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
November 18, 2009

PRESENT: Sheila Amin Gutierrez de Piñeres, Kurt Beron, Dinesh Bhatia, Denise Boots, John Burr, Cyrus Cantrell, R. Chandrasekaran, David Cordell, Gregg Dieckmann, Kelly Durbin, John Hoffman, Jennifer Holmes, Karen Huxtable-Jester, Joe Izen, Marilyn Kaplan, Murray Leaf, Syam Menon, Dennis Miller, B.P.S. Murthi, Simeon Ntafos, Ravi Prakash, Tim Redman, Richard Scotch, Lucien Thompson, Tonja Wissinger

ABSENT: Mark Anderson, Titu Andreeescu, Gail Breen, Jay Dowling, Shayla Holub, Mustapha Ishak-Boushaki, Nanda Kumar, Steven Nielsen, Mark Rosen, Young Ryu, Chelliah Srisankarajah, Robert Stern

VISITORS: David Daniel, Hobson Wildenthal, Calvin Jamison, Serenity King, Daniel Calhoun, Travis Keshvari, Chris Parr, Elizabeth Organ, Michael Coleman, Abby Kratz, Mary Jane Hurst, Kamran Kiasaleh

1. CALL TO ORDER, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

President. Daniel called the meeting to order.

President Daniel noted that the University had completed the purchase of the Raytheon building at the corner of Waterview and Drive A. University personnel are evaluating building design and how best to make use of the space. Information Resources is interested, which would free up space in the middle of the campus, consistent with a current goal. If faculty have ideas about special space use that would benefit academics, they should forward them to the Provost.

President Daniel indicated that there are ongoing discussions with regents and system officials about budget shortfalls, including a possible statewide deficit. There is a potential that the “rainy day fund” could be accessed. Politically, the likely case is that all agencies and universities will be told to cut expenditures by “X” percent. UTD is trying to budget now in a way that will allow flexibility later.

There is an emphasis on the so-called “lean university initiative.” This approach emphasizes evaluating a particular step in a process to see if there is value added from that step, or if that step can be eliminated to increase productivity at no real loss of
effectiveness. The key issue is identifying wasteful and inefficient activities that can be done away with to improve productivity and avoid staff cuts.

There will be a review of small classes, which is an area of concern to legislators. President Daniel defends class size and workload to be competitive, especially considering the Tier 1 initiative, but stated that we need to make some changes that will help with expenses. He indicated that teaching load can improve by having administrators engage in the teaching mission, including president and other senior administrators.

President Daniel also specified looking at administrative costs—overhead—and welcomes faculty input. He stated that the university and faculty must prepare ourselves proactively for financial challenges.

There was general discussion among senators about ways to improve efficiency and save money. Speaker Leaf offered to send an email to faculty asking for possible time and/or cost saving concepts.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Dr. Cantrell noted that item 13 on the agenda should be “undergraduate” catalog copy rather than “graduate” catalog copy. Speaker Leaf accepted the amendment. Dr. Cantrell moved to accept the agenda as amended. Dr. Scotch seconded. The motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Speaker Leaf called for corrections to the minutes as circulated. Several names were added to the recorded attendees. Dr. Cantrell moved to approve the minutes as amended. Dr. Redman seconded. The motion carried.

4. SPEAKER’S REPORT

1. Meeting Schedules. The Academic Council has agreed to hold a December Council meeting and schedule the next Senate meeting in January. The Council will not meet at the beginning of January. The January Senate agenda will allow for additional items to be submitted from the CEP that are approved after the December Council meeting. The agenda committee for the Council (Speaker, Secretary, and President) will review the proposed additional items for inclusion in the Senate agenda. Speaker Leaf asked if the Senate concurred with this approach, and there was no disagreement.

2. Invitation of Jim Gary. The Council discussed whether to invite Jim Gary back to the Senate at this meeting. The Council agreed that there was no benefit in scheduling a presentation in November. It was agreed that the Senate should urge that final grades also be submitted through Orion rather than changing to another system, and that we have Dr. Gary back for a discussion at the Senate meeting in January.
3. Policy on Fitness for Duty. The Senate referred this policy proposal to the Committee on Faculty Standing and Conduct last month. That Committee has met and discussed the policy, with Larry Wilson included in the discussion as Director of Human Resources. The Committee and Mr. Wilson have agreed to remove references to faculty from the policy presented, and the Committee will develop a separate policy for faculty that is consistent with our policies and procedures and that will protect faculty from arbitrary assignment and dismissal. This decision has been conveyed to the HOP committee.

4. Meaning of expulsion. Dean Cunningham has asked Speaker Leaf for an opinion regarding the significance of expulsion. A student in a program seeking a Master’s degree has been accused of plagiarism, and Judicial Affairs has agreed with the allegation. This is the second instance of plagiarism for this student. The Office of Judicial Affairs therefore ordered the student expelled. The student’s academic program has subsequently filed a revised degree plan removing the course in which the plagiarism occurred and replacing it with another. Dr. Cunningham asked if, in Speaker Leaf’s view, the Senate would regard this as consistent with our policies. Speaker Leaf’s response was that in all of our Senate discussions regarding progress toward a degree as well as discussions of the way we should treat academic dishonesty, our assumption has clearly been that the meaning of expulsion is that all progress toward a degree stops at that point, and that the student’s relation to the university is severed. Hence submitting a revised degree plan is contrary to the intent of our policies and procedures. Students who are expelled cannot graduate from the university. Speaker Leaf asked if there was any disagreement with his opinion or need for the Senate to develop an explicit policy. Everyone agreed that no additional policy was needed; the concept of expulsion is clear and common sense will suffice.

5. Speaker Leaf reported that he has announced our search for a Governance Secretary in the Staff Council, and has circulated a draft to job description to our present and past Academic Senate secretaries (David Cordell and Marilyn Kaplan) and our previous Governance Secretary (Tonja Kirkwood-Brown). We expect to be able to fill the position by January 4. The search is for a person who can serve as secretary to the Senate and the Staff Council, but whether one person can actually do all of this is still somewhat of an open question that we will examine further as the search proceeds.

5. FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT

Speaker Leaf stated that there have been no FAC meetings or further FAC actions. The Chancellor’s Task Force on Exigency is discussing revisions to Regents Rules that have been circulated by Dr. Reyes on the basis of our meeting discussions. The revisions incorporate most of the suggestions of the meeting and are generally consistent with what we have been discussing here at UTD Senate but further development is still needed.

6. PRESIDENT’S REPORT ON THE BUDGET

President Daniel indicated that he has not been able to complete his budget report. He stated that he will present it at the January meeting.
7. **APPROVAL OF CANDIDATES FOR GRADUATION**

Speaker Leaf noted that the lists of candidates for undergraduate and graduate degrees had been distributed by email and asked if everyone had received them. They had received them. Secretary Cordell moved the following:

“These students have applied for graduation and have been reviewed by the Office of the Registrar. The Office of the Registrar declared that all of these students will be eligible for graduation upon 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 course work and requirements consistent with the standards for honors at the levels offered by this University.”

Dr. Cantrell seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Secretary Cordell moved the following:

“These students have applied for graduate degrees and have been reviewed by the Graduate Dean. The Graduate Dean certifies that all 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.”

Dr. Izen seconded the motion. The motion carried.

8. **APPOINTMENT OF DANIEL BOCHSLER TO LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS COMMITTEE**

Dr. Leaf noted that this action had been requested by Rhonda Blackburn, RUO of the Committee, and that Dr. Bochsler has been attending meetings. Ms. Blackburn has asked for the appointment to recognize his service. Dr. Redman moved to approve the appointment. Dr. Kaplan seconded. The motion passed.

9. **APPOINTMENT OF LEONIDAS BLERIS TO INSTITUTIONAL ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE**

Speaker Leaf noted that the Animal Care Committee is a university committee rather than a Senate Committee. He also noted that the committee’s activities were very appropriate to Dr. Bleris’s field, and that Dr. Bleris had already begun to participate with the
committee. Dr. Cantrell moved to make the appointment. Dr. Redman seconded. The motion passed.

10. **APPOINTMENT OF TRACY ROCKETT TO SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

Dr. Leaf asked for a motion to approve the appointment of Tracy Rockett to the Scholarship Committee. Dr. Redman noted that Dr. Elizabeth Salter had tendered her resignation from the Committee because the committee had declined to follow the procedures established over the past two years, and that we should not simply appoint a replacement without addressing both the reason for this resignation and the proper functioning of the Committee. Speaker Leaf responded that this was only a motion to appoint Dr. Rockett. The Council had declined to accept Dr. Salter’s resignation and charged Speaker Leaf to find out what had happened and what might be done by way of corrective action if corrective action were needed. Dr. Leaf had not yet contacted Dr. Salter, but would do so promptly. Since it was, therefore, not a straightforward replacement, several Senators asked what the current composition of the committee was. He responded that he was uncertain, especially given the unclear status of the resignation of Dr. Salter. Dr. Kaplan noted that the present chair, Douglas Eckel, is seriously ill and may be unable to serve the rest of the year. He is certainly unable to serve for the next few weeks, and this is when many decisions must be made. Dr. Leaf noted that the motion had not been made, and asked for it again with the understanding that he would work out the implementation in consultation with the concerned individuals and in accordance with the Committee charge. Dr. Murthy moved to make the appointment. Dr. Kaplan seconded. The motion passed with one nay and one abstention who wished to be noted.

11. **UNIVERSITY SAFETY AND SECURITY COUNCIL ADD CHAIR**

Speaker Leaf called for a motion to add the Chair of the Compliance Committee to the membership of the University Safety and Security Council. This change is at the request of the Chair of the Compliance Committee and in consultation with the Chair of Safety and Security Council. Dr. Cantrell made the motion. Dr. Scotch seconded. The motion carried.

12. **SENATE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The draft charge for the Senate Strategic Planning Committee was discussed. Several revisions were suggested, but the consensus was that the Senate could not work out all the necessary details in a reasonable amount of time. Dr. Cantrell moved to endorse the concept and aim of the committee in principle, and to empower the Academic Council to refine the charge. Dr. Kaplan seconded the motion. The motion carried.

13. **CEP – UNDERGRADUATE CATALOG COPY**

Dr. Cantrell introduced the revisions for the CEP and moved approval. Several Senators objected to the third revision, changing the way grading and credit was recorded in
courses repeated for credit and failed. Pursuant to a request from the floor and with concurrence of Dr. Cantrell, Speaker Leaf divided the motion into three separate motions.

Dr. Cantrell moved to amend the second sentence in the second paragraph in the section titled Scholastic Probation to read: “Such students may register for a maximum of 14 semester credit hours, must earn a semester 2.20 GPA, and many not withdraw from classes.” Dr. Izen seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Dr. Beron moved to amend the second sentence in the section titled Repeating Course Work, changing the phrase “attempting the same class for the third time will” to “attempting the same class for the third time may.” Dr. Holmes seconded. The motion carried.

Dr. Cantrell moved to amend the second paragraph of the same section by deleting the sentence “The grade from the last attempt will determine credit earned to satisfy degree requirements” and replacing it with “In cases where students fail a repeated class they had passed previously, a content exception for the previous attempt will be applied to their degree plan but the last grade earned will be used for their grade point average. All grades will appear on the student’s transcript.” Dr. Holmes seconded the motion. Speaker Leaf called for a vote by show of hands. There were seven votes in favor and seven opposed. Speaker Leaf declined to vote to break the tie.

Dr. Cantrell asked if a quorum was present. Speaker Leaf counted 18 members still present, including the Speaker. Since there are 37 Senators including the Speaker, there was not a quorum.

14. ADJOURNMENT

A quorum having been called for and declared not to be present, under Robert’s Rules we could not vote on the remaining agenda items. Dr. Leaf asked President Daniel to adjourn the meeting. The remaining three items (New Policy: Camps and Clinics, Alcoholic Beverages Policy, and PM-15 Committee on Parking and Transportation) will carry over to the January agenda. The meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.

APPROVED: [Signature]

Speaker of the Academic Senate