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 the official minutes.

ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING
October 15, 2008


ABSENT: James Bartlett, John Burr, Santosh D’Mello, Juan Gonzalez, Kamran Kiasaleh, B.P.S. Murthi, Michael Rebello, Timothy Redman, Lucien Thompson

VISITORS: Andrew Blanchard, Remsen Jennings, Serenity King, Molly Wurzer

1. CALL TO ORDER, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Due to Dr. Daniel being in Austin, Dr. Wildenthal called the meeting to order. There were no announcements.

2. APPROVAL OF THE SENATE AGENDA

Dr. Leaf presented the Petition to Reform Federal Sanctions Pertaining to American Institutions of Higher Education.

Dr. Cantrell moved to add the petition to the agenda and Dr. Izen seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Dr. Cantrell moved to approve the agenda as amended and Dr. Izen seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Leaf offered an amendment to item 8, Policy on Policies. In the fourth line of the text for subsection 5.1, “with” should be replaced with “with the.”

Dr. Scotch moved to approve the minutes for the September 17th meeting as amended and Dr. Holmes seconded the motion. The motion carried.
4. SPEAKER’S REPORT

A. The title of the RUO for the Scholarship Committee has been changed from Vice President for Student Affairs to Associate Provost for Student Affairs. Since the former office is being converted into the latter, the Agenda Committee considers this an editorial amendment.

B. In the Charge for the CEP, the title Associate Provost will be changed to Assistant Provost as an editorial amendment. The Assistant Provost who will serve on the committee is Serenity King. Since this is mainly a title change reflecting adjustments in the office of the Provost, the Agenda Committee considers this a title change only.

C. In the Charge for the Committee for the Support of Diversity and Equity, the RUO is being changed from the Executive Vice President and Provost to the Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement. The Agenda Committee referred this to the Council. The Council agreed that this was an editorial change.

D. Last year the size of the Committee on Parking and Transportation was reduced, so that only two faculty representatives were required. The committee was advised to decide for itself who could be relieved of service. This year this information got lost in the preparation of the Committee on Committees work packet, and more replacements were appointed than were needed. Having caught the problem, I have recommended that we not make the new appointments. We will see what the current situation is.

F. Revisions to the Policy on Policies and the charge for the new Committee on Learning Management Systems (with minor editorial corrections) have been sent to the OGC.

G. Joe Izen raises a question concerning increasing numbers of no credit courses in NS&M in response to legislative limits on the total credit hours the state will pay for. Mathematics and Chemistry use them, and physics will being in the Spring. He urges dialog with legislators. Also giving teaching credit to faculty for such courses based on contact hours with students.

In discussion in the Academic Council, it was agreed that we should develop a consistent policy. The obvious course of action would be to use the provision for laboratory sections. The Council had discussed this and asked the concerned schools to try to develop a policy to bring to the Senate. The Senate discussed the matter further and concurred.

5. FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT

As it turned out, no legislators or regents were available to meet with FAC. So discussion focused on the introduction and orientation of new members and system matters.

A. Murray Leaf (UTD) and Amy Jasperson (UTSA) introduced the Governance committee’s program for the year and invited new members. The committee will concentrate on two things.

One is supporting Dr. Prior’s efforts to counteract political lobbying that conveys seriously erroneous views of what higher education is and does. This mainly concerns with making
faculty and the public aware of the activities of the Texas Public Policy Foundation and a network of allied groups. The TPPF was the behind-the-scenes initiator and organizer of the special retreat on higher education called by Governor Perry last year for members of the boards of regents of all Texas universities. Evidently, they have decided to target regents as a group with important power over universities, but with little actual knowledge of how they function.

The second is an effort to mobilize academic support for those who support American higher education in the Congress, and to resist the increasing administrative intrusiveness that has developed as a largely unintended consequence of a number of well-intended federal Acts. This center on developing and circulating a petition.

The petition raises the question of what is allowable and not allowable lobbying by faculty. This issue has been raising problems for years. We will seek to get a definitive policy on it, so faculty on the several campuses will have a clear sense of what they can do by way of communicating with legislators and officials, and how they can do it.

B. Legislative report by Barry McBee, legislative liaison. Mr. McBee reported, among other things, that there will probably be a push in the legislature this year to base funding on credit hours completed rather than credit hours attempted. At present, UT system is mildly supporting. We need to give him some clear reasons to oppose this change.

C. The FAC had an interesting report from a subcommittee delegated to try to form an estimate of the costs of SACS accreditation? It is very high, both monetarily and financially. I will try to get a written copy, and circulate it.

D. Geri Malandra and Suzan Franzen reported on the progress toward forming the UT System Leadership Institute. This originated in an idea of the FAC to provide training for new department heads, and we (UTD and the FAC) have added the idea that training should also include faculty Senate chairs and potential chairs. They are about to role it out for a small group of administrators, which initially will be closer the level of deans and assistant provosts. The content of the program is based on responses to a questionnaire the distributed to the campuses—apparently only to presidents. A preliminary version was distributed to the FAC. I will put it on the Council agenda for discussion next month, and ask them to consider it as a discussion item for the Senate. In my view, it is in most respects much too generic, including a lot of stuff about getting along with people that is common to such programs in industry, but very little addressing the special constraints and requirements of academic and administrative leader in Texas in particular, and in the UT system. As it happens, we have a leadership training group in our PA program that is doing much the same thing with local government bodies in the metroplex, and they might be both more accessible and more readily adaptable to our needs—including the need to get better mid-level and faculty-level cooperation with UT Arlington and UT Southwestern.

6. INFORMATIONAL WEBSITE FOR FACULTY

http://www.utdallas.edu/provost/templates.html
Contains forms and approval processes for new degrees, new certificates, new departments, SACS substantive changes, etc. The website will be expanded to include status on new degree programs and policies...

Over the past year there have been many requests for more transparency with items such as academic certificates, professional certificates, certificate assessment plan, coordinating board programs, administrative change request, etc.

Any questions contact Serenity King x6749

7. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT REPLACEMENTS

Dr. Leaf outlined the changes to committee appointments as follows:

- Safety & Security – replace John Worrall with Lynne Vieraitis
- CQ – replace Robert Stern, Vice Chair with Adrienne McLean
- Faculty Mentoring – replace Russell Edmunds & Venus Reese with Tim Redman & Susan Briante
- Diversity & Equity – replace Erin Smith as the Vice Chair with Peter Park
- Campus Facilities – replace Andy Blanchard with Mark Spong
- Educational Policy – replace Paul Tracey with Lynne Vieraitis

Dr. Kieschnick moved to approve changes to committee appointments and Dr. Cantrell seconded the motion. The motion carried.

8. OGC APPROVED LMS (Learning Management Systems) POLICY

Dr. Leaf announced that this policy made it through OGC faster than any other policy up to now. But we also have several policies down there that have been there for 12 months.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS
NUMBERED POLICY MEMORANDA

POLICY MEMORANDUM 08-III.21-98
Draft: September 29, 2008

COMMITTEE ON LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

The Committee on Learning Management Systems is a Concurrent Committee of the Academic Senate charged to analyze, support, and provide advice and recommendations regarding the educational software package employed for instructional purposes. The Committee will advise the Responsible University Official on all aspects of the use and operation of such software and, if necessary, the selection of any successor software. It will also assist in long term planning and in designing and implementing programs for faculty instruction in the use of such software.
The Committee will also advise the President through the Academic Senate on strategy and policy regarding university software to support instruction. The Committee will communicate with the Committee on Distance Learning and, with them, will advise the Executive Vice President and Provost on academic and faculty issues that pertain to the maintenance, use, and improvement of this software.

By November 1, the Chair of the Committee will provide the Speaker of the Faculty with a copy of the agenda established by the Committee for its work during the academic year.

Annually, but no later than August 31, the Chair of the Committee will provide the Speaker of the Faculty with a written report for the Academic Senate of the Committee’s activities for the prior academic year.

The Committee is composed of five members appointed from the membership of the General Faculty, (as defined in Title III, Chapter 21, Section 1.B.1 of The University of Texas at Dallas Handbook of Operating Procedures), pursuant to the applicable procedures outlined in Title III, supra. The criteria for appointment shall be that they will be faculty who use WebCT and will represent a broad spectrum of disciplinary content and levels of instruction. Ideally, one member would be from each of six of the seven schools in the University. Up to twenty additional members, ex-officio may be appointed upon nomination of the Responsible University Official from the offices of Educational Enhancement, Information Resources, the Registrar, Audit and Compliance, and the instructional designers in the School of Management. The Associate Provost for Educational Enhancement serves as the Responsible University Official.

The terms for appointed faculty members shall be staggered so that no more than two-fifths of the terms expire in any one year. Of the initial five Committee members appointed from the membership of the General Faculty, two shall be appointed to one year terms and three shall be appointed for two year terms. Thereafter, unless specified otherwise in this charge, Committee members are appointed to two-year terms, and the Chair and Vice Chair are appointed annually. Members may be reappointed by the President for additional terms upon nomination of the Academic Council. If for any reason a Committee member resigns, the President, upon nomination of the Academic Council, shall appoint another individual to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

Dr. Cantrell moved to approve this policy as amended by OGC and Dr. Ishak-Boushaki seconded the motion. The motion carried.

9. CEP CALENDAR CHANGE REQUEST (see Appendix B)

We have a request from the Registrar to adjust the Summer 2009 Academic Calendar. The last day all grades must be received for Summer 2009 is August 19, 2009. The first day of the semester for Fall 2009 is August 20, 2009.

The request was to move the date grades are due back two days, from Wednesday, August 19, to Monday, August 17. This will still allow five days between the latest close of the
examination week and the due date. In discussion, the Senate agreed that we should make the resolution for a more general cases.

Dr. Cantrell moved to approve moving the date grades in the Summer term, 2009, from Wednesday, August 19, to Monday, August 17, and to establish as a general policy that there should be at least five days between the close of the examination week and the date that grades must be posted. Dr. Scotch seconded the motion. The motion carried.

10. CEP – MINOR IN NANOSCIENCE (see Appendix A)

Dr. Cantrell reported that this proposal was written by a couple of McDermott scholars students and it is the best proposal that CEP has seen in a long time.

Students must take a minimum of 18 credit hours for the minor, at least 12 of which must be upper-division hours. No credit hours may be used to satisfy both the major and minor requirements; however, free elective hours or major preparatory classes may be used to satisfy the minor. Students will be able to contact the academic advisor in their major for a list of the courses that satisfy each minor.

Students must complete a minimum of 18 credit hours from the following courses and are responsible for completing all prerequisite courses.

Dr. Cantrell moved to approve proposal and Dr. Amin Gutierrez de Piñeres seconded the motion. The motion carried.

11. EPPS BYLAWS CHANGES (see Appendix B)

Dr. Leaf outlined the changes made to the EPPS bylaws. They mainly involve incorporating general university policies for personnel review into the school procedures and adjusting them explicitly to the school organization, rather than leaving the school faculty to seek that information elsewhere.

Dr. Holmes moved to approve the changes in the bylaws and Dr. Amin Gutierrez de Piñeres seconded the motion. The motion carried.

12. PETITION TO REFORM FEDERAL SANCTIONS

This originated in the Governance committee of the UT System Faculty Advisory Council and has been approved by the entire FAC. The next step is to disseminate it, with the aim of bringing these concerns to the concerned committees of the US House and Senate, to indicate our concern and our support for a more rationalized approach to higher education regulation.

To: Senate Health Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee (Senator Edward Kennedy, Chair) and the House Education and Labor Committee (Representative George Miller, Chair).
Petition to Reform Federal Sanctions Pertaining to American Institutions of Higher Education.

The U. S. Congress has authorized various agencies to create and enforce regulations. In many cases the regulatory burden and the penalties that the agencies have deemed appropriate are disproportionate to possible damage from failure to comply (see appendix for list of Acts and penalties). These penalties commonly include exceedingly large fines and the possibility of cutting all federal funds. The regulations also commonly preclude appeal to courts.

While we fully endorse the purposes of these laws, unreasonable sanctions interfere with our abilities to compete effectively, both domestically and internationally. The problems include the following:

- Regulations often are written too broadly.
- Potentially disastrous sanctions cause universities to hire large numbers of staff to assure nominal compliance.
- Excessive and inappropriate sanctions distort the concept of “risk.”
- Agencies have become potential vehicles for the imposition of ideologically and politically motivated agendas or policies of the sitting administration.
- Imposing centralized, bureaucratic control beyond appropriate oversight is destructive of an autonomous and independent system of academic and scientific self-regulation.

Because of the increasing reliance of state universities on federal funding and the increasing national reliance on universities to meet the nation’s needs for research and higher education, we must do better.

The undersigned representatives of faculty governance organizations petition our representatives to inform themselves of the impacts of these Acts and to amend them so as to eliminate these adverse effects.

Specifically, we ask for the following types of amendments:

1. Align penalties with actual or likely damage.
2. Provide for appeals to courts with regard to comparability to penalties that would be imposed under ordinary tort or contract standards.
3. Provide for public hearings on proposed regulations and changes, with congressional participation.
4. Increase congressional oversight over the administrative agencies.
5. End entirely the practice of threatening to eliminate all federal funds for an infraction under any one Act.

Dr. Cantrell moved to approve the petition and Dr. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Dr. Leaf will now attempt to obtain a definitive position on the way laws on lobbying bear on such resolutions.
13. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Wildenthal asked for motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Izen moved to adjourn and Dr. Urquhart seconded the motion. The motion carried.

APPROVED: 
Murray J. Leaf
Speaker of the Faculty

DATE: December 2009