

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2007

Call to Order: Scott Beckett, President, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Senators Present: Scott Beckett, Lana Jackson, Steve Weber, , Larry Adams, Steve Beckham, Claudie Biggers, Nancy Brent, Jnita Collins, Mindy Graham, Ann Hamblin, Diana Johnson, Marianne Jones, Michael Kopenits, Bob Mathews, Aimee Martin, Gay Mills, Bill Netherton, Sheree Talkington, Lil Withrow, and Henry Wyckoff.

Senators Absent: Karla Dixon

Guests: Dr. Paul Matney, Carroll Mack Forrester

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of November 2, 2007 were approved as submitted. The motion to approve was made by Henry Wyckoff and seconded by Bob Matthews.

Dr. Matney - Response for Questions Committee and Mead Award: Dr. Matney responded to the question regarding selection and removal of department chairs. He stated that no department chair position is for life, and no tenure exists. In the past, chairs have stepped down and/or moved to different positions. Chair screening has sought faculty input, but final selections are a function and responsibility of the administration. Due to the differences between departments, no policies or one size fits all exist. Chair positions must be an approved funded position, and are therefore determined by specific need. Dr. Matney remembers one situation in which the chair asked to serve a year, then re-assess the position and ask for faculty input. There is no policy which mandates the rotation of the chair position. Regarding removal, some chairs have voluntarily stepped down. Faculty who are not happy with their chairs should follow the same procedure as student to faculty conflict management - talk first with the chair, then if still unresolved, the division chair. Faculty who desire to be a chair should go through the same procedure.

In response to a senator's question, Dr. Matney stated that the difference between program coordinators and department chairs is a critical mass of full-time positions. Prior to 1997, department chairs were paid \$900 across the board with 3-hour release time. In 1997, after a year-long compensation committee study, the policy changed to reflect a chair stipend formula that considered the number of full-time and part-time faculty and staff they supervise, number of labs, advising load, instructional lab supervisors, workforce contact hours, and other administrative duties. At that time, department chair salaries ranged between \$2500-3000 per year, with a range of release time between 20-60% - most were 20%. Variations also depend on the type of contract (i.e. 9-month to 11-month contract). Further, annual "across-the-board" salary increases are also added to department chair salaries. Currently, department chair stipends range from \$1139-3948 per year. While most program coordinators are paid, it is generally less than department chairs. A few coordinators receive release time. Dr. Matney commends the Faculty Supervisors Council, who brought department chairs and program coordinators together to both get to know and learn from each other.

Dr. Matney mentioned the new Learning Management System transition to Blackboard and mentioned a very positive meeting with Eduserve. President Jones has decided to hire an EduServe consultant to serve as project manager of the LMS conversion this Spring. Dr. Matney commended Bob Slogers service and hard work toward this new system, and believes this conversion will be faculty driven. The LMS management consultant wants the AC conversion to Blackboard to be a model for the state of Texas. In short, AC is doing it right.

Regarding the Mead Faculty Excellence Award, Dr Matney stated that he believes the selection process can be improved. In the mid 80s, nominations came from the faculty. Since then, committees have made it student driven. He recognizes the need for the process to be more structured. Dr. Matney recommends a minimum requirement be made for students to nominate an instructor for the Mead Award. He also recommends the Senate visit with Judy Isbell, former Mead chair, for her recommendations on how to strengthen the Mead Award process.

Regarding the lack of an AC Piper Award nominee, Dr. Matney stated that while this was unfortunate, he commended Scott Beckett and the senate for taking the necessary steps to ensure that it does not happen again in the future. Letters from Scott Beckett and Dr. Matney have been prepared for the faculty.

President's Report: Scott Beckett shared a thank you card from the Dutton family.

Eduserve: Scott met with Eduserve leaders just before the present Senate meeting. Once again, they stressed accountability for this transition period and beyond. He stated that Dr. Jones hired consultants of Eduserve to carry on Bob Sloger's position, and Eduserve is committed to a smooth transition with direct faculty involvement. They outlined a 3-phase transition, in which WebCT and Blackboard will be running simultaneously within the first parts of the transition. Sherry Hendricks, Eduserve leader, will be approached about organizing a retreat for the Senate and the online faculty advisory committee to test new systems. Larry Adams stated that Eduserve will work through the E-Learning Center to take pressure off their staff and faculty as well during the transition. Larry and Scott will be involved in the initial testing group, and any faculty questions should be directed to them and the team.

Senate Committee Reports:

Elections Committee – Michael Kopenits reported that the ballots were destroyed.

Technology Committee – Larry Adams reported that his committee will meet next week to evaluate and make recommendations to the senate regarding issues of WebCT, CMS, and MyAC. Senators discussed whether or not to publish senate minutes. The discussion was tabled for the next meeting.

Courtesy Committee – Lil Withrow reported that cards were sent to Tom Hodges for his retirement, to Gay Mills whose father had a stroke, and to Bob Sloger's family.

Salary Committee –Lana Jackson reported that The Faculty Senate Salary Proposal is near completion. The committee is awaiting more current data from TCCTA (available in December) and Amarillo National Bank (available in January). The group has presented a rough draft of the proposal to Scott Beckett, Senate President, and Gay Mills, Senate Past President. The committee anticipates presenting the final proposal to Dr. Jones in January. Scott Beckett commended the committee for their excellent work.

Questions Committee – Bill Netherton reported a new question regarding a possible joint purchase of property with WT. Bill will forward the question to Dr. Jones' office.

Faculty Development Committee –Lana Jackson reported that Professional Development "Communities of Learning" have been well received and will continue: Using MyAC: Faculty Communication with Students; CMS Faculty Focus: A Community for Learning; Authentic Assessments: Faculty Sharing with Faculty; and Online Faculty Conversations: Tips, Tricks, Techniques & Train Wrecks.

Informal comments/assessments from participants in the online Mindleaders Series professional development opportunities have been very good. Participants are successfully completing multiple training units. A formal evaluation survey will be sent out next week. Results will be used as documentation for additional budget requests during the next budget cycle, if necessary.

Patsy LeMaster's office will be creating a schedule of more structured professional development activities for the Spring semester. Potential topics include: Learning Communities and Pairing; Video Conferencing; Bell Helicopter Initiative/Aerospace Engineering training; Advising Training; and Career Clusters/Pathways.

ACTS 2008 is schedule for May 14-17 at Ft. Marcy. Invitations will be forthcoming early in the Spring semester. Mike Bellah is the director.

Faculty Survey Committee – Aimee Martin reported that she had one meeting with Danita McAnally regarding ways to improve last year’s faculty survey to help clarify questions, elicit more responses, and make tabulation easier.

Information Parking Committee – No report. Scott Beckett charged the committee to research current sister institution policies.

Old Business:

AC Multi-passenger vehicle – Heather Atchley will be invited to the next senate meeting. Steve Weber reported that he gave Heather a copy of the bus information provided by Bob Matthews and spoke with her informally. Claudie Biggers mentioned that during the last club council meeting, it was announced that AC has changed insurance companies and now 15-passenger vehicles are permitted; however, AC sold all but one of these vehicles. Steve Weber stated that it was his understanding that 15-passenger vehicles were illegal for any state educational institution. The senate will seek clarification from physical plant.

Mead Award – Senators discussed ideas to restructure and better advertise the Mead Award. Discussion was tabled, and the Mead Award Committee was charged to discuss and make recommendations.

Dutton Memorial – Michael Kopenits reported that in a discussion with Dr. Matney, no building will be named for any deceased faculty because it would create a precedent. Plans are being considered to plant a tree on the grounds of the new Science building in Steve’s honor. Scott Beckett suggested that the senate should consider looking into naming a lab or study area in Steve’s honor since naming a building does not look like a possibility.

New Business:

E-Learning Center – Previously discussed under President’s Report and questions directed to Dr. Matney.

Faculty Supervisory Committee – Lana Jackson reported that the FSC was considering reassessing the supervisor’s compensation chart based on job description changes and other collected data. They had planned to meet with Dr. Matney. Lana stated a concern that this proposal could negatively effect the Salary Committee’s upcoming proposal. Scott and Lana will seek a meeting with Kathy Wetzel and Dwight Huber to discuss this issue. They will advise the FSC that they channel their proposal through the Faculty Senate in order to keep the faculty united on salary and other issues.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mindy Graham and seconded by Larry Adams. The motion was carried unanimously at 4:50p.m.