President Daniel called the meeting to order and thanked the faculty for attending.

Announcements: The Board of Regents met last week. UTD was granted 2.5 million dollars to address infrastructure problems on campus. The Board approved UTD’s request for a Ph.D. and M.S. degree programs in Criminology. The Board has made graduation rates a top priority item. They feel the rates are much too low and will be pressuring Universities to look at the reasons they are losing students and what they can do better.

Dr. Daniel believes the Board will begin to look closely at fund raising efforts at all of the U. T. institutions. One of the measures of a strong institution is alumni giving. Currently, UTD is in last place with only a 2-3% alumni funding base.

The U. T. System administration has been undergoing major staffing changes. The changes are bringing in good people at high levels and will raise the focus of important issues for all U. T. System institutions.

Questions from the floor:

Progress on the search for the new Dean of Natural Sciences and Mathematics: Dr. Wildenthal updated members on the status of the search progress. Advertisements have appeared during the last two weeks, and Dr. Brian Berry has been selected to Chair the Search Committee. The membership of the Search Committee is being finalized.

Tuition Taskforce: The Provost, SGA, and Student Affairs met to discuss proposed increases in fees to cover the cost of more expensive academic programs. The meeting
was well attended with about 25 to 30 students present. The Town Hall meeting with all students will be later this week. Dr. Wildenthal pointed out that, unlike U. T. Austin, which closely controls students’ majors and is able to charge higher fees based on the majors, U. T. Dallas does not control its students’ majors as closely. Therefore, the Taskforce is proposing putting necessary fee increases on semester credit hours earned in the more expensive courses. President Daniel will make the final determination and, then, the proposal must be approved by the Board before it can be adopted.

UTD will also be proposing to have a one-time fee of approximately $150 to cover increased utility costs.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of October 19, 2005 as distributed. The motion carried.

3. SPEAKER’S REPORT

The attempt by the library to set up electronic files for the CQ has failed. Although the files can be uploaded, they are unable to provide security for the files. The committee will need to continue to use paper files. The Speaker will meet with CQ again to see what they would recommend.

The service learning committee is still waiting to get student members before they begin their work.

There is a need to establish a new ad hoc committee (3+3+3+1) to set guidelines for faculty merit raises. This is particularly important because there are no longer cost-of-living raises; all raises are merit based. Murray Leaf will chair the committee.

Paperwork has been done to begin the process of hiring a new full-time secretary to work with faculty governance. The new secretary’s time will be split between the Senate and the Staff Council. Applications are already being received.

The steering committee for SACS met on Tuesday, 11/2/2005. The calendar for UTD’s reaccreditation is included in the packets. The compliance document is due by September 1, 2007. Although UTD will be expected to have 2 years of assessment data, it will only be possible to have 1.5 years because the pilot program will begin in the summer 2006. Faculty must have the student oriented outcomes and objectives listed in all syllabi. SACS will be looking at syllabi posted on the web to see if the outcomes appearing are appropriate.

January and February will be devoted to workshops on assessments for each UTD academic program. At the recent U. T. System/SACS conference, different schools presented their compliance programs. The SACS representative did not find any of the programs
acceptable. UNT’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) was rejected because it was built around faculty not student outcomes. U. T. Arlington’s plan was rejected because their assessment schedule was not yearly.

Important lessons from the meeting: SACS will target any and all perceived flaws in the compliance documents and will investigate the flaws; every outcome must have 3-4 assessment measures; QEP must be student oriented; faculty credentialing is a priority; over 50% of classes at UTD must be taught by tenure track faculty. We are checking to see if there is any way to include Senior Lecturers in that percentage.

4. U. T. SYSTEM FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL (FAC) REPORT

FAC is seeking information about counter offers for retention of faculty who receive employment offers from other schools.

Senates have been asked to establish local policies for bridge funding. The policy would have peer evaluation of grant proposals that received high marks but did not receive funding. In discussions in Council, it was decided to leave the matter to individual schools.

FAC is still considering the role of ombudsmen on campuses. Other major considerations are how faculty are placed on administrative leave and how they can obtain Family Medical Leave.

Suggested changes in the Regents’ Rules for evaluation of administrators have been forwarded to the FAC. The suggestions include evaluations of Presidents annually by the Executive Vice Chancellor. FAC members hope to reinstitute wording that will say that future upward evaluations of administrators must involve input from the faculty.

5. ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE

The state requires each institution to have a written policy on evaluating military training for academic credit. The UTD policy would require syllabi and other course materials from the training be turned in to the Registrar’s office, and the actual evaluation to determine academic credit is to be done at the department level. Discussion followed with one slight change in the wording, to include training manuals as well as syllabi. A motion was made and seconded to approve the policy. The motion carried.

6. TEXAS COUNCIL OF FACULTY SENATES RESOLUTION ON TEXAS A&M KINGSVILLE

The President of Texas A&M Kingsville disbanded the faculty senate after an initial disagreement, over moving from a four-year to a six-year tenure clock, caused irreconcilable differences between the President and the Senate. Although the change does not seem unreasonable, it was not adequately vetted by the Senate. The Senate, after quarreling about this, as well as many other issues, voted “no confidence” in the President. In retaliation for the “no confidence” vote, the President, with the approval of
the Chancellor and the Board of Regents, disbanded the Senate. This action was taken in part on the recommendation by three Senate Chairs from other A&M Campuses. The reasons sited centered around the Senate election process. In remarks before the Texas Council of Faculty Senates, the Chancellor stated that the Arts and Humanities had too large a proportion of the seats and, therefore, did not properly represent the faculty. He also indicated that the membership of the executive committee was long standing. However, the president of the Senate was newly elected. The actual election process included the election of three people from each school with the remaining members being elected from the faculty at large; hence there was an obvious reason for the larger representation by members of Arts and Humanities.

The Texas Council of Faculty Senates has asked all Faculty Senates to affirm its resolution that the faculty has the right to assemble and petition grievances without threat of retribution.

Discussion followed. There were suggestions on changing some of the wording on the resolution. A motion was made and seconded to support the resolution with revisions to the language. The motion carried. The revised resolution will be forwarded to the Texas Council of Faculty Senates.

7. CERTIFICATION PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION

The Global Human Resources Certification program is on the agenda, not for approval but for discussion. The issue centers on certificate programs being placed on the web without going through the proper channels and without receiving the proper authorizations. In the case of the Global Human Resources Certification, two other proposals were brought up in the School of Management last summer, and both went through the proper procedures and were approved. However, when the information about the programs appeared on the web, a third certificate program that did not go through the proper review/approval process appeared.

Discussion of the problem followed. The members of the Academic Senate agreed that this situation was intolerable.

The discussion confirmed that the program has been removed from the web and a request for review and approval will be submitted to the Graduate Education Council following approval by the faculty in the School of Management.

8. UTA-UTD JOINT INSTITUTIONAL SEED RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Presidents of UTA and UTD have jointly funded a seed money program. This program will provide $250,000 to promote research collaboration between faculty at UTA and UTD. The money is to be used to submit grant proposals to funding agencies. Each proposal will be reviewed and scored (100 point system) on the basis of merit (55 points), PI qualifications (15 points), and potential funding (30 points). The proposal may receive a maximum grant of $20,000, $10,000 from each institution to be divided
between the co-PI’s. The PI’s may receive a $4,000 bonus award ($2,000 from each institution) if the proposals receive outside funding.

The program was originally designed to target only federal grants but has now been expanded to include all outside granting agencies.

A short discussion of the program followed, after which the policy was approved.

9. SCHEDULING POLICY

At the Senate’s request the ad hoc committee, with the help of Dean Coleman, did a survey, to determine student preference for class scheduling. Most students preferred classes be held 2 days a week, having core classes scheduled to avoid conflicts, having classes meet as few days a week as possible, having no classes start at 8 a.m., and having no classes on Saturday.

Unfortunately, due to space limitations not all student preferences can be followed. The committee has recommended that class scheduling go to a 3-hour block balanced schedule, where schools work cooperatively to schedule the blocks.

The recommendation is to leave the scheduling of lower-division classes basically unchanged (continue with a basic Monday, Wednesday, Friday schedule) and allow the upper-division and graduate level classes to become more flexible, utilizing the balanced 3-hour block schedule.

Discussion followed.

A motion was made to continue to schedule lower-division classes as they are now and to change the upper-division and graduate-level classes to the 3-hour balanced schedule block.

The motion was carried with 10 in favor, 4 opposed and 3 abstentions.

10. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

The U. T. System originally had a policy on background checks for faculty that required all faculty to have a background check each year. That policy was revoked; however, the System realized that there was still a need to have a set policy.

The new policy requires a background check for faculty who have contact with minors, (someone under the age of 18) for at least one hour every 30 days. This contact does not include classroom instruction time, or faculty office hours. Background checks would be done every two years. Deans of the schools would decide which faculty would be subject to background checks for non-research related activities, and the IRB would decide which faculty would be subject to background checks for research related
activities. Discussion ensued about whether teaching assistants were included in the policy. Wording was added to exclude them in their roles as instructors.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the policy. The motion carried with one no vote.

11. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

The Speaker distributed the lists of students who have applied for Graduation in December as candidates for the baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral degree programs and announced the name of one addition to the list of Ph.D. graduates in Biology. Following the announcement, the Speaker made the following motion for undergraduates:

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.

The motion was seconded. The motion carried.

The Speaker made the following motion for graduate students:

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.

The motion was seconded. The motion carried.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED: ______________________________                     DATE: 1/18/06
Speaker of the Faculty