

TSU FACULTY SENATE MEETING

2 Sept. 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 (Pharmacy & Health Sciences); Thorpe Butler (COLABS); Kiran Chilakamarri (COST); Robert Ford (COST); Daniel Georges-Abeyie (SOPA); Anna James (TMSL); Wei Li (COST); Emlyn Norman (COLABS); Byron Price (Graduate School); Andrea Shelton (Pharmacy & Health Sciences); Sara White (COLABS). **Total: 17.**

Members Absent: Demetruis Kazakos (Asst. Secretary); Doris Jackson (Pharmacy & Health Sciences); Zivar Yousefipour (Pharmacy & Health Sciences). **Total: 3.**

Visiting Faculty: Drs. James Opolot, Cary Wintz, and Mammo Woldie.

Agenda Items

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:12p when a sufficient number of Senators were present to constitute a quorum. She immediately introduced and turned the floor over to Mr. Billy Rector, TSU's Chief Information Officer.

Faculty Queue Update

Mr. Rector announced that a "dilemma" had been solved and that the TSU Faculty Senate now had dedicated operational access that would enable it to communicate

globally with the TSU faculty via email directly into their individual Inboxes. He said that the Chair of the Faculty Assembly/Senate will be the sole moderator of the access, and all material to be transmitted has to go through her. Mr. Rector said that he would have to be contacted regarding any “special requests”. While this long-awaited news was greeted with approval, Senator Butler reminded Mr. Rector that some faculty members were still burdened with old computers that needed to be replaced.

Chair’s Announcements

The Chair made the following announcements:

- She introduced Dr. Byron Price, who replaced Dr. Michael Sollars as the Senator representing the Graduate School, and discussion followed;
- Re: faculty raises, she said that TSU President Rudley had announced that faculty would get 2% raises for sure, some of it based on merit, and 3% if student enrollment warranted it, and that the exact raise configuration would be determined in October;
- Re: the Faculty Assembly/Senate office space on the third floor of Hannah Hall, the Chair reported “that we have been displaced, if you will”, by Provost Ohia, who has taken over part of this space for his use and is in the process of refurbishing and reconfiguring the area that will be occupied by him and the Faculty Assembly/Senate;
- That Ms. Josie Decatur, the staff person who worked for the TSU Faculty Assembly/Senate, had recently departed her position, which remains vacant;
- That the TSU Board of Regents had approved all requests for promotion and tenure;
- That progress has been made to increase parking spaces for faculty and staff in the University parking garages.

Approval of May 2010 Senate Meeting Minutes

Secretary Beeth submitted the minutes of the Senate’s May 2010 meeting which were moved, seconded, and adopted with one correction noted by Vice Chair Sen. The Chair added that before Josie Decatur left, she posted the minutes of recent Senate meetings as well as recent issues of *The Faculty Speaks* on the Senate’s web page.

Faculty Speaks Update

Editor Alexis Brooks De Vita reported that she had put out five issues of the faculty publication last year and hoped for three issues this year. On another matter, she complained that while our university encourages scholarship, it has established this year an unrealistic deadline of 1 September for submitting applications for research grants, before most calls-for-papers have been issued, and that this year travel grants have been reduced from \$3000 to \$2000. She asked that an appropriate administrator be invited to discuss these matters with the Senate. Discussion followed, during which Dr. Cary Wintz, a faculty visitor and member of the TSU Research Council, said his best understanding was that seed grants were the only type of grants with a submission deadline of September 1st and that there were no deadlines for travel grants. Much discussion followed, and the Senate agreed to invite Dr. Adebayo Oyekan, the new Interim Associate Dean for Research, to attend the Senate's October meeting to clarify and confirm what official university policy actually is. The Chair suggested that the details of this policy could then be written up and shared with the faculty in *The Faculty Speaks*.

Faculty Workload Committee Update

Vice Chair Sen, the head of the Workload Committee, distributed copies of the committee's recommendations and introduced members of the committee, including Drs. James Opolot, Cary Wintz, and Mammo Woldie.

She observed that there are differences among the faculty, department chairs, and deans about differing interpretations of workload policies. After a short discussion about this, she urged the Senate to act favorably on the recommendations of the Workload Committee and invited further comments by committee members in attendance. Thereupon Dr. Wintz made the following points:

- That the committee had tried to clarify the ambiguities of the present policy.
- That rumors of administrative non-compliance with the current policy are rife.
- That the committee had scrupulously tried to accommodate departments with special needs.
- That the committee had included faculty sabbaticals as a right and not as a possibility.

- That before including a new provision, the Committee had carefully checked what “the best professional practices” were nationally.
- That Provost Ohia had approved the committee’s recommendations point by point and that he’d heard that President Rudley had, too.

Dr. Wintz concluded by urging the Senate to approve the committee’s recommendations and send it on to the Board of Regents ASAP since it already had momentum and “the wind is at our backs”.

Much discussion followed that included comments by most Senators, some of which follow. The key issue of the discussion was whether the Workload Committee’s report should be accepted and endorsed by the Senate now or later. Vice Chair Sen and Dr. Wintz continued to make the case for immediate Senate approval. The Chair, however, urged delay, saying that it should go forward for approval only when the Faculty Manual Revision Committee was finished with its labor and the combined documents could go forward together. Senator Ford also argued for delay until the Faculty Assembly had time to be consulted, although Senator Norman said this would take too long. Instead, he suggested approving the Workload Committee’s report now with the right to modify it later on. Senator Akpaffiong then made a motion that the Senate approve the Workload Committee’s report, subject to the subsequent review of the various colleges, after which the Senate could approve a final workload document that incorporated the input from the colleges. Senator Butler made a friendly motion to table Senator Akpaffiong’s motion, to return the workload report to the Workload Committee, and for the Senate not to take further action on the workload report until individuals as well as all the colleges had the time to review and propose changes to the Workload Committee, which would then present a finalized workload report to the Senate, hopefully next month, for further consideration. Senator Butler’s motion was seconded and passed.

Parking and Phased Retirement Committee Reports

Senator Butler reported that the Parking Committee will continue its work and hopefully have something definitive to report next month. Senator Norman complained that many faculty spaces in the parking garages have been converted into administrative parking spaces, making parking more difficult for faculty than

in the past. The Chair identified Ms. Charlotte Washington and Ms. Gloria Walker as the go-to persons to deal with this matter. Senator Georges-Abeyle also noted that the gates of the parking garages are up and that students have entered and used parking spaces not allocated to them.

Re: phased retirement, Senator Butler reported that he's made calls to other schools about their policies but has not heard back from them. He promised to keep trying to contact them. The Chair commented on the related topic of buy-outs to reduce the budget by offering an inducement for senior faculty to retire. She asserted that the standard buy-out offer for the profession was 1 year and that TSU, if it even proposed a buy-out policy, would probably adhere to this standard and might include staff as well as faculty. Other Senators, however, noted that the University of Texas and Texas A&M had offered 2 year buy-out proposals and that the University of Houston also was considering this. A short general discussion of buy-outs followed.

Old Business: None.

New Business

Treasurer Rasoul Saneifard complained that the salary adjustments made several years ago were flawed. He said that some faculty members have worked for many years at TSU and are still making so little that they can't afford to retire. He wondered if salary policy could be reviewed to ameliorate this problem. Vice Chair Sen said that she had publicly available salary information. The Chair pointed out that some faculty members in the past had successfully approached the Rank, Tenure, Promotion, and Salary Committee for a salary adjustment, and she recommended to Treasurer Saneifard that he advise others to do the same.

Adjournment

The Senate adjourned its September meeting at 5:05p.