APPROVED AND CORRECTED MINUTES

These minutes are disseminated to provide timely information to the Academic Senate. They have been approved by the body in question, and, therefore, they are the official minutes.

ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING
November 17, 2010


ABSENT: Indranil Bardhan, Dinesh Bhatia, D.T. Huynh, Mustapha Ishak-Boushaki, Linda Keith, Syam Menon, Steven Nielsen, Orlando Richard, Lucien Thompson, Mathukumalli Vidyasagar, Yexiao Xu, Zhenyu Xuan, Harold Zhang

VISITORS: Andrew Blanchard, Mark Spong, Serenity King, Lewis Chang

1. CALL TO ORDER, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS
President Daniel called the meeting to order. He stated that state funding and the budget is the dominant issue on his mind at this time. He referenced an article that appeared in Monday’s Dallas Morning News about further state budget funding cutbacks this fiscal year. This was the first indication that there might be additional cuts this fiscal year. At the State of the University address President Daniel announced the need to cut an additional $4 million in spending from this year’s budget. The cuts that were announced earlier this week will increase that amount to around $5 million. President Daniel has been talking with the vice presidents and they have begun the process of thinking about what type of impact staff reductions might have and to develop a plan on how those cuts might look. Dr. Daniel is insisting that the budget reductions in the administrative units be greater than the reductions in the academic units. At the moment the percentage reductions that are being reviewed are half the percentage of reductions in the administrative units. The President’s Office budget is taking the highest percentage of cuts. One area that is under consideration is changing freshman convocation. By making this a more serious academic convocation and eliminating the carnival and fireworks following the ceremony we could save $15,000-$20,000. Another cost saving move will be the elimination of serving wine at the doctoral hooding ceremony. He is still working on what the budget numbers might be for next September. President Daniel is writing a statement that will be distributed to the campus as soon as it is reviewed and receives System approval. Dr. Daniel remains confident about our situation and is not backing off his commitment to increase faculty in the next year. He stated that in a state of budget decline we cannot continue to do the same things we have done in the past, and have to look at not doing some things or doing them differently. One way of doing this might be to offer relatively small enrollment elective courses every other semester rather than every semester to make better use of our resources. Dr. Daniel still feels
that even though we have a difficult road ahead our fundamentals are really good and we are well-prepared as an institution.

President Daniel stated that some administrative changes are being made. One of those changes is that the Office of Enrollment Management is moving away from directly reporting to the President and is moving into of the Office of the Provost. Curt Eley will now be Vice Provost for Enrollment Management. The reason for doing this is the function of enrollment management more closely aligns with the schools and if we are going to be asked to do more with fewer resources, it is vital that these groups talk with one another and find ways to aggregate and coalesce resources, especially with some of the technology. The Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement will retain this title but now have dual reporting to the Provost as well. Other changes are under consideration in an effort to find meaningful ways to bring groups that have some strong interconnectivity together from an administrative side to improve efficiency in the system. He welcomes any and all input.

Cy Cantrell asked what comment, if any, President Daniel had on legislation that had been introduced to abolish the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. President Daniel responded that he would rather not make a public comment.

Dr. Daniel was asked if he felt our guaranteed four-year tuition plan was having an adverse impact on us. On the contrary, Dr. Daniel feels this has had a positive impact for us.

He acknowledged that one big potential disadvantage to a guaranteed plan is that if there is a dramatic cut in state funding that necessitates a large tuition increase we would only be able to apply this increase to incoming students and could not apply the increase across the board. In that sense we could potentially be hurt by it. On the other hand, that is the very reason the plan is so popular in the first place. There are no sudden increases. UTD is uniquely well-positioned for a four-year tuition plan because we get a much higher fraction of new students every year than most universities, which is because we have such a rich Masters program and we have a large number of transfer students at the undergraduate level. In any one year approximately 35% of our student population is new. If there is an increase in tuition in any one year we will catch up much faster with a four-year plan than other institutions might. The Board of Regents has already approved a 3.95% tuition increase for 2011. Given the magnitude of state cuts, it seems certain that the Board of Regents may revisit this issue and consider higher tuition rates for 2011.

Another issue that the Provost is reviewing at this time is whether or not there will be any student fee increases for next fall. Any proposed fee increases must be presented to UT System by December 1. This is an area where arguably it has never been more important to collect legitimately defensible fees from students if it will help ensure that our educational offering is not harmed. President Daniel encouraged Provost Wildenthal to give him an aggressive recommendation regarding fees.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
Speaker Leaf had three additional items to add to the agenda—a revision to the Arts and Humanities bylaws; the revised financial exigency policy, and a request by the Committee on Faculty Mentoring to change the RUO of the committee. Cy Cantrell moved to approve the agenda as amended. Simon Fass seconded the motion. The agenda was approved as amended.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Cy Cantrell moved to approve the minutes as circulated. Tim Redman seconded the motion. Jessica Murphy noted that in the paragraph at the bottom of page 3 the sentence indicating that she and Tim Redman would take the initiative in writing an article for the next issue of the UTD Magazine was inaccurate and should be stricken. The minutes were approved as amended.

4. ELECTRONIC VOTING FOR SENATE ELECTIONS
David Cordell presented this item and reported that the Senate has talked for some time about the possibility of using some type of online voting system. This is partly an issue of sustainability and partly an issue of enabling the governance secretary to use her time more efficiently. There were also some issues in the past with ballots and nominations not being received. Dr. Cordell introduced Simon Kane of the Provost’s Office to give a demonstration of a possible system that could be used.

Simon demonstrated a prototype of a web-based system called e-Vote which is based on the CourseBook system that is currently in use. He presented a brief overview of the system, going through both the nomination and voting processes. Simon has discussed this system with John Wiorowski, chair of the Elections Committee, and John is satisfied that he will be able to get the voting data in a workable format.

There was further discussion regarding the pros and cons of electronic voting. The matter of preserving the anonymity of voters was of significant concern to several Senate members, as well as the possibility that the electronic nomination process would be too time consuming and not as simple as signing a sheet of paper to nominate a candidate.

Speaker Leaf asked Mr. Kane if it would be possible for him to create a beta version of the software so that the Senate could have a mock election at or before its next meeting to test the system. Mr. Kane stated that this would certainly be possible. Cy Cantrell moved to ask Mr. Kane to continue to develop the system and have it available for the Senate to test in a mock election at the next meeting. R. Chandrasakaren seconded the motion. The motion carried.

5. SPEAKER’S REPORT
Speaker Leaf reported that the Sustainability Committee has met and is off to an enthusiastic start. Many of their recommendations will also have some cost-saving benefits, though probably not a significant amount in the short term.

The Committee on Committees still needs to appoint a chair for the Scholarship Committee. Speaker Leaf will continue to work on this issue.

Speaker Leaf received a reply from the Office of General Council on the last round of amendments for the exigency policy. Dan Sharporn says the policy is fine. The revised Criminal Background Check policy has been sent back to OGC but we have not yet had a reply. This policy has also been sent to the Faculty Advisory Council.

In response to the Senate discussion last month regarding notifications of oral examinations for PhD candidates, Speaker Leaf reported that he has spoken with Jim Gary, Chief Information Officer, about the possibility of establishing an opt-in mailing list for people who wish to receive this information. Mr. Gary stated that we have the capability of creating such a list now. However, Dean Cunningham is happy with the way that notifications are being sent now and
would like to continue with that method. His staff has reformatted the email notice that is used for these notifications so the information is more accessible.

Speaker Leaf raised the issue of whether or not the Senate should meet in December. R. Chandrasakaran moved that the Academic Council would meet in December but not in January and that the Senate would meet in January but not in December. The Council will decide at its December meeting if there is a need for an earlier Senate meeting. Tim Redman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

6. **TCFS REPORT**

Speaker Leaf reported that he and Dr. Cordell attended the Texas Council of Faculty Senates meeting in October. As expected, discussion at this meeting was focused on the impending state budget crisis. Speaker Leaf noted that we are in very good shape compared to other schools. The keynote speaker was Robert Nelsen, president of UT-Pan Am. They are expecting much greater losses because they are more reliant on state appropriations. Eighty percent of their students are on some type of scholarship. Speaker Leaf feels that we are possibly in the best shape financially of any school in the System. Another issue that commanded a great deal of attention was public relations and the need to generate as much public support for higher education as possible.

7. **STUDENT GOVERNMENT LIASION REPORT**

Lewis Chang, representative from Student Government, reported that they are working on a textbook swap program that they hope to have in place later this semester. He also noted that in their meeting last night, Student Government approved a resolution to expand the Student Union. President Daniel noted that this decision will require an increase in fees, but it is probably too late to be included in this legislative session, so it should show up in about 24 months.

8. **REPORT ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY CASES**

Speaker Leaf reported that Dean Fitch was unable to attend today’s meeting to address this report. He asked the Senate to review the information in their packet to determine if this format is adequate. It was pointed out in discussion that the numbers on the report do not add up to an orderly total. The view of the Senate was that the format should be a “balance sheet” in which the cases resolved under all the possible headings should add up to the cases referred. In conclusion, the Senate agreed that the report was acceptable with the following provisions:

(a) It should provide time-depth data trends.

(b) It should be a balance sheet so that the number of dispositions adds up to the number of referrals.

(c) The information should be disseminated to students.

Dan Bochsler moved to approve the report. Dinesh Bhatia seconded the motion. Cy Cantrell pointed out that the report should read Engineering and Computer Science, not Electrical Engineering & Computer Science. The report was accepted with the noted correction.

9. **APPROVAL OF CANDIDATES FOR GRADUATION**

The Secretary of the Faculty presented the lists of candidates for undergraduate and graduate degrees for the fall commencement.
CANDIDATES FOR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES:
These students have applied for graduation and have been reviewed by the Office of Records. The Office of Records declared that all of these students will be eligible for graduation upon the completion of the current semester’s work at the necessary levels. I request, therefore, that the Academic Senate certify these students to graduate upon receipt of final grades, and notification of completion of other requirements, provided that the grades are consistent with the standards for graduation prescribed by this University. I also request that the Academic Senate certify those students designated as eligible to graduate with honors upon completion of coursework and requirements consistent with the standards for honors at the levels offered by this University.

David Cordell moved to certify the list of undergraduate candidates for graduation. Tim Redman seconded. The motion carried.

CANDIDATES FOR GRADUATE DEGREES:
These students have applied for graduate degrees and have been reviewed by the Graduate Dean. The Graduate Dean certifies that all of these students will be eligible for the degrees indicated upon satisfactory completion of the current semester’s work. I request, therefore, that the Academic Senate certify these students to receive the degrees as indicated upon receipt of final grades and notification of completion of other requirements, provided that the grades received are consistent with the standards for credit prescribed by this University.

David Cordell moved to certify the list of graduate candidates for graduation. Cy Cantrell seconded. The motion carried.

10. DISCUSSION OF COST MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES
Speaker Leaf introduced this item as a continuation of the discussion President Daniel asked for at the previous meeting. After the discussion in the Senate, Speaker Leaf asked the Budget Advisory Committee to discuss concrete actions that the university might take to address future budgetary concerns. For the Committee, Richard Scotch distributed a memo to the Senate with a report of the committee meeting. The Committee’s recommendations are in the following three categories: cost reduction, revenue enhancement and structural changes. Dr. Scotch noted that the Committee had a strong feeling that different schools in the academic units have very different situations so that sometimes blanket measures may not be appropriate for all units. A summary of their suggestions is listed below:

Cost Reduction:
   a) The Committee suggested that the university might further reduce its use of paper correspondence for announcements, etc.
   b) Educate faculty about the fact that syllabi no longer need to include all the boilerplate to their printed syllabi that was adopted prior to the last SACS review, and that they can use a web address for some of it.
   c) Encourage the use of community electric devices rather than individual electric devices (e.g., refrigerators in individual offices).
   d) Reduce administrative bloat/overhead
   e) Encourage the use of native plants (e.g., buffalo grass and reduced mowing, etc.)
Revenue Enhancement:
   a) The Committee suggested that the university might provide Principal Investigators more incentive to pursue grants by allowing them to retain more, especially when they produce RA positions.
   b) The university should advertise more of its masters programs, like the SOM does, to increase graduate enrollment in programs outside of the SOM.
   c) The university should appeal to its alumni to fund star faculty positions.

Structural Changes:
   a) The Committee felt that while increasing class size might be appropriate on a case by case basis, it also felt that these increases should be accompanied by increases in support (e.g., TAs, SIs, etc.). Also, these courses might rely more on tutorial sections.
   b) The Committee felt that the university should give thought to restructuring its delivery of some classes to a mix of online and on-campus delivery. For example, there might be master lecturers that deliver online lecture material and then different instructors for on-campus classes for discussion and interaction.
   c) The Committee discussed the increased use of SIs and TA apprenticeships as a way of improving the learning experience while at the same time reducing the use of more expensive supplementary instruction.

Speaker Leaf was asked if there is a way for the university to solicit funds for different sustainability initiatives such as motion detectors and automatic thermostats that might generate some cost savings. He replied that the Budget Committee did not discuss this issue but that it is a part of the ongoing work of the Sustainability Committee and noted that they will be pursuing such options in the future.

President Daniel expressed appreciation to the budget committee for the feedback and asked for continued input. On the issue of reduced printing costs, he feels that if an item is strictly for internal purposes and does not generate revenue it should not be printed. He acknowledged that there would be some push back from a policy of this sort but stressed that we need to have more careful thought about internally distributed items.

General discussion ensured regarding the current split of research funds and how they are currently distributed. Provost Wildenthal noted that one issue that needs to be under consideration is the fact that we are currently providing a powerful incentive to PIs to put RAs on their research grants by paying for RAs’ tuition and fees from university funds. Dr. Scotch stated that the lack of continuity in how RA tuition and fees are covered has been a matter of some uncertainty, confusion, and frustration on the part of some programs in the past and asked that this be taken into consideration before any changes are made to this program.

President Daniel stated that he welcomes suggestions on how improve the desirability of engaging in a research enterprise because it is consistent with the goals of the university.

During discussion the issue of the effective use of faculty was brought up. Speaker Leaf stated that each school has a teaching effectiveness committee. They have not at this point be charged with asking whether the faculty are being used effectively or efficiently or whether the best
faculty are doing the best things for the school. He asked if the Senate should make that charge to these committees. The Senate agreed that this is not the appropriate group to address this type of issue and that these decisions are best made in the schools between deans and department heads.

It was suggested that we need to have a uniform incentive program for all faculty and that perhaps we should not focus so heavily on PhD programs right now when more people are returning to school to pursue Masters degrees because that is what the current job market is demanding.

President Daniel stated that he feels very strongly that we need to reward teaching excellence and that we should have more teaching awards.

Dr. Daniel was asked if it was possible to renegotiate with our external stakeholders on our contractual commitments as a way of lowering costs. He stated that he will give this suggestion to Dr. Jamison and Jim Gary for their thoughts.

11. **APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO A&H BYLAWS**
   Dr. Tim Redman presented the item. The changes involve more formal procedures for reviewing Senior Lecturers, along the lines of those developed by Liz Salter for Interdisciplinary Studies, and giving some Senior Lecturers voting rights at the meetings of the A&H faculty (there will be spots available to 20% of the Senior Lecturers).

   Tim Redman moved to approve the amended Arts & Humanities bylaws. Richard Scotch seconded the motion. The motion carried.

12. **REVISED FINANCIAL EXIGENCY POLICY**
   Speaker Leaf noted that he circulated the latest revisions of the policy prior to the meeting and received some comments which indicated this item should be placed back on the Senate agenda. There was a consensus among the members of the Senate that this version of the policy was consistent with the last version that was approved and no further action was necessary.

13. **CHANGE IN RUO FOR THE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY MENTORING**
   Speaker Leaf reported that at the request of the committee, Hlaing Minn, committee chair, is requesting that the Responsible University Official for this committee be changed to the Executive Vice President and Provost. The Provost has also agreed to this change. Cy Cantrell moved to change the RUO as requested. John Burr seconded the motion. The motion carried.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**
   There being no further business, President Daniel adjourned the meeting.

Approved:

[Signature]
Murray J. Leaf
Speaker of the Academic Senate

Date: 26 Jan 2011

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