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**\*\*TSU FACULTY SENATE MEETING\*\***

**5 April 2012**

**Minutes**

**Howard Beeth, Secretary**

**Members Present:** Howard Beeth (Secretary); Chris Beineman (COLABS); Alexis Brooks de Vita (Editor, *The Faculty Speaks*); Bettye Desselle (JHJ School of Business); Angie Eaton (College of Pharmacy & Health Science); Robert Ford (COST); Daniel Georges-Abeyie (SOPA); Lila Ghemri (COST); Vera Hawkins (School of Communication); Linda Johnson (COLABS); Sharlette Kellum (Graduate School); James Opolot (SOPA); Samuel Osueke (COE); Jane Perkyns (COLABS); Byron Price (Chairman); Rasoul Saneifard (Vice Chairman); Lalita Sen (Treasurer); Karma Sherif (JHJ School of Business); Holim Song (COE); Sara White (Parliamentarian); Mammo Woldie (JHJ School of Business). **Total: 21.**

**Members Absent:** Macaulay Akpaffiong (College of Pharmacy & Health Science); Jafus Cavil (COE); Cassandra Hill (TMSL); Mohsen Javadian (COST); Emlyn Norman (COLABS); Zivar Yousefipour (College of Pharmacy & Health Science). **Total: 6.**

**Guests:** Kirsteryn Gunter, Faculty Assembly/Senate Senior Administrative Assistant; Obugo Ogar, guest of Senator Angie Eaton. **Total: 2.**

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **Call to Order**

Senate Chair Byron Price called the April 2012 meeting of the TSU Faculty Senate to order at 3:10p when a sufficient number of members were present to constitute a quorum. Members then immediately turned to the business at hand.

### **Approval of 1 March 2012 Senate Meeting Minutes**

Senator Robert Ford expressed a concern that the March 2012 meeting minutes contained contested testimony from two Senators concerning the office hours expected of faculty in the Department of Mathematics by the chair of that department, Dr. Azime Saydam. The claim of these Senators was that Dr. Saydam required members of the department to spend an additional two hours, beyond their normal office hours, to tutor students in the Mathematics Learning Center rather than in their office.

Senator Ford went to the trouble to contact Dr. Saydam about this matter and provided members of the Senate with an email exchange between them. In her email to Senator Ford, Dr. Saydam thanked him “very much” for contacting her about the matter and wrote to Senator Ford that in response to the “false complaint” lodged against her “I have never asked the faculty to contribute 2 hours in addition to their regular office hours; instead, I have asked the faculty to contribute 2 hours of their regular office hours to helping students in the Mathematics Learning Center”. Dr. Saydam concluded her email to Senator Ford by writing that “Temporarily, all faculty members” except one “volunteered to spend 2 hours of their regular office hours at the Mathematics Learning Center”.

Senators Ford and Vera Hawkins wanted assurance that Dr. Saydam’s views would be included in the minutes of the Senate’s April 2012 meeting minutes. Assured by Secretary Howard Beeth that they would be, the members of the Senate unanimously approved the draft copy of the Senate’s March 2012 meeting minutes as submitted and moved on to other business.

### **Post-Tenure Review**

Secretary Beeth led off the discussion of the relatively new policy of Post-Tenure Review by making two assertions: that faculty were already the most evaluated group on campus and that Post-Tenure Review effectively nullified tenure itself, leaving all faculty subject to termination by administrators at any time in their career. Post-Tenure Review, he said, was the “elephant in the room”--the biggest professional challenge to all faculty of this generation and hence to all who served in Faculty Senates at any university where it was management policy.

As to his first argument--that faculty were the most evaluated group of educational professionals on campus--Beeth itemized the number of times that faculty were normally and routinely evaluated over the course of their career. He recounted that faculty were evaluated when they were hired, each time they were promoted, and when they applied for tenure. In addition, he continued, TSU faculty were evaluated by academic managers and administrators every year throughout their career in required Annual Merit Reviews as well as by every student in every class they taught. He concluded that the additional requirement of Post-Tenure Review was unnecessary, burdensome to faculty, and stripped them of reasonable and traditional job security. In fact, he said, Post-Tenure Review was an attack on faculty by larger political forces that were hostile to them, aided and abetted by university administrators who shared this view or who, for various reasons, were unwilling publicly to oppose it.

As to his second argument--that Post-Tenure Review really marked the end of tenure itself--Beeth merely noted that any policy that made tenure and continued employment conditional really marked the end of tenure as well as of the reasonably secure employment which faculty in the United States have long enjoyed. In practice, he concluded, it gave academic managers and administrators a powerful weapon for discretionary use against faculty.

After a discussion, Chairman Price agreed to consider meeting with Faculty Senate chairs at other area universities to discuss Post-Tenure Review with them as well as to invite to the next Senate meeting TSU faculty who are active in the Texas Faculty Association to hear what information they may have about faculty reaction to Post-Tenure Review action across Texas.

### **Committee Reports**

Senator Mammo Woldie presented a long and interesting visual/verbal report on the work done by the Ad Hoc Salary Equity Committee, which he chairs. He explained that the committee selected the College of Pharmacy and Health to begin with and to serve as a model for subsequent analysis of other TSU schools and colleges. There, the committee broke down faculty in each of the three departments of the college by years of service, rank, salary (median and average), and so forth, measuring for gender bias. Eventually, Senator Woldie reported that the committee planned to compare TSU salaries with those of other higher ed institutions.

In the discussion that followed, Senate members suggested the need to compare the salaries of those with terminal degrees with those who lacked one. The merits and demerits of using the Cooper database were mentioned. In response to a question from Chairman Price, Senator Woldie indicated that eventually the salaries of educational administrators, such as department chairs, as well as staff personnel would be included in the study. Senate members agreed with Vice Chair Rasoul Saneifard that hard data were required to protect the interest of the faculty, and Senate members commended Woldie and the committee for their important work.

## **University Academic Village Report**

Senator Robert Ford provided Senate members with an update on TSU's recently inaugurated University Academic Village. Due to start-up problems, the initial group of students selected for enrollment in the UAV, who now number about one hundred, were not adequately vetted. However, plans are underway to solve this problem by enlisting interested faculty to participate more in conducting short (15 minutes) but important discussions with prospective students. Senator Ford indicated that out-of-town students would be able to participate in the process via telephone or video conferencing. The goal, he said, was to raise the number of students participating in the UAV from about one hundred to about three hundred. To achieve this increase, various recruiting techniques have been employed, including the utilization of some student organizations. Ford indicated that the UAV was part of TSU's plan not only to attract a larger core of high-achieving students but to increase TSU's retention and graduation rate. He promised Senate members regular updates to this well received report.

## **Faculty Communication Problems**

Secretary Beeth began this discussion about the problems that elected faculty leaders had in communicating with their rank-and-file faculty constituency. He said that he was particularly concerned that for years regular reporting by elected faculty leaders to their faculty constituency via email directly into faculty Inboxes of the faculty publication, *The Faculty Speaks*, as well as the monthly meeting minutes of the Faculty Senate, had proven impossible. Time and again, Beeth said, administrators had given various excuses why it was impossible to have these important documents sent out by a universal e-blast to all faculty. Yet, he noted, others on campus appeared to have no difficulty in having material distributed. Regularly, he said, faculty received in their Inboxes postings from the President, the Provost, deans, and individual colleges. The TSU Athletic Department, Beeth pointed out, seemed to have no trouble getting its message out. Only the faculty, he observed, seemed to have this communication problem. It was enough, Beeth mused aloud, to make reasonable people wonder if it was just a coincidence—or deliberate design. After discussion, Chairman Price promised to compose an email to administrators about this important, persistent communication problem that was a barrier to faculty cohesion and unity.

## **The Role of Senior Faculty in Providing Guidance**

Vice Chair Saneifard led a brief conversation about the importance of senior faculty in providing guidance and mentoring newly-arriving or junior faculty. There was no disagreement about this. However, Senator Samuel Osueke reminded his tablemates that one bit of advice that senior faculty should impart to younger faculty is that they, themselves, should take the initiative to seek out mentoring relationships with more senior faculty.

## **Faculty Participation in Committees**

Senate members easily agreed about the importance of university committees in doing much of the important work of the university itself. As well, they agreed that committee work was important in earning all faculty promotion, tenure (such as it is), and a successful career. At issue, however, was whether faculty committees should be elected by the faculty or appointed by administrators. All Senate members who joined in discussion about this favored faculty election as opposed to administrative appointment. Senator Jane Perkyns assured the room that the Faculty Manual Revision Committee would include this provision in its proposed revision, and Treasurer Lalita Sen added that it should be in the by-laws of individual colleges as well, although she pointed out that *The Faculty Manual* trumped all college by-laws regardless.

In another matter relating to committees, some Senate members indicated that some administrators routinely attended faculty committee meetings, where their presence intimidated faculty, especially junior, untenured faculty, and complicated candid faculty discussion. Chairman Price recommended to Senator Perkyns that a provision be included in the new *Faculty Manual* that would prohibit this practice.

## **Tenure and Promotion Issues and Challenges**

Vice Chair Saneifard urged that faculty serving on committees involved with promotion and tenure be sure that administrators followed proper procedure and observed written rules—and likewise urged that faculty on such committees be aware of the rules and followed them, too.

## **Faculty Outside Employment**

Vice Chair Saneiford observed that some faculty at TSU are rumored to work more for other employers than for TSU. This, he said, was prohibited behavior and could lead to having employment at TSU terminated. Senator Daniel Georges-Abeyie reminded the table that there is an important difference between outside *working* and *consulting*. Consulting is acceptable and even encouraged, while working full time elsewhere while fully employed at TSU is prohibited. Chairman Price commented that faculty, too, had to observe standard rules of employment.

## **Surveys Re: Administrators**

Chairman Price distributed copies of the surveys that will soon be distributed by email to all faculty. One is designed to survey lower management personnel (chairs and deans) and the other for upper management (provosts and the president).

Senator Georges-Abeyie suggested that the surveys should include an answer-option of “don’t know” or “insufficient information” because chairs and deans are not well known outside their particular department or college. In response, Chairman Price indicated that the survey for upper

management personnel would be sent to all faculty, while the survey for lower management would only be sent to faculty serving in their particular department or college.

Senator Karma Sherif suggested that future surveys should include a short statement by each individual administrator so that faculty could measure their job performance based on such statements. Chairman Price noted this suggestion and closed the discussion of this issue by saying that survey results would be provided to the TSU Board of Regents and otherwise publicized.

### **Old Business**

Vice Chair Saneifard noted that some administrators continued to call faculty to meetings outside faculty service times, such as during vacation breaks. He urged that faculty continue to monitor and make a written record of such egregious behavior with the possibility of making future official protests about it.

*Faculty Speaks* editor Alexis Brooks de Vita reported that she continues to negotiate with administrators regarding her remuneration for publishing one issue of the publication per month. In support of her, Secretary Beeth made available an earlier Senate resolution (passed unanimously) that called for her position to be remunerated exactly as the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary of the Faculty Senate were. Brooks de Vita said university administrators had resisted such compensation thus far, and she was especially concerned that she would not be offered enough release time or course reduction to be able to continue in the position. Chairman Price said that the TSU Senate would continue to support Editor Brooks de Vita in her quest for adequate compensation.

The hour growing late, the April 2012 meeting of the TSU Faculty Senate adjourned at 5p.