ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING
July 16, 2003


ABSENT Poras Balsara, Doug Benn, Lawrence Cauller, G. R. Dattatreya, Jay Dowling, Carla Gerona, Jennifer Holmes, Matthew Leybourne, Robert Marsh, Shun Chen Niu, Larry Overzet, Ravi Prakash

VISITORS: Priscilla Beadle, Sophie Rutenbar

1. CALL TO ORDER, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Dr. Wildenthal called the meeting to order in the absence of Dr. Jenifer. He gave a status report on the budget and said that we do not have a finalized budget for the year because of actions by the Legislature and the Governor. Because of the Governor’s veto, the overall budget was recently cut by $3M. In the initial appropriation, we had received a 3% increase in formula funding and a 3% increase in research funding over the biennium, an increase largely due to the growth in student body. Now with the veto by the Governor, we are about 5% down in our funding. There have been discussions about a fee increase in the fall; however, there will be no increase in tuition for the fall because the Chancellor has decreed that we must go through a decision-making process that will include input from students, faculty, alumni, and community leaders before tuition can be raised. It will not be possible to finish this process before the fall semester begins.

According to Dr. Wildenthal, the EMMITT money (which will come from the Governor’s fund, UT System, and private donations as part of the negotiations to build the TI wafer plant in Richardson) will not be available for salaries for current employees. There probably will not be funding for a salary increase for faculty and staff.

A major concern of the University, Dr. Wildenthal said, is that the graduate assistants are losing ½ of their provided insurance premium. To make up for this loss will cost UTD
approximately $1M. This is the #1 priority to fix. The graduate assistants have been advised to sign up for the insurance with the hope that the problem will be fixed.

There was further discussion about the TA/RA’s, new faculty, new staff, not being eligible for insurance for 90 days after initial employment. Dr. Wildenthal stated that he thought the problem will be resolved using local funds.

According to Dr. Wildenthal, Dean Helms is in favor of purchasing the Kodak building at the corner of Waterview and Frankfurt as soon as possible. We are capital rich but salary poor because of EMMITT. The process will probably involve moving people from Founders into Kodak building and then renovate Founders. No final decision on the renovation of Founders has been made.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of June 18, 2003. The motion carried.

3. SPEAKER’S REPORT

Most of what has concerned the governance system over the past month is on today’s agenda. The items that are not can all be discussed while reviewing our consideration of the Senate priorities for the coming year.

The academic council discussed the list of priorities from the Caucus and assured me that it reached a consensus, although I am not entirely confident that I can represent that consensus without provoking disagreement. Basically, most of the issues were already under consideration, so the question of what priority order to place them in was actually moot. They will proceed at whatever speed we can manage. Accordingly, without a great concern for the order, here is the list:

   A. Centers policy: revision to include institutes. We are working on this. Where we now stand is that we have one rather complete redraft of the old policy from the Administration and another version from me that tries to be much clearer about preserving the lines of authority for approval of academic programs and keeping the centers/institutes out of that process. I am not sure how much of the difference
is real and how much is stylistic. Both drafts are being sent to the Advisory Committee on Research and the Graduate Council for comment.

B. Research Support Policy: further clarification and removal of bottlenecks and disincentives. This was already implicit in our concerns with setting up the Research Advisory Committee and Safety Council, and with stimulating the Intellectual Property policy and committee and the Biosafety committee. The new science and engineering resources make it doubly urgent. They also make it even more important that we work to bring our policies into some really tight and effective coordination with other institutions our faculty are likely to work with in the U T System. This largely absorbs the item designated as “Collaboration with other universities: measures to facilitate.” In addition to facilitating research proposal creation and research itself, we also need to consider explicit policies or guidelines on intercampus joint appointments.

C. Senior Lecturers. The drafting committee has now sent its initial version to the Deans and Provost for comment. So far we have received a response only from Dean Murdoch, who thinks it will fit easily into the present Social Science by-laws. I will send around a reminder to the other deans. If there is no problem on the administrative side, this should be non-controversial but nevertheless very helpful.

D. Three items that were not action items in themselves but seemed closely related in their action implications:

- Faculty satisfaction issues from Faculty Satisfaction Survey
- Core Committee on Women and Minorities
- Budget involvement (involvement of governance in budget review process)

Robert Nelsen will give a presentation on the whole faculty satisfaction survey and the Council will parse out the results that pertain to various of our ongoing concerns and send them to the bodies involved.

One of the most conspicuous sources of dissatisfaction in the survey is a sense of salary unfairness, and this was also prominent in the recent loss of several women faculty members. It is also an issue with the Senior Lecturers, of whom a higher proportion are female than for the tenure-track faculty. I think the Council agreed that we need to make a very serious effort to look at the possibility of a more
definite and open policy linking remuneration to rank for all full-time faculty that should involve both the Senate and the Core Committee for Women and Minorities.

A second question concerns the Core Committee on Women and Minorities itself. The question is whether to keep it as it is or rename it. This arises because the Chancellor has dropped it at the system level in favor of a broader concern with the quality of campus life and its chief Regental supporter, Regent Craven has turned her attention elsewhere. Strictly speaking, because of the way the Core Committee has been sheltered from Senate influence, this is not a Senate issue. But I think we do in fact need to worry about campus quality of life issues as part of recruitment and the Core Committee issue is part of the puzzle.

Formulating a salary policy would in effect divide the budget involvement issue in two pieces. Salary is one and the other is general academic priorities. One recommendation for dealing with the latter is the university council idea from the FAC, which we discussed briefly last year and rejected. We discussed it again in Council and I think again were mainly not in favor, although we left open the possibility of bringing up for a fuller discussion in the Senate if that is the Senate’s wish. In my view, a committee at that level with the necessary grass-roots knowledge would be too large to work with the President’s Cabinet and one small enough not to intrude would not have the necessary knowledge. The better approach is the one we have already chosen, which is to encourage schools to set up Executive Committees (which they are doing) and encourage consultation between the Executive Committees and Deans in budget formulation, which seems to be happening. The main holdout is Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and that should resolve itself in the course of the coming year.

E. New program development: establish specific procedures. This has largely now been done through the bylaws process but we can review what we have for uniformity across schools and see where that leads. Again, the main problem seems to be NS&M.

F. I think we agreed that there was not general interest in pursuing the Upward Review of Administrators below level of deans or further accountability. I am confident we agree that there was no need to pursue continuing education (with non-credit courses) as a means of making money.
4. DISCUSSION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Dr. Rachavong was invited to come to the meeting today to discuss academic integrity, but was unable to attend. The Speaker described his discussion with her of the faculty’s concerns and asked the Senate whether they would like to discuss the topic today or wait until September when she would be able to attend. A motion was made to refer this item to the Senate’s ad hoc committee on academic integrity which is chaired by Cy Cantrell, who should in turn invite the graduate and undergraduate councils to participate. The committee will be asked to review this item and recommend a proposal to the Academic Council. The motion passed.

5. ELECTION OF SECRETARY

Speaker Leaf announced that Secretary Yasbin has resigned as Secretary of the Faculty since he will be leaving UTD the end of August. There are no written procedures on how to handle replacing the secretary so procedures were discussed as to how the election of the replacement Secretary would be held. When Dr. Yasbin resigns from the Senate, the next alternate is asked to replace him on the Senate.

Nominations were opened for the secretary and Dr. Robert Nelsen was nominated. He was elected by acclamation.

Since Dr. Nelsen is currently a member of the Academic Council, his election as Secretary still left Dr. Yasbin’s Council seat vacant. To fill it, the Senate agreed to go to the results of the ballot for Council in the Caucus. In this case, however, the candidates receiving the next two highest totals of voters were tied: Professor Steve Levene and Professor Janok Bhattacharya. Accordingly, a ballot was circulated to break the tie. Dr. Bhattacharya was elected to become a member of the Council.

6. FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL SATISFACTION SURVEY PRESENTATION

Dr. Robert Nelsen presented the Faculty Advisory Council Satisfaction Survey that is being prepared for presentation to the Board of Regents in August.
GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT OVERALL SATISFACTION

- As a group, the UT System faculty are moderately satisfied with their jobs ($M=4.54$ on a 7-point scale).
- Faculty is most satisfied regarding autonomy with respect to decisions about teaching, research and service.
- Job security, retirement and health benefits, and opportunities for advancement within academic and administrative careers were moderately satisfying to satisfying among the UT System faculty as a whole.
- In response to a question about overall job satisfaction (“If I had to do it all over again, I would still accept a faculty position at this institution”), faculty say that they choose to work within the UT System.
- Faculty in Health Institutions demonstrated the greatest overall job satisfaction.
- Faculty at UT-Brownsville, UT-Pan American, UT-Permian Basin, UT-Tyler are the least satisfied.
- Non-tenure track faculty are more satisfied than tenure track faculty.
- Faculty in arts and humanities are the least satisfied with their jobs.
- African Americans are noticeably more satisfied than other racial/ethnic groups.
- Hispanics are noticeably less satisfied than other racial/ethnic groups.
- Men and women are about equally satisfied; however, women were less satisfied than men with job security, salary, and opportunities for advancement.
- Salaries and opportunities for sabbaticals were the least satisfying aspects of faculty jobs.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE ISSUES IN THE SYSTEM AND ON CAMPUSES

- Faculty tend to be satisfied with office space, computing resources and secretarial support.
- Faculty are somewhat satisfied with most resources for teaching.


- UT System faculty are somewhat to moderately satisfied with policies and practices for annual and periodic job performance reviews and for promotion and tenure decisions. But faculty do not seem to believe performance reviews have enhanced teaching quality or faculty productivity.
- Salary compression is viewed as problematic by faculty from all but the Health Institutions.
- Faculty tend to be less satisfied with the process used to determine merit increases and salary adjustments.
- Faculty tend to be less satisfied with institutional funding for research projects, external speakers, and travel to research/professional meetings.
- Faculty are concerned about the staff available to assist with the preparation of proposals and with the management of funded projects.
- Faculty disagree with the assertion that Tele-campus services are worth the cost.
- Faculty are less satisfied with graduate student support available to assist them with their teaching and research.
- Faculty at all academic Institutions except UT-Austin are concerned about print library materials.

**DIVERSITY ISSUES ON CAMPUSSES**

- Across comparison groups, faculty believe that the diversity of the students is important to the educational process.
- Faculty in the different institutional, tenure, seniority, and disciplinary comparison groups tend to disagree with statements suggesting women and minorities are discriminated against or disadvantaged in recruitment and promotion.
- Faculty believe women and minorities are underrepresented in senior faculty and administrative positions.
- Women and racial/ethnic minority groups believe that European-Americans received more helpful career advice.
- Both members of ethnic/racial minority groups and women think they have to work harder than their European-American and male counterparts to achieve legitimacy as scholars.
Women differ noticeably from men in their satisfaction with promotion/tenure review and merit/salary adjustment processes. Men are more satisfied than women.

COMPARISON OF 1993 AND 2003

FACULTY SATISFACTION SURVEYS

The survey found little to no difference between times of data gathering for satisfaction with:

- Job security
- Retirement benefits
- Autonomy in teaching
- Collegial relations among faculty
- Responsiveness of department chairs to faculty.

The data suggest slightly higher satisfaction in 2003 than in 1993 for:

- Health benefits
- Perceived value campuses give to research in Academic Institutions (Health remained about the same)
- Processes used in annual reviews of job performance.

For the remaining items, satisfaction was slightly greater in 1993:

- Salary
- Perceived value campuses give to teaching
- Institutional level administrators responsiveness to faculty
- Effectiveness of faculty governance
- Institutional resources for research
- Staff support for courses
- Library resources (Academic Institutions)
- Support given to new faculty.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the 2003 Faculty Satisfaction Survey, Digital Research, Inc. indicated that the following areas of concern (in descending order of importance in each category) should be addressed and should be given highest priority:

(1) All Universities should identify and address specific concerns with respect to:
   • Opportunities available for faculty development leaves, sabbaticals.
   • Policies and practices used to determine merit increases and salary adjustments.
   • The effectiveness of faculty governance in dealing with upper administration.
   • Salary compression.
   • The visibility and effectiveness of Committee on the Status of Women and Minorities and its impact on the work lives of individuals within these groups.
   • Support given to new faculty.

(2) All Academic Institutions should identify and address specific concerns regarding:
   • Health and retirement benefits.
   • Staff support for course related activities.
   • Staff support for the preparation of proposals to external funding agencies.
   • Staff to assist with the management of funded projects (e.g., bookkeeping, accounting, correspondence).
   • Policies and practices regarding release time from teaching responsibilities to work on projects funded by external sources and the assignment of graduate research assistants to work with faculty on their research.

(3) Faculty and administrators in All Academic Institutions (other than the UT-Austin) should take action with regards to the following concerns:
   • Quality of library print materials.
   • Responsiveness of institutional level administrators to faculty.

(4) Faculty at UT-Arlington, UT-Dallas, UT-El Paso, UT-San Antonio should pursue faculty concerns about:
   • Quality of undergraduate students, including community college transfer students.

(5) Faculty and administrators in All Health Institutions should examine and refine policies and practices regarding:
   • Patient billing.
   • Securing payment of bills by patients.
   • Salary incentives.

A recommendation was made that volunteers look at the data for UTD. Those that volunteered to help Robert Nelsen were Richard Scotch and Duane Buhrmester.
7. COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES’ RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of the Committee on Committees’ were presented by the Speaker. A motion was made and seconded to accept the recommendations from the Committee. The motion passed. Pursuant to agreements reached with the administration in the fall of 2002 and now incorporated in the Committee on Committee’s by-laws, it was noted that the Senate’s actions on recommendations for the Senate committee will be final and if there are any difficulties concerning them they will be resolved by the Senate, but the approval of the nominations for University-wide committees are only recommendations to the President and the Senate will have no further involvement unless specifically requested by the Administration.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

There was additional discussion about the TA/RA insurance problems and a motion was made and seconded for a sense of the Senate resolution “that the University should place top priority in allocating funds for insurance benefits for graduate assistants to assure that net compensation will not be less than 2002-2003.” The motion passed.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The business was concluded and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Goertzen
Academic Governance Secretary