ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING
October 15, 2003


VISITORS: Priscilla Beadle, Ryan Davidson, Richard Golden, Dennis Kratz, Sophie Rutenbar, Larry Terry

1. CALL TO ORDER, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Dr. Jenifer called the meeting to order and explained the selection and search process for replacing him upon his retirement. He stated that UTD was in an excellent position to move to the next level and that it was a good time for him to retire. He suggested that the faculty should begin to think seriously about what they want their new President to be like. In this regard, the faculty should remain focused on the mission of the University which includes strong emphasis in science and technology as well as other specified areas of research excellence.

It is important to keep the mission of the University in mind during the search because the mission can serve very much like a job description and will clearly help determine who the next President of UTD will be.

Dr. Jenifer said he will serve until a replacement is found. He also said that he would anticipate a replacement by next fall. He recommended that the faculty take the search process seriously because it will determine the future of the University.

The U. T. System has hired the Washington Advisory Group, which is headed up by Dr. Frank Press, a former president of the National Academy of Sciences. The WAG will examine the academic components (other than U. T. Austin) in order to advise the
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Regents and the Chancellor as to which universities are ready to be first tier research universities and in which programs they are ready to be first tier. This group has already visited the UTD campus and met with various research faculty, and Dr. Jenifer thought that the members of the WAG were very impressed with UTD and that they believe that UTD is ready for the next step.

Two additional visits are planned. One will focus on the School of Engineering and the other on the School of Management. The WAG will eventually submit their findings to the Regents.

A committee headed by Dr. Wildenthal is looking at the possibility and ramifications of raising tuition for the spring and next fall. The Chancellor has set a November deadline to develop a policy and procedure for any increases in tuition that must be presented to him and to the Regents. A meeting has been scheduled with the students to discuss the issues surrounding the possible tuition increase. Dr. Jenifer indicated that he personally will make a decision after the meeting with the students and after considering the recommendations from Dr. Wildenthal’s committee.

The President’s committee that was appointed to review space needs has recommended the purchase of the old Kodak building. The tentative plan, if and when the Kodak building is purchased, would be to move the people that are in Founders to this building while Founders is renovated. There will be sufficient resources to fund both projects.

But the perception that UTD is rich is not true. There are funds for bricks and mortar as a result of the TI gift and Project Emmitt, but because of the Governor’s veto, there is not enough operational money. If UTD does not receive some additional dollars through tuition increases or other funds, there will be a period of hard hiring freezes and other such measures in order to balance the budget.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of September 17, 2003. The motion carried.

3. SPEAKER’S REPORT

Outstanding matters not on the agenda include revising the charge for the IR committees, the Senate website, an issue with the Comet card, and a series of editorial changes to policy memoranda reviewed by the Council Agenda Committee.
A. IR Committees. We have two IR committees whose charges logically overlap. One is the IR Planning and Policy committee; the other the IR Planning and Security. The former is a Senate committee. The latter a University Committee, established wholly or partly in response to a system directive, and usually does not meet. We have been discussing combining them, with the Security Committee a permanent subcommittee of a larger planning and policy committee. This past August we agreed that as an interim measure the IR Security Committee members who would be appointed would be a subset of the IR Planning and Policy Committee members, and I would try to come up with a new charge. The appointments have been made, and I have offered the draft. I have responses back, and it looks like we will have this on the agenda for the next Senate meeting. Because this is a highly sensitive area, it is important that we do not have confusion about who is responsible for what.

B. The Senate website. As I reported to the Senate, Michael Coleman has offered the services of Lynn Shell in his office. I have spoken to her and she is working on a new design. What I think we need, and I think we all agree to, is a process in which the Speaker and Secretary will make sure that material to be posted goes to Sandee Goertz along with instructions on where to post it so that once a week or on some other regular basis our support person can check in and pick it up. That person will allocate either some pre-arranged block of time, like a day, and come back to finish next week if the work is not done. If it is done, that person will return to his or her other duties. What we cannot continue with is a situation in which Senate work takes a back seat to other administrative work on all days.

C. There is a problem with the rules on Comet cards; staff who are also students seem to be caught in a bind that prevents them from getting the full benefit of other students. I am not clear about the details, a committee of the Staff Council is working on it and expects to have a recommendation and expects to have it November. Then, if they approve it, I think it would appropriate for the Senate to see if we would want to lend its support.

D. Editorial changes, reflecting changes in system numbering of documents, have been made in the following policy memoranda:

- 75-III.22-3 page 3. Promotion and Tenure.
- 81-I.2-42 Charge: Campus Facilities Committee
95-III.21-67 Charge: University Research Integrity Committee

89-VI.57.49 page 2. Registration of Faculty and Staff Organizations

94-III.21-61 page 5 Faculty Conduct


Following the agreement we made in Council last year, Priscilla Beadle circulated these to me for the Academic Council Agenda Committee. I circulated them to the other members of the committee (the President and Senate Secretary). Although I have not had a formal response from them, in view of the character of the changes it seems appropriate to take silence as concurrence. It seems to me that the process worked nicely, and I will try to find somewhere in our bylaws or Handbook of Operating Procedures to insert it formally.

E. The Senior Lecturers have held their election for Senate representatives. The Senators are Doug Benn, Marilyn Kaplan, and Liz Salter. The Senior Lecturers will also try to organize a more formal steering committee for themselves with bylaws.

F. The results of the e-mail vote for the candidates for graduation at the summer commencement were 24 to approve all candidates, 0 votes to disapprove, and 12 no responses.

G. There was a problem or confusion implementing the new legislative rules on the state contribution to health insurance premiums for new faculty. This was initially interpreted as also applying to faculty who went on leave and discontinued coverage. In other words, the ruling from System seemed to be that if you went on leave in which someone else paid your premiums, when you came back you would be treated as a new employee and the state would not pay its contribution for the first ninety days. This is not a reasonable policy. Leave is something we want to encourage, not discourage. It also did not seem to be the legislative intent as it had been explained to the Faculty Advisory Council. I checked with Larry Wilson in Human Resources, and Human Resources has checked with System. It is now clear that this is not the case. If you go on leave and discontinue coverage, you will be regarded as a continuing employee on your return. Please see that your colleagues understand this.
H. Finally, as you all probably know, when President Jennifer announced his intention to resign on October 1, the Senate was asked to meet with Vice Chancellor Terri Sullivan on October 2, at 2 pm. We therefore called a caucus among ourselves for noon on Oct 2 to establish our own sense of the situation and the way we would proceed. Under Regents’ Rules the academic Senate will appoint three faculty members to the selection committee. The consensus was that I should receive and coordinate nominations and we would hold an election. V. C. Sullivan did not say anything inconsistent with what we had agreed to, but added a definite time line. She wants the names in three weeks from the day we meet—hence October 22. This means that the election of our representatives must occur at this meeting. The first tally of nominations received was sent out on October 8. The last tally is here in hard copy for those who did not get it by email.

4. LIBRARY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Richard Golden presented the Library Committee’s annual report for the previous year. A motion was made and seconded to accept the report. The motion passed.

5. LIBRARY COMMITTEE CHARGE

The Library Committee recommended that the charge is revised to add an additional member from the School of General Studies to the membership. A motion was made and seconded to approve this revision to the charge. The motion passed.

6. ELECTION OF FACULTY REPRESENTATIVES TO ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

There are three representatives to elect. Before discussing the candidates, the Senate agreed that the election would occur in two steps. We would hold an initial ballot in which each person would vote for three, and we would post the three names that received the most votes, as well as the two who received the next largest numbers of votes. We would then consider whether the top three were most suitable group to represent the university as a team, and hold a second vote to confirm, voting for three and this time posting only the top three. They would be our representatives. There would be no alternates. If one of those elected were unable to complete the term, the Senate would consider filling the position at that time.
Dr. Leaf presented the list of all those who had been nominated to serve as representatives to the Advisory Committee for the Presidential Search. The list included the nominators for each candidate. After considerable discussion as to what was desired in the representatives (e.g., representation from various Schools, broad knowledge of the University, non-partisanship, research credentials, experience in faculty governance, etc.), an initial election occurred to select five finalists for the three available positions. The following five candidates were nominated:

Ramaswamy Chandrasekaran, Murray Leaf, Robert Nelsen, Dean Sherry, Cyrus Cantrell

The Senate then discussed the candidates in the context of the different ways to think of a representative team and the second ballot was circulated. The following faculty were chosen to be on the search committee:

Ramaswamy Chandrasekaran, Murray Leaf, Robert Nelsen

Dr. Nelsen indicated that he had arranged for the three chosen candidates to meet with the Chancellor in Austin on Thursday morning to discuss the priorities for our new President.

7. CONSIDERATION OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY IN GRADUATE PROGRAMS

After discussion about whether graduate students should be treated more severely because of maturity and professional responsibility than undergraduate students with regard to matters of academic dishonesty, a motion was made and seconded to refer this to the ad hoc committee on Academic Integrity. The motion was approved.

8. POLICY ON CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

Speaker Leaf presented the proposed policy on centers and institutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposed policy. An amendment was presented as follows to be added to the proposed policy: “Each center or institute shall undergo a periodic review every five years. The review process shall consist of a committee appointed by the Chief Academic Officer and shall contain an equal proportion of faculty members from the institute or center and the various Schools from which the Center or Institute draws its membership. The committee shall issue a written report that will be shared with the institute, the administration, and the Schools from which the institute, the administration, and the schools from which the center or institute is comprised.”
After discussion, the amendment was voted on and was not approved. The original motion passed and is attached to these minutes.

9. PEER REVIEW FOR NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY

The policies for a peer review process for Senior Lecturers recommended by the ad hoc committee that has been working on the status of Senior Lecturers was presented for consideration by the Senate. Regents' Rules do not provide for the three gradations used at UTD, but because the Rules are currently undergoing revision, it was decided to continue using the current nomenclature, Senior Lecturers I, II and III, with the stipulation that the policy will have to be revised in accordance with Regents' Rules when they are finalized.

A motion was made to delete a fourth category for review, "administration," and to make an editorial change on page 3, section 3, such that administration was included as part of university service. The motion was accepted as a friendly amendment.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend that the administration adopt the guidelines on peer review for Senior Lecturers, subject to such revisions as may be necessary to be consistent with the terminology required by Regents' Rules.

The motion passed. The amended policy is attached to these minutes.

Dr. Redman proposed a special thank you to Liz Salter, Doug Benn, and Marilyn Kaplan, all Senior Lecturers, for the role they played in bringing this policy forward.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The business was concluded and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Goertzen
Academic Governance Secretary