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 official minutes.

ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING
JANUARY 18, 2012

PRESENT:  David Daniel, Hobson Wildenthal, Shawn Alborz, Peter Assmann, Poras Balsara, Kurt Beron, Dinesh Bhatia, Dan Bochsler, Judd Bradbury, Gail Breen, John Burr, Cy Cantrell, David Cordell, Gregg Dieckmann, John Ferguson, Lev Gelb Jeremy Hall, Mustapha Ishak-Boushaki, Joe Izen, Ganesh Janakiraman, Murray Leaf, Stanimir Markov, Jessica Murphy, Ravi Prakash, Monica Rankin, Michael Rebello, Tim Redman, Liz Salter, Richard Scotch, Lucien Thompson, Zhenyu Xuan

ABSENT:  Bobby Alexander, Daniel Cohen, Gregory Dess, Kamran Kiasaleh, Sumit Majumdar, Syam Menon, Dennis Miller, Neeraj Mittal, Steven Nielsen, Lakshman Tamil, Mark Thouin

VISITORS:  Andrew Blanchard, Serenity King, Abby Kratz, Chris Parr, Austin Cunningham, Sheila Amin Gutierrez de Pineres, Mary Jo Venetis, Sharkey Andrews

1. CALL TO ORDER, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

President Daniel called the meeting to order and asked for questions. There were no particular announcements, but Dr. Daniel said that he was especially pleased with the way the fall semester worked out considering the large growth in student enrollment. In spite of the large spike in enrollment, he received no complaints from students regarding unavailability of class sections, overcrowding, etc. Dr. Daniel expressed appreciation to the faculty and academic leadership for their help in meeting these challenges.

Applications for next fall are being managed in new ways by the Provost. Our goal is for an overall enrollment increase of 4-5%. One way this will be accomplished is to exercise greater control over the awarding of Academic Excellence Scholarships. In addition to helping to limit the enrollment growth, this will help control the cost of these scholarships as well. Graduate applications are up 28-30% for next fall, and Dr. Daniel feels this is a reflection of the reputation of the University. The Provost has been enthusiastically encouraged to hire new faculty.

Dr. Daniel announced that an organizational change has been made splitting what was the Office of Business Affairs into the Office of Administration and the Office of Budget and Finance. This was done to reflect the massive workload in these two rather distinct areas of the University. There are still a number of very specific issues to resolve regarding the PeopleSoft conversion and we will have to make more of an investment in this.

On the administrative side we have a lot of new initiatives especially with regard to facilities. The Loop Road project with the City of Richardson has been funded and work will begin soon. We are building some additional surface parking lots now so they will be ready by fall. Two
parking garages will be built in the future. One will be by the residence halls and one next to the new energy plant next to the School of Management.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Cy Cantrell moved to add approval of the proposed MSSE degree program and the approval of the undergraduate catalog as items from the CEP. Tim Redman opposed the motion because the undergraduate catalog material was not distributed in a timely fashion and moved that only the MSSE proposal be added to the agenda. Dean Fineres stated that the approval of the undergraduate catalog could wait until the February meeting. Tim Redman amended the motion adding only the MSSE proposal for consideration. Dan Bochsler seconded the amended motion. The agenda was approved as amended.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Cy Cantrell moved to approve the minutes as circulated. Peter Assmann seconded. The motion carried.

4. **SPEAKER’S REPORT – MURRAY LEAF**

1. Our policy on Dishonesty in Theses and Dissertations was discussed with OGC. Dean Fitch still opposes the idea of a separate procedure and policy just for theses and dissertations and thinks it should be part of current policy on other forms of dishonesty. Maggie Wilensky, our UTD attorney, tentatively agreed and arranged a conference call with OGC on January 9. Gene Fitch, Abby Kratz, Priscilla Lozano, Dan Sharphorn, and I participated. In the call, Priscilla Lozano and Dan Sharphorn thought the issue was neutral legally, but they will try to devise an integrated wording, which we can then still accept or reject.

2. Speaker Leaf has asked Marilyn Kaplan to have the Distance Learning Committee to take the lead in working on MyEdu for the Senate.

At this time President Daniel remarked that he felt MyEdu may prove to be a very important initiative for us. It can have some very useful information and he can see why today’s student would be interested in having the option to access this type of information online. The program allows students to juggle their schedules more effectively. Students are interested in support tools that will allow them to get better advising.

A concern was expressed that this type of word of mouth advising could undermine our own efforts at student advising. Dr. Daniel feels that we should work with MyEdu to give them comprehensive information.

There was general concern about the type of information that was made available to MyEdu. Dr. Wildenthal stated that we have not given MyEdu any information, but if information was available and it is requested in the appropriate fashion we would make that information available. Anything that is in the MyEdu database right now has been obtained through public records or by student-driven postings online.

3. Chancellor’s Dashboard: There is a possibility of having the Regents provide SciVal or Academic Analytics to the campus. If so, it would be useful in promotion-tenure evaluations among other things.
4. Mike Durbin, as President of the Retirees Association, has suggested that the UTD website include a virtual graveyard—a place to put and keep memorials and other statements recalling the contributions of faculty who have died.

5. **FAC Report - Murray Leaf**
The Faculty Advisory Council will meet on January 26.

6. **STUDENT Government Liaison Report**
Sharkey Andrews, Student Government President, reported that the Student Senate will not meet until next week. March 31 is the date for the fourth annual I Heart UT Dallas health fair. She invited all faculty and staff to attend and bring their families and friends.

7. **CEP Proposals**
Cy Cantrell presented the graduate catalog front matter for review. These are primarily editorial changes. One substantive change deals with appeals of academic decisions. The newly worded policy states that the only grounds for changing a grade will be clerical error or that it is unjust. The only ground for considering a grade to be unjust is that it is arbitrary or capricious, meaning that the grade cannot be considered reasonable given the material of the course, the overall performance of the class and the individual performance of the student. The new copy states that the university assumes that course-work is best evaluated by the instructor in the immediate context of the course activity. Requests for reconsideration must show with clear and convincing evidence why this assumption should be set aside. This is a considerably higher standard for a complaint than what we have had in the past. Dr. Cantrell asked Dean Austin Cunningham if he had any comments. Dr. Cunningham stated that he agrees completely with this change and it is a welcome addition to the catalog.

Dr. Cunningham said that the last catalog introduced a provision for doctoral students in their final semester allowing them to be enrolled in one semester hour as opposed to the previous rule that stated all students must be enrolled in at least three semester hours. In recognition of the ever-increasing cost of tuition, he is now proposing that all students in their final semester be allowed to register for one semester hour. Dr. Daniel asked what the rationale was for this when faculty is spending so much of their time editing theses and dissertations. Dr. Cunningham said that in many cases the students in their final semester have missed the deadline for application and all of the work has been done. Dr. Daniel stated that he had no objection in those cases where a student has submitted all the materials required for graduation by the first class day. If, however, they are still on campus working there is real cost associated with producing that work. Dr. Cunningham explained that solve the problem of students having to enroll in three hours when they only needed one hour to complete the degree requirements. The catalog simply states that a student must be enrolled in the semester of graduation. This provides the option to the degree program to specify what that enrollment means. This was acceptable to Dr. Daniel. Cy Cantrell moved that the graduate catalog copy be approved. Richard Scotch seconded. The motion carries.

**Executive Master of Science in Software Engineering Proposal:** Cy Cantrell presented this proposal. It is modeled closely after the Executive Master of Business Affairs in the School of Management. He explained that Executive Masters programs are popular in professional schools because they allow people to come to campus fewer times in total for the degree. The
content is the same for the existing Master of Science in Software Engineering. The difference is that students will come to campus three times per month instead of two or three times a week and that there is a specific price affixed to the program, which we have typically not done with degrees offered in the traditional format. The academic requirements are the same, but students will be interviewed prior to acceptance in the program. There is also a “work experience” requirement. Cy Cantrell moved to approve this proposal. Dan Bochsler seconded. The motion carried.

8. **Draft – Annual Review Policy**

Speaker Leaf stated that we do not presently have a formal policy on annual reviews. Since this has been considered an administrative process we have left it to the administration. They have developed set of practices which appear to be acceptable to the faculty. We will, however, be required to develop a policy with faculty involvement if the Regents approve the presently proposed amendments to Regents’ Rule 31102, dealing with post tenure review (periodic performance evaluation). The amendments will relate the post tenure review to the annual reviews, and will require all campuses to have an annual review policy established with Senate involvement as well as a post tenure review policy established with Senate involvement. This policy for UTD is intended to be pretty much what we already doing. Speaker Leaf asked the members of the Senate for their general reaction to the policy draft and whether this was something that he should recommend to the UT System Faculty Advisory Council for their consideration. Cy Cantrell suggested that practices may differ among different academic units and that the schools should have the ability to decide whether or not to include peer review as a part of their annual review process.

Tim Redman said that he thought this was an excellent start but cautioned rushing into a decision. He suggested that allowances should be made for faculty discretion to emphasize service or teaching over research at certain stages of their careers.

There was general concern expressed over rushing into a policy too quickly. The consensus of the Senate was to refer this item back to the Academic Council for further discussion. Speaker Leaf will do so, and will also incorporate the suggestions made in a revised version for discussion at the Faculty Advisory Council level.

9. **Review of Nontenure-System Faculty**

Speaker Leaf explained that the policy that was circulated in the agenda packet is not the original policy that was approved in 2006. That policy had a series of steps leading to longer contracts. That was removed in the policy that is now posted, so that the practice of giving annual contracts is consistent with this policy. Both noted that the Regents have a limit of three year contracts. The 2006 policy allowed contract terms up to that limit; the present version says UTD only issues annual contracts. The reason for the change was that the administration was concerned about being able to respond to the demands we have been receiving from the governor’s office for plans to return operating money to the state in the event of budget shortfalls. The administration does not think this is necessary; we can return to offering more security. But we should also try to strengthen the process of peer evaluation on which such longer contracts should be based.

Dr. Leaf asked Dr. Wildenthal if he would like to speak to the issue for the administration. Dr. Wildenthal stated that our Senior Lecturer colleagues are a totally essential highly valued and
valuable component of our university life. It could be that we do not spend enough time and attention evaluating them. They are extremely important and we should pay more attention to them and to their performance and to their relationship to the university.

Speaker Leaf asked if the Senate agreed to proceed with revising the policy to try to provide more security for Senior Lecturers with longer-term contracts as well as making the review process a university-level review comparable to the tenure/tenure-track review. That would mean that we would need to develop clear and strong teaching evaluation standards.

Speaker Leaf said that one option that was considered in 2006 when the original policy was approved was having the Committee on Qualifications of Academic Personnel or a comparable university-level body that would review candidates for hiring and make recommendations to the Provost. The opinion was expressed that this was not a practical solution and was not workable.

Richard Scotch noted the importance of coming up with a system that would provide security and appropriate recognition for Senior Lecturers while still allowing the schools the ability to adapt to the changing market as new units are created and old units have to shift.

Speaker Leaf said that if there was agreement to move forward, the obvious way would be to establish a committee of faculty and administrators. He asked for a motion to establish a “3+3” committee to consider modifications of the current policy. Judd Bradbury moved. Ramaswamy Chandrasekaran seconded. The motion carried. The Academic Council will decide on the membership of the committee.

Speaker Leaf said that we are beginning the election process again and the Senate is required to establish an ad hoc election committee. Last year the committee members were Ramaswamy Chandrasekaran, David Cordell and John Wiorkowski.

Dr. Leaf asked Dr. Chandrasekaran if he was willing to serve again. He agreed. Dinesh Bhatia volunteered to serve as well, along with David Cordell, who will chair the committee.

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

APPROVED:  
Murray J. Leaf  
Speaker of the Academic Senate  

DATE: 2 January 2013