

# TSU FACULTY SENATE MEETING

6 May 2010

## Minutes

Howard Beeth, Secretary

**Members Present:** Edieth Wu, Chair; Lalita Sen, Vice Chair; Howard Beeth, Secretary; Rasoul Saneifard, Treasurer; C.J. Tymczak, Parliamentarian; Alexis Brooks de Vita, Editor, *The Faculty Speaks*; Macaulay Akpaffiong, Senator, Pharmacy & Health Sciences; Thorpe Butler, Senator, COLABS; Daniel Georges-Abeyie, Senator, SOPA; Anna James, Senator, TMSL; Wei Li, Senator, COST; Emlyn Norman, Senator, COLABS; Sara White, Senator, COLABS; Zivar Yousefipour, Senator, Pharmacy & Health Sciences. **Total: 14.**

**Members Absent:** Demetrius Kazakos Assistant Secretary; Kiran Chilakamarri, Senator, COST; Robert Ford, Senator, COST; Doris Jackson, Senator, Pharmacy & Health Sciences; Andrea Shelton, Pharmacy & Health Sciences; Michael Sollars, Senator, The Graduate School. **Total: 6.**

## Agenda Items

### Call to Order & Chair's Announcements

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:15p when a sufficient number of Senators finally arrived to create a quorum. She immediately introduced and turned the floor over to Dr. Vera Hawkins, who headed the team that produced TSU's new Quality Enhancement Plan, copies of which she distributed. Assisting Dr. Hawkins were Dean Greg Maddox of the Graduate School and Professor Jacqueline Fleming.

### TSU's Quality Enhancement Plan

As described by Dr. Hawkins, TSU's Quality Enhancement Plan is a distillation of a widely circulated campus survey that identified a consensus desire to achieve 4 major goals, which she itemized:

- 1) Multi-directional (vertical and horizontal) mentoring, described as the “key” to student success;
- 2) The creation of a “Culture of Learning” at TSU, including an expanded orientation process and other mechanisms to keep students on campus and learning-centered;
- 3) An enhanced emphasis on “Informational Literacy”, including critical thinking and writing as well as computer and Internet sophistication;
- 4) Internationalizing the TSU educational experience.

Much discussion occurred during and after the QEP presentation. Senator Georges-Abeyie, while lauding the goals of QEP, was nevertheless concerned that some were realistically unattainable without implementing structural changes, including reduced teaching loads on faculty to allow them adequate time to mentor sometimes woefully underprepared students. Senator Thorpe Butler and several others called attention to the historically under-budgeted library, especially its lack of sufficient Internet data-bases upon which so much research depends. The Chair suggested inviting a library staffer involved in electronic resources to a future Senate meeting to further discuss this issue. Senator Anna James spoke for many when she said the QEP represents a positive start about important campus reform that will surely continue.

### **Chair’s Announcements**

Following the QEP presentation and discussion, the Chair made 3 important announcements:

- 1) That the Terry Library is the No. 1 campus priority—hopefully a new library with a bigger budget;
- 2) That another major goal is a permanent “place” for the Faculty Assembly/Senate, including office space for officers and Editor Brooks de Vita, and a “center” with 2 computers for general faculty use;
- 3) That the Faculty Assembly/Senate has won the long-sought goal of being able to send copies of the Senate’s monthly meeting minutes and its publication, *The Faculty Voice*, globally via direct email to the Inboxes of recipients.

In the discussion that followed, Editor Alexis Brooks de Vita emphasized that she wanted *The Faculty Voice* distributed to the entire university community, not just the faculty. Secretary Howard Beeth called achieving the ability of the Senate actually to communicate its work in behalf of the faculty to the faculty a milestone. Several Senators made additional comments about TSU’s IT system and its problems. These wide ranging comments touched on censorship concerns, communications between faculty and students, and more. The Chair said she would invite an IT rep to a future Senate meeting more fully to discuss these important matters.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Secretary Beeth submitted the minutes of the Senate's April 2010 meeting, which were moved, seconded, and adopted without modification.

## **Carnegie Community Engagement Campus Issue**

Senator Robert Ford not being present, this report was deferred until the next Senate meeting.

## **Faculty Workload Committee Update**

Vice Chair Lalita Sen distributed copies of the committee's 7 page preliminary report. She urged all to read it and make suggestions ASAP, in time to be considered and possibly incorporated into the final report to be submitted to Provost Ohia.

According to the preliminary report, "The workload committee met twice every month since December 2009 to review the workload currently adopted by the University and ratified by the TSU Board in 2007, for further refinement and inclusion...The committee visited the faculty workload at several Universities in Texas" to evaluate their practices. The preliminary report contrasted existing workload policy at TSU with the committee's proposed changes.

In the discussion which followed, Parliamentarian C.J. Tymczak mentioned whispers of a secret "efficiency report" on each department being prepared by the TSU administration for possible use in a future faculty reduction. The Chair promised to obtain and share with the Senate a copy of this rumored report, if such exists.

## **Parking & Phased Retirement Updates**

Re: Phased Retirement, as in previous meetings, Senator Butler reported that he has been advised that to protect themselves, faculty who wish to opt for phased retirement should first retire and then go on phased retirement. While this sounds somewhat illogical, he continues to check this and related matters out by investigating phased retirement policies in place at other universities.

Re: TSU parking policy, Senator Butler reported that the Parking Policy Committee voted to recommend a new 3-tier policy to replace the 2-tier now in place. The proposed 3-tier policy would feature:

- 1) A low tier component (the cheapest) at the same price which would exclude parking in the choicest locations;
- 2) A new middle-tier component that would offer access to some prime locations equally divided between faculty and staff but not featuring individually-reserved spaces;
- 3) A top tier component (the most expensive) at the same price, restricted to senior faculty and administrators (not including staff).

Discussion indicated general approval of this new, 3-tiered plan.

### **Faculty Speaks Update**

Editor Brooks de Vita distributed her 2009-2010 academic year, 1 page report to the Senate. In it, she itemized some difficulties she has encountered and made 5 recommendations to deal with these difficulties:

- 1) That undistributed copies of the publication be made available for distribution at the monthly meetings of the Faculty Senate and at the twice yearly meetings of the Faculty Assembly;
- 2) That as Editor she “be given global faculty email access so that *The Faculty Speaks* opens from every current faculty member’s inbox”;
- 3) That a “Faculty Senate suite office...be made available for the Editor, including a working computer or laptop, printer, and telephone”;
- 4) That as Editor she “should be allowed use of a Faculty Senate-sponsored laptop”;
- 5) That as Editor she “should have a per-semester class reduction”.

In the discussion that followed, Editor Brooks de Vita reiterated that she’d put out 5 issues in the last academic year, far more than the total produced in the 5 years previous to her editorship. She recounted again some of the difficulties this entailed, including plain over work. The Chair commiserated with her, but said that a course reduction for Senate work was limited in the *TSU Faculty Manual* to the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. It was suggested that Editor Brooks de Vita contact the *Faculty Manual* Revision Committee to urge it to include a course reduction provision for those editing the publication.

### **Staff Council-Student Government Association-Faculty Senate Coordination**

Secretary Beeth proposed that various bodies representing different sections of the university community send a non-voting representative to attend one another’s meetings. Beeth recognized that a cost/benefit analysis of the plan would include some downside as well as benefits, but he argued that the benefits--transparency, additional timely informational exchanges between bodies, an increased ability to coordinate action by participating bodies, etc.—outweighed the disadvantages. He volunteered to serve the Senate as its designated representative to the Staff Council. Senator James, however, worried about “confidentiality” issues. The hour being late, further discussion of the topic was postponed until the next Senate meeting.

### **Old Business**

Vice Chair Sen noted with approval the completion of the annual Faculty Survey of Administrators, and Senator Zivar Yousefipour received the congratulations of the Senate for having coordinated this effort. Vice Chair Sen volunteered to arrange the crunching of the survey numbers, Senators Yousefipour and Butler agreed to do a draft report based on their analysis of

the numbers, and Secretary Beeth agreed to edit their draft report. Several senators expressed the hope that this process would be completed over the summer so that a final version of the 2009-2010 Faculty Survey of Administrators could be distributed at the Fall 2010 opening faculty meeting.

**New Business**—None.

The hour being late, the Senate voted to adjourn its May 2010 meeting at 5:25p.