

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING of May 11, 2010

The regular monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate for the 2009-2010 academic year was held May 11, 2010, at 3:30 p.m. in the University Room (BB 2.06.04) with Dr. Mansour El-Kikhia, Chairman of the Faculty Senate, presiding.

I. Call to order and taking of attendance

Present: Diane Abdo, Steve Bach, Manuel Berriozabal, Mark Brill, Garry Cole, Norma Cantu, William Cooke, Kim Cuero, Sara DeTurk, Beth Durodoye, Carol Dyas, Mansour El-Kikhia, John Frederick, Mary Ellen Garcia, Rhonda Gonzales, Lars Hansen, Robert Hard, Judith Haschenburger, Victor Heller, Palani-Rajan Kadapakkam, Randy Manteufel, Mary McNaughton-Cassill, Elizabeth Murakami-Ramalho, Sharon Nichols, Sandy Norman, Darryl Ohlenbusch, Anand Ramasubmaranian, Hazem Rashed-Ali, Cherylon Robinson, Johnelle Sparks, Raydel Tullous, Alistair Welchman, Carola Wenk, Bennie Wilson

Absent: Sos Agaian, Yoris Au, Ron Binks, Amy Jasperson (excused), Zlatko Koinov (excused), Margarita Machado-Casas, John McCray (excused), John Merrifield, Jolyn Mikow, J. Mitchell Miller, Ben Olguin (excused), Branco Ponomariov, Robert Rico (excused), Hatim Sharif, Ted Skekel

Guests: Dennis Haynes, George Norton, Gage Paine, Francine Sanders-Romero, Lawrence Williams

Total members present: 32 Total members absent: 15

II. Approval of the April 8, 2010 minutes

The minutes were approved.

III. Reports

A. Chair of the Faculty Senate- Dr. Mansour El-Kikhia

Dr. El-Kikhia briefly reported on Faculty Senate Executive Committee's meeting with UT System Executive Vice Chancellor David Prior on May 4. As an

outgrowth of this meeting, Dr. El-Kikhia recommended that the Faculty Senate create a committee concerning online education.

B. Secretary of General Faculty- Dr. Sandy Norman

Dr. Norman reported that the online course evaluation implementation plan is ongoing. Dr. El-Kikhia commented that students' typed online responses may be subject to the Open Records Act.

Also, Dr. Norman reported that the 2011-2012 Coordinating Board calendar may include an earlier start date for the spring semester or a different configuration for the summer sessions.

C. Nominating, Elections, and Procedures Committee- Dr. Johnelle Sparks

Dr. Sparks reported that Dr. Amy Jaspersen, College of Liberal and Fine Arts, has been elected Secretary of the General Faculty. Dr. Sparks also requested that senators interested in serving on the Faculty Senate standing committees notify her by email. Additional committee nominations and elections for officers and committee members will be on the agenda for the September Faculty Senate meeting. She encouraged senators to stress to their faculty the importance of serving on the standing committees.

D. Consent Calendar

- Approval of new Chair of Graduate Council, Dr. Kim Kline
- Ph.D. Translational Science program

Dr. Kim Kline was approved as Chair of the Graduate Council. Also, senators were presented with a proposal for a joint doctoral degree program in Translational Science, in collaboration with the UTHSCSA and the University of Texas at Austin's college of Pharmacy and Pharmacotherapy Division. The proposal was moved forward without any objections.

E. Curriculum Committee- Dr. Hazem Rashed-Ali

Dr. Rashed-Ali reported on:

- Elimination of the BAAS degree in Children, Family, and Community.
- Bachelor's degree in Public Administration

Dr. Rashed-Ali explained that the BAAs degree in Children, Family, and Community was being phased out due to low enrollment. Senators approved the elimination of the degree.

Also, Dr. Rashad-Ali reported that the Curriculum Committee unanimously approved acceptance of a new bachelor's degree in Public Administration. Dr. Francine Sanders-Romero, representing the Department of Public Administration, as well as Dennis Haynes, Interim Dean of the College of Public Policy, fielded questions from Senators about the proposed degree plan. Since the proposal had not been sent to senators before the meeting, some senators expressed concerns about not having enough time to review proposals before they are brought before the Senate. As part of the discussion it was noted that the proposed program has overlap with a program in the Department of Political Sciences, however since this department is in a different college it was not included in the approval chain for this proposal. Senators discussed different options for dealing with the approval chain for programs that affect other colleges, including courtesy notification of affected departments as one option.

Following a discussion, senators approved the proposal: 22 in favor, 11 opposed, and 3 abstentions.

F. Evaluations, Merit, Rewards, and Workload Committee- Dr. William Cooke

The Committee presented the following report:

“The Faculty Senate Committee on Evaluations, Merit, Rewards and Workload was charged with reviewing the university merit policy and making recommendations for revision.

The committee is concerned primarily about determinants of merit eligibility and ambiguities that exist from year-to-year. Specifically, in 2008 (for the 2007 academic year) merit eligibility was apparently calculated from two-year numeric averages from teaching, research, and service categories. In 2009 (for the 2008 academic year), there appears to have been a strategic change that now considers two-year “absolute values” from each category. With this construct, faculty members need to achieve a score of “good” or better in each category (teaching, research and service) in each of the preceding two years. The committee feels that this metric is restrictive and may unintentionally punish otherwise productive faculty who may have experienced an uncharacteristic year.

Our committee proposes the following resolution:

- *We propose to reject a merit strategy that incorporates an “absolute value” for teaching, research and service calculated over two years.”*

After discussion the following resolution was unanimously approved:

- *We propose to reject a merit strategy that incorporates a minimum of the values in the individual categories of teaching, research and service calculated over two years.”*

Provost John Frederick suggested using the following general guideline for this year: If there is an unsatisfactory in any of the categories of this year’s evaluation then there is no eligibility for merit. Otherwise compute a net evaluation score as the weighted average of all categories of this year’s evaluation. Compare this score to two thresholds, one threshold for eligibility for 0.5% merit and another threshold for eligibility for higher merit.

G. HOP Committee- Dr. Cherylon Robinson

Dr. Robinson gave the committee’s report on the proposed procedures for tenured faculty Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) resulting from an unsatisfactory Periodic Performance Evaluation (PPE).

According to the report (see Attachment A), the committee review focused on 1) lack of provision for successful completion of a PIP, 2) potential time limitations imposed in PIPs, 3) peer review of PIP progress and structural features of peer review in the process.

The report, which included the adoption of a policy regarding PIPS tied to an unsatisfactory PPE decision, was approved by senators and scheduled to be sent to the Provost.

H. Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee- Dr. Sara DeTurk

Dr. DeTurk provided the following resolution concerning the PIP Policy that is not tied to the PPE Policy:

Resolution of the Faculty Senate

1) The Faculty Senate has serious concerns about the implementation of the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) policy recently proposed at UTSA. The Senate strongly believes that any implementation of PIPs outside of the usual Periodic Performance Evaluation (PPE) process constitutes a threat to academic freedom and tenure. We refer to the corresponding report of the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee and to the following statement by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP):

Post-tenure review ought to be aimed not at accountability, but at faculty development. Post-tenure review must be developed and carried out by faculty. Post-tenure review must not be a reevaluation of tenure, nor may it be used to shift the burden of proof from an institution’s administration

(to show cause for dismissal) to the individual faculty member (to show cause why he or she should be retained). Post-tenure review must be conducted according to standards that protect academic freedom and the quality of education. (<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/issues/PT/>)

2) The annual faculty performance appraisal as outline in Policy 2.11 in the Handbook of Operating Procedures addresses faculty performance, and the Faculty Senate considers the implementation of any additional policies for this matter redundant.

We refer to an excerpt of HOP 2.11:

The purpose of annual faculty performance appraisal at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) is to

- 1. recognize and reward faculty records of excellence in a given year;*
- 2. ensure that faculty members contribute to the Department, College, and University missions*
- 3. promote a culture of achievement and accomplishment among the faculty; and*
- 4. identify individual performance areas in need of improvement.*

The Faculty Senate recommends that the implementation of HOP 2.11 be uniform across the university. If faculty improvement is deemed necessary, the Department Chair's annual evaluation should include written feedback to faculty based on guidelines established by the Department, as agreed upon by department faculty and provided for in the HOP.

The resolution was approved and scheduled to be sent to the Provost.

I. Academic Policy and Requirements Committee- Dr. Bennie Wilson

Dr. Wilson reported on the following items:

- TA/RA requirement to enroll in courses
- New undergraduate admissions criteria
- Plus/Minus course grading scheme

TA/RA Requirements. The Committee recommended retaining the current HOP provision requiring TA/RAs to be enrolled in classes. The senate voted 15 to 10 against accepting the report.

New Undergraduate Admission Criteria. George Norton, Assistant Vice President of Admissions, attended the Faculty Senate meeting to report on the First-Time Freshman Admission Criteria Proposal (2011 entering class). Senators voted in favor of the proposal. The proposal will now be sent to the Provost and President for approval.

Plus/Minus Course Grading Scheme. Dr. Wilson reported on the plus/minus course grading policy. His report included responses from the general faculty in favor or against the proposed system. The Senate voted 15 to 9 in favor of the proposal. The proposal will now be sent to the Provost and President for approval.

IV. Unfinished Business

There was none.

V. New Business

There was none.

VI. Provost Report – Dr. John Frederick

Dr. Frederick recognized Dr. El-Kikhia for his dedication and leadership as Chair of the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Frederick reported on his summer plans to address the merit process, PPE process and academic freedom and tenure. He commented that faculty development should be a positive process rather than a punitive one. He noted that UTSA faculty work very hard—their productivity is measurably higher every year. “You are carrying your weight, and I appreciate that,” he said.

Dr. Frederick announced that the promotion and tenure process is now conducted online and in the next year the third year review process will be conducted online as well. He also reported that Academic Affairs will cover voicemail expenses next year.

Dr. Frederick said he will be working on standardizing 3rd year review guidelines as well as reviewing guidelines for the PPE process. He reminded faculty about the implementation of HB 4502, which is driving the implementation of online course surveys.

VII. Open Forum

There was no discussion.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously passed at 5:35 pm.

Attachment A

To: Faculty Senate

From: FS HOP Committee
Cherylon Robinson, Chair

Report of the FS HOP Committee on the Proposed Procedures for Tenured Faculty Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) Resulting from an Unsatisfactory Periodic Performance Evaluation (PPE).

The Faculty Senate HOP Committee met as charged by Mansour El Kikhia, Faculty Senate Chair, on April 6, 2010 to review the Provost's policy on Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) resulting from an unsatisfactory Periodic Performance Evaluation (PPE) and suggest recommendations, if any, to that policy. In reviewing the Provost's policy on PIPs, the committee was provided with documents containing suggestions for revision of the policy by faculty senate members. Specifically the committee concerned itself with the following issues as detailed below: 1) lack of provision for successful completion of a PIP, 2) potential time limitations imposed in PIPs, 3) peer review of PIP progress and structural features of peer review in the process.

1) Lack of provision for successful completion of a PIP

The committee was very concerned that no provision for successful completion of a PIP was included in the present policy, although the policy states that unsuccessful completion may trigger the initiation of termination proceedings for the faculty member. The committee thought that a failure to include a policy for successful completion of a PIP indicates that the policy assumes no successful outcome of any PIP process.

2) Potential time limitations imposed on PIP

The committee strongly recommends the designation of a specific time period sufficient to accomplish performance improvement. The committee felt that the duration of a PIP is closely tied to the time periods between post-tenure reviews and that shorter time periods are likely to infringe on academic freedom and tenure. The committee therefore recommends a time period of 3 years for a PIP, with an annual review of progress.

3) Peer review of PIP progress

The committee felt that peer review of the PIP process is an absolutely necessary provision in the process. The committee therefore recommends a process that is consistent with the PPE review process, as outlined in the recommended policy revision below. Such a process will involve both a committee of peers as well as administrators, and will hence minimize the possibility of abuse from either side.

The Faculty Senate HOP Committee recommends adoption of the following policy regarding PIPs tied to an unsatisfactory PPE decision.

According to HOP 2.22 paragraph III.B2, faculty members may become subject to a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) after an unsatisfactory Periodic Performance Evaluation (PPE). Prior to making a final decision to place the faculty member on a PIP, the Dean will consult with the Department Chair and with the Chair of the PPE Review Committee about the faculty member's performance issues. If the decision is to proceed with a PIP, the Department Chair will notify the faculty member in writing about the outcome of the PPE process and that the faculty member will be placed on a PIP.

Once the faculty member has been notified, the Department Chair in consultation with the PPE Review Committee will draft a PIP containing specific goals addressing the problems identified in the PPE review. The PIP should identify a limited time frame within which the faculty member is expected to improve his or her performance. The time frame chosen should be appropriate to the improvement plan, but should be at least three years with an annual review of progress. Depending on the particular problem, the Department Chair and the PPE Review Committee may consider soliciting advice from other appropriate entities, such as particular DFRAC faculty in a specific research area or from the Teaching and Learning Center. The Department Chair and the chair of the PPE Review Committee will meet with the faculty member to discuss the PIP proposal. The Department Chair and the PPE Review Committee will take any concerns that the faculty member has about their PIP proposal into consideration before forwarding the final PIP proposal to the Dean for approval.

Once the Dean approves the PIP, the Department Chair and the chair of the PPE Review Committee should meet with the faculty member to review the plan and to request that the faculty member sign the PIP. If the faculty member refuses to do so, the Department Chair should note and date that fact on the PIP form.

Responsibility to oversee the faculty member's PIP should fall to a PIP committee that reports to the Department Chair. Development of guidelines for selection of the PIP committee and for the procedures to oversee the PIP will be determined by DFRAC. The PIP committee may consist of the DFRAC as a whole, a subcommittee of the DFRAC, the original PPE Review Committee or other combination, but it will include at least three members of the DFRAC and it will elect a chair. The PIP committee will develop guidelines regarding the measurement of progress toward achievement of the PIP goals and standards for findings of satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress. The faculty member assigned a PIP will submit their first yearly report one year after signing the PIP agreement documenting their progress towards the PIP goals. Upon receipt of this report, the PIP committee will review the report, assess progress and report a determination of satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress. The final year of the PIP will consider the accomplishments across the duration of the PIP period. Each year the PIP committee will submit their findings, along with the yearly report submitted by the faculty member, to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will also assess progress on an annual basis and provide a report along with the faculty member's and PIP committee's reports to the Dean.

Successful completion of PIP goals at the end of the PIP process will result in a letter from the Department Chair releasing the faculty member from the PIP review process. A faculty member who does not complete the PIP successfully but who has made sufficient progress toward the goals of their PIP may be placed on a second three year PIP. If a faculty member is assessed by

the PIP committee as not successfully completing nor making sufficient progress toward the goals of their PIP after the first PIP cycle, the PIP committee may make a recommendation to the Chair regarding any further actions to be taken. The Department Chair will review this recommendation and forward their recommendation to the Dean. After the completion of two unsuccessful PIP cycles, the PIP committee will make a report and recommendation for further action to the Chair. This action may include the initiation of termination proceedings if the deficiencies of the faculty member's performance represent negligent and incompetent job performance consistent with the requirements for termination of tenured faculty in Texas Education Code. The Chair will review this report and recommendation and, in a letter to the Dean, make their recommendation for further action.

The Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee of the UTSA Faculty Senate is charged with monitoring this review process and with reporting its findings annually to the Faculty Senate and the UTSA administration. If its findings warrant, the committee shall recommend revisions of the procedures for faculty review at UTSA, the system-wide guidelines for post-tenure review of faculty or both.