

DRAFT
FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
Meeting: February 3, 2009

PRESENT: M. Moosally, B. Belbot, T. Davis, B. Christmas, J. Creighton, J. Dutcher, J. Flosi, B. Gilbert, O. Gupta, T. Hale, S. Henney, L. Hignite, A. Kane, N. Leveille, P. Lyons, K. McLellan, D. Nino, C. Nguyen, , J. Pavletich, K. Pinkerton, N. Rangel, T. Redl, A. Rejaie, R. Robbins, K. Robertson, D. Ryden, P. Simeonov, J. Yoon, Z. Zhou

ABSENT: J. Caro, M. Cunningham, A. Gomez-Rivas, S. Penkar, C. Stewart, H. Wang,

GUESTS: Provost M. Woods, AVP P. Williams, VP D. Bradley, VP I. Montalbano, AVP G. Evans, Library Director P. Ensor, Public Relations Director S. Davis, P. Cureton, P. Ingram, J. Schmertz, R. Sheridan, A. Sikka, C. Stokes.

Senate President Moosally called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Senate President Moosally's Report

President Moosally gave an update of the status of the workload policy. It has been sent back to the Faculty Affairs Committee for removal of the financial exigency clause. The 4/3 workload policy will be implemented for fall semester 2010, instead of 2009. There were also issues of how many independent studies count as a course at the graduate and undergraduate level.

President Moosally reported that the name selection change committee has examined the detailed data but she does not know if the data will be released to the full community. The decision by the committee will be made on Wednesday; the BOR meeting is Friday, February 6, at 1:00. President Moosally also said that she does not know exactly what the process will be, but she is on the agenda to speak at the BOR meeting. She wanted faculty to let her know their feelings and said that she would do a walk-around survey to try to have additional information from faculty.

President Moosally reminded the Senate that the Universities Faculty Senate Executive Committee is sponsoring a conference on student success at UHD on Friday,

President Moosally read the SACS letter to the Senate and then distributed copies of the letter.

Senate Vice President Belbot's Report

VP Belbot reported that elections are in progress for replacing those senators who could not serve their senate terms this semester; the results will be available by the next faculty senate meeting.

Administrative Report

Provost M. Woods provided the report. President Castillo was preparing his comments for legislature and was unable to attend the senate meeting. Provost Woods reported that she had just returned from the chief academic officers meeting in Austin. One of the government relations representative suggested that universities might be looking at frozen tuition, i.e. the students entering in the fall would be able to attend the university at the same tuition level for all four years. Provost Woods said there will be additional reporting requirements but that these will mostly affect administrators. Provost Woods reported that the presidents of Texas universities will be appealing the 6-course drop rule with the legislature. High school officials across the state are saying that they do not have the faculty to teach what they would need to teach for college readiness. However, some high school students will be graduating from high school with associate degrees; therefore, universities need to prepare for having 18-yr. old students enrolled in their classes.

Provost Woods also reported that the legislature is considering a policy where universities would have to choose from a limited list of textbooks and then use the same textbooks for a period of 3 years. Senators were disturbed that such a policy was being considered by the legislature.

Old business

Senate President Moosally pointed out that the topics listed on the senate agenda were the topics that had been put forth fall semester, but given the issues possibly being considered by the legislature and other university systems, i.e., firearms on campus and bonuses based on student evaluations, those topics could change. President Moosally will be attending the Texas Committee of Faculty Senates (TCFS) meeting in March in Austin. Topics may also need to be added on at a later date. President Moosally also pointed out that placing child care on the agenda for the March 3 senate meeting will give anyone who is interested in this topic the time to gather information. Senator Flosi moved to approve the list of topics. The proposed slate of topics was unanimously approved by the Senate. Senator Flosi asked whether an age range for child care has been discussed and whether child care would be a “sick-care” facility.

President Moosally reported that FSEC thought the final exam schedule would be too complex to be dealt with at the senate level; therefore, she asked for volunteers who would be willing to address the final exam schedule, including the rooms assigned for exams and to work with others on campus who have a role in setting up those schedules. Senator Flosi volunteered to participate in this group.

New business

Ombuds Evaluation Form: President Moosally asked if senators have questions or suggestions for improvement on the ombuds evaluation form. Senator Robbins questioned items #4 and #5; she wanted to know if the ombuds is responsible for solving the problem and whether these are appropriate questions to ask. Senate VP Belbot suggested taking out the language “progress of the solution;” Senator Christmas suggested item #4 might be remedied by changing the “for me” to “with me” and then deleting item #5. President Moosally said the ombuds is supposed to deal

with conflict resolution—but presumably the ombuds would never “solve” the problem without the input and collaboration with the faculty member. Senator Rangel suggested “the faculty ombuds assisted me in answering my problem;” Senator McLellan suggested “helped me stay informed in the process of finding an answer.” Senator Christmas said item #5 is not needed if item #4 is properly answered. Senator Rejaie said it needs to be stated more clearly—that it is not clear as currently written. It was suggested that the issue is about “fairness;” Senator Rejaie said that there will be times that the ombuds may have done everything possible but might not be able to resolve the problem. What we want to know is whether the “office” is effective. AVP Evans asked if there is a way to capture input from all parties involved, given that the role of the ombuds is to serve as a mediator. President Moosally said that this might reveal too much information. Senator Redl suggested using language “contactee” or “contactor.” President Moosally then read the duties/role of the ombuds—she thinks that maybe they can go back to use the policy words to form/shape items. President Moosally asked how the senate wanted to handle this. Senator Flosi moved that FSEC interpret the comments made here and create a final version of the form. Senator Christmas seconded the motion, and the motion passed with one abstention.

Online Course Survey Instrument

Background: Feedback from online courses has been very low. Questions on the student evaluation for F2F classes are not always appropriate for online courses. Working with AVP Gail Evans, the committee sent forward a new online course evaluation (dated 11/6/08) which complies with PS 03.A.26, i.e. it includes a set of common questions which will be used in all courses. Senator Redl suggested omitting the “not applicable” option on the evaluation form. Senator Hignite asked how students would know what a hybrid course is when faculty do not seem to know. AVP Evans explained that a hybrid course is NOT an online course—51% of a hybrid course has to be F2F. She suggested that maybe there need to be some questions that are specific to each type of course, e.g. F2F, ITV, online, and hybrid. Senator McLellan suggested omitting item #6 from the evaluation instrument. Senator Redl pointed out that item #7 assumes the course is an online course and not a hybrid. Senator Pavletich said that it is problematic that some of the questions are not on evaluations for all the different types of courses, resulting in the comparison being that of apples and oranges. Senator Christmas felt that item #7 is meaningless on a student evaluation; he also pointed out the lack of meaningfulness of other questions on student evaluations. Senator Dutcher suggested that we keep going back to an older set of questions so maybe that needs to be revisited before moving on to look at the “whole” thing. AVP Evans suggested looking at validated (nationally normed) instruments for assessing teaching effectiveness. Senator Gilbert stated that he is disturbed by some of the language, specifically see item #20. Senate President Moosally stated that she had thought there was some urgency to the development of the instrument for online courses, but she is open to looking at the entire process. AVP Evans said that Lucy Bowen (in TTLC) is looking at a product called Quark-Eval that would work with Blackboard. One of the big problems is the response rate. Perhaps that could be worked on in the short-term; also, individual colleges could develop questions to go with Quark-Eval. Senate President Moosally expressed that she has discomfort with letting the colleges develop their own questions; she also suggested that maybe we are making this more complicated than it needs to be. She suggested that maybe there could be some minor adjustments of questions. Senator Pavletich suggested that this be done in a small

group because it is too complicated to work out in Senate. Senator Gilbert moved that the Senate send the evaluation instrument back to the originating committee with the suggestion that the “current set of core questions be maintained and an additional set of questions specific to mode of delivery be generated.” The motion passed with 1 vote opposed and 1 abstention. The committee will also be asked to review the current set of questions used on F2F evaluation instrument. President Moosally asked if the Senate would like FSEC to send a charge to the committee to study the entire student evaluation process. The response was affirmative.

President Moosally asked if there were any other charges that the Senate would like to send forward to the policy committees, either to review or develop new policies.

Senator Leveille asked if a charge could be given to review the Department Chair Appointment policy, with specific focus regarding search committee members not being allowed to apply for the position; time lines should also be specified. Senator Ryden asked that the Faculty Development Leave policy be reviewed; he said that there are questions about whether the chair has to consult the R&T committee. Currently, the R&T committee and chairs do not know what their role is. President Moosally also noted that there has been some question about whether at least some of these leaves should be reserved for tenured faculty members only.

It was noted that there was only about twenty minutes of meeting time left and that a resolution presented by Senator Gilbert might require all of that time. Senator Hale pointed out that changing the order of the agenda would require a motion and vote to suspend the rules. A motion to change the order of discussion of agenda items passed with 22 in favor, 2 opposed, and 2 abstentions.

A motion was made to consider the resolution put forth by Senator Gilbert. Senator Leveille pointed out that what was stated in item #1 was not a proven fact and therefore it should not be stated as such. President Moosally suggested that the senate vote on each item. Senator McLellan moved that the senate vote on the acceptance/rejection of each item in the resolution. Senator Ryden moved to do the vote to see how much support there is for the resolution. Senator Hale called for a vote on suspending the rules so that the senate could vote on the resolution today, given the fairly short notice to the Senate: 21 voted in favor; 6 opposed.

A vote was then taken on each of the items on the resolution. The results are:

1. Majority opposed
2. Majority carries
3. Majority carries
4. Majority carries
5. Majority carries
6. Majority carries
7. Majority carries
8. Majority carries
9. Majority carries

A motion and a second were made to pass the resolution. The items remaining on the resolution (items #2 through #9) were voted on as a whole: 18 in favor; 9 opposed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy J. Davis
Secretary-Treasurer