the financial arrangement with the international marketers. International marketers can be paid in two ways. They can be paid a one-time flat fee of $2,500 or $3,000 per student they have enrolled at TXST. Another would be a commission rate, where we pay a certain percentage of the tuition generated by the student to the recruiter. By Federal law, this payment can only be made for international recruiting. Payment to the recruiters will not occur until the student enrolls and pays tuition. It also applies to recruited students participating in online programming through TXST Global. A Senator asked if there was any financial support for international students. Sivakuraman stated undergraduates were eligible for the $1,000 merit scholarship or any merit scholarship available at TXST. Additionally, undergraduates who receive a $1,000 merit scholarship or higher qualify for in-state tuition. Sivakuraman stated that 36% of our students qualify for full Pell Grants. TXST Global wants to create affordable international educational opportunities for our students. Interestingly, out of a student population of 38,000, only 670 TXST students will travel abroad this summer. Sivakuraman noted this was a low number and desired to create a lower-cost international education experience for our students.

**Mexico**. A university in Mexico approached TXST to offer a TXST degree on their campus. Discussions have been held with the Texas State University System (TSUS) office and our Board of Regents to explore this partnership. The next step will be to meet with each department to determine their interest in this opportunity. Interested departments will decide who will visit the facility to determine which four-year degree could be offered beginning in 2025. The current international campus setup compares with American-style design, dorms, and college football. Arkansas State offers fourteen programs, and TXST would offer ten complimentary degrees and would not compete with Arkansas State’s offerings. A Senator asked what programs would be considered complementary. Programs being considered include psychology, computer science, nutrition, civil engineering, interior design, mass communications, media innovation, biochemistry, and civil engineering. Sivakuraman stated at a recent Council of Chairs meeting that the Physical Therapy program was interested in exploring an opportunity at this international institution. Sivakuraman encouraged any departments interested in this opportunity to contact him.

Sivakuraman stated **other projects** TXST Global has been working on include the Bachelor of Arts and Applied Science (B.A.A.S) program and Coast Regional flight training to offer a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences with a concentration in aviation science. Coast Regional flight training will provide the pilot licensure, and TXST will provide the four-year degree. TXST will have a pilot certification program starting in the fall of 2024. TXST Global will work with the College of Education to market a fifteen-credit-hour teacher certification program. TXST Global will explore offering winter and May mini semesters beginning in the winter of 2025. These would not be required or mandated, just an optional program offering. TXST Global will have summer and winter hubs in New Zealand or Australia. Other offerings being explored include offering dual credit courses at TXST with students from San Marcos Consolidated ISD (SMCISD). SMCISD will graduate forty-one students with an associate degree from Coastal Bend College this year and anticipates sixty-one next year. TXST Global has been working with several colleges on new degree programs, including one in game design and development. The other one being developed would be a BS in hospitality management. Planning has begun with Coursera to offer certification certificates, and we would consider offering a degree to meet workforce demand. A Senator asked, considering some courses offered would be eight weeks, if the short open time frame to create a course or project course in Canvas had been addressed. Sivakuraman stated Matt Hall, Vice President of Information Technology, was working to ensure access.

The next item on the agenda was the **Faculty Senate Election Report**. The Faculty Senators elected to serve the 2024-2027 term include from Applied Arts: Michael Supancic; Fine Arts & Communication: Lynn Ledbetter; McCoy College, Kevin Jetton; Liberal Arts: Steve Wilson, Peter Dedek, and Valentina Glajar (one-year unexpired term), and from Science & Engineering, Noland Martin. Chair Ledbetter stated there was some discussion last year about changing the opt-in or opt-out of the election process by faculty. There continues to be concern with the opt-out option. Some faculty think the process was unethical, confusing, inconvenient, and makes the process cumbersome. The Chair would like the Faculty Senate to consider changing the system to an opt-in process. A Senator noted a change would be required in the Constitution related to faculty voters. Some other Senators concurred on adopting an opt-in process.

Chair Ledbetter stated the new Faculty Senate will be seated on May 1 at 5:00 p.m. Interested Senators should consider running for the three Faculty Senate offices: Chair, Vice Chair (VC), and Secretary. Candidates must draft a purpose statement tailored to their desired position. The general duties of the positions will be provided on the Faculty Senate Teams site. A Senator asked for a list of officer criteria and when the date to submit their purpose statement to run for office would need to be posted to the Teams site. This information will be posted to the Teams site.

The VC of the Faculty Senate serves as the Chair of the Nontenure Line Faculty Committee (NLFC). Faculty Senators interested in the VC position were invited to the upcoming NLFC meeting. VC Davenport will share the agenda with interested Faculty Senators wanting to run for the Vice Chair position. Chair Ledbetter wanted the Nontenure Line Faculty (NLF) to know the Faculty Senate highly values these faculty. The Chair suggested providing a standing invitation for Faculty Senators to attend NLF meetings. VC Davenport extended the invitation, letting Faculty Senators know they are always welcome to join any of the meetings and that the Zoom link and minutes are posted to the Faculty Senate website.

The next item on the agenda **was a request for the Faculty Senate to review the AA/PPS 02.03.01 Conduct and Planning of Courses, which will be due April 25.**

This edit proposes combining AA/PPS 02.03.01 “Conduct and Planning of Courses,” AA/PPS 02.03.02 “Conduct of Classes,” and AA/PPS 02.03.20 “Maintenance and Improvement in Quality of Teaching” into one policy. Edits have been proposed for this full policy review, including changing the review date, updating URL links and office names, adding additional modalities for office hours, and removing references to page numbers in the Faculty Handbook, which has been converted to a website.

**MOTION** to approve the April 3, 2024, Minutes. **PASSED.**

The Faculty Senate moved to an Executive Session to identify two Faculty

Senators to serve on the Academic Affairs Subcommittee and identify two

Faculty Senators to serve on the Shared Governance (Personnel Committee

Policy) Committee.

**MOTION** to approve two Faculty Senators to serve on the Academic Affairs

Subcommittee. **PASSED**.

The Faculty Senate endorsed two Senators to serve on the Shared Governance

Committee.

**Chair Ledbetter adjourned the meeting at 5:58 p.m**.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be on April 17, 2024, with Dr. Julie Lessiter, Vice

President of the Round Rock campus via **Zoom only**.