ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING
September 17, 2003


ABSENT: G. R. Dattatreya, Franklyn Jenifer, Young Ryu, Hobson Wildenthal

VISITORS: Priscilla Beadle, Michael Coleman, Ryan Davidson, John Hoffman, Stephen Rabe, Darrelene Rachavong, Sophie Rutenbar, Larry Terry

1. CALL TO ORDER, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Speaker Leaf called the meeting to order in the absence of President Jenifer and Executive Vice President and Provost Wildenthal.

Dr. Leaf announced that a plan is being considered by the new ad hoc committee on long term space allocation to purchase the current “Kodak” building and then to move the staff from Founders to this building while Founders undergoes renovation. Founders would then be renovated purely for classroom and teaching laboratories and instructional support. An additional possibility under discussion is Founders would also house a high-security testing center.

In the meantime, Dr. Leaf also indicated he would send a memo to the general faculty to see if there is interest in a testing center and that he will work with Dean Coleman in arranging as soon as possible some sort of site such as the gym in the Athletic Center for large-scale, proctored exams.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of July 16, 2003. The motion carried.
3. **SPEAKER’S REPORT**

The items of concern to the Senate but not on the Senate Agenda prepared by Academic Council are the draft policy on peer review for Senior Lecturers and the draft revision of the policy on Centers and Institutes. There are also some developments the Senate needs to be aware of regarding the Senate web site, changes to Regents Rules and planning for the space allocation changes associated with Project Emmett.

A. Following our established procedure, we have asked Tim Bray to replace Ron Yasin on the Academic Senate. He has accepted.

B. Draft Policy on Peer Review for Senior Lecturers. The draft was circulated to the Deans of the schools (copied to the Provost) in early June, asking for responses by the end of July. A reminder went out in mid-July. We have received responses from just two deans, Jim Murdoch (Social Sciences) and George Fair (General Studies). Dean Murdoch said it would fit into the current Social Sciences bylaws without trouble. Dean Fair said that because of the peculiar faculty profile of his school it has little bearing on their operations. I will now ask for reactions from the Provost and call a final meeting of the drafting committee. We will submit it to the Council next month for consideration for the agenda of the Senate.

C. Centers and Institutes. We now have two draft revisions to our current (1979) policy. The Council has referred the two drafts to the Graduate Council, chaired by Professor Cunningham, and the Advisory Committee on Research, chaired by Professor Cantrell. I spoke to Dean Cunningham at Commencement and he indicated that they had not yet considered it. I have heard nothing further. Professor Cantrell reports that he has not had a meeting yet and asked that we defer action until next month. On the assumption that neither body is likely to come up with consolidated wording that will strike the needed balance between the two drafts, I will try to meet with Provost Wildenthal to develop a single document for consideration at the October meeting.

D. Senate Website. Our administrative support for the website collapsed some time around last February, although I was not made aware of it until July when we got some complaints about the lack of Senate minutes. I have now brought the information up to date, but this is a stopgap. It is unreasonable to expect the Speaker or Secretary of the Faculty to also be able to manage the Senate website. More permanent arrangements need to be made. Concurrently, Ted Harpham has suggested that the site needs substantial revision to make it more inviting and usable and has offered some student help. After I brought this up in the last
Council meeting, Michael Coleman, with the concurrence of Provost Wildenthal, offered us the support of Linda Schell, who works on his website. I have talked to her. She agrees with Ted that the present site is ugly and will study it and make some proposals. In the meantime, any feedback you can provide will be helpful.

E. Regents Rules. After the last FAC meeting, I reported that the FAC had suggested revisions to Regents Rules to add wording to the effect that the duties assigned to the faculty in the Rules were to be carried out by representative governance bodies elected by the faculty of each campus, and that the FAC itself would be established on a permanent basis (it is now, under the rules, only an advisory committee that the Chancellor is empowered to establish if he wishes). The Chancellor has responded and does not wish to have these changes placed in the Rules. He would rather have them in a supplemental policy memorandum. This would be a substantial improvement over the present situation, but I will continue to try to urge a stronger position.

F. Project Emmit: President Jennifer has established a task force to consider the space allocation implications of the Emmit plan and the acquisition of the Kodak building. He asked me to sit on the group and to recommend one more faculty representative. I recommended Professor and Senator Juan Gonzalez. The committee has met and a plan seems to have been established.

G. Benefits for retirees. Last year we decided to join with the Staff Council in asking the administration for a series of benefits for retirees. These were to:

1. allow internet access through UTD, at the faculty rate,
2. allow use of the library,
3. allow retirees to attend intercollegiate sporting events at discount rate,
4. allow retirees to attend UTD cultural events at faculty/staff rates,
5. allow activities center membership (at faculty/staff rate),
6. allow retirees to audit courses without charge if space is available,
7. allow retirees to purchase parking permits
8. allow computer courses to be taken at faculty/staff rates,
9. allow access to discounted tickets form Info Depot, and
10. allow access to the Microsoft license agreement at faculty/staff rates.

The administration has now agreed to the requests, but they have not yet been implemented. We will continue to work with Staff Council and the administration to accomplish this, and expect the necessary arrangements to be regularized shortly.
H. Safety and Biosafety. We have not quite sorted out the problems in developing a truly systematic university safety plan, but we are working on it. A central problem is that System rules make the V P for Business Affairs the chief safety officer, but for research related issues it is the V P for Research and Graduate Education that is most closely involved. The problem is to work out some clear kind of dual responsibility. Another problem is that last year the Biosafety Committee did not actually meet, and we are therefore well behind in developing the Biosafety manual. Dennis Miller has now been appointed the Chair of the Biosafety Committee and we have arranged overlapping membership with Radiation safety and the Safety Council. At the same time, the Safety Council, chaired by Professor Goeckner, has taken the initiative and adopted the UTMB Biosafety manual as our own. This is a crucial area of concern for the campus, and we need to make progress rapidly. The prospects now look much better.

I. Academic Integrity: We have made up a trifold brochure on maintaining academic integrity that will be circulated by the Dean of Students through the Deans to the faculty. This will be repeated on a regular cycle.

J. Larry Overzet pointed out that there is a differential tax exposure under present options faculty have for funding medical insurance. If faculty fund it on the nine-month plan, it comes out of salaries and is pre-income-tax. If faculty do not spread their salaries over a 12 month period yet choose to pay for their insurance on a twelve month basis, the summer portion comes out of bank accounts and is post-income tax. I brought this up in Council and Larry Terry convened a group to consider options. It turns out that as record-keeping matter there is no way to base the twelve-month charges on salary deductions in a nine month period. Hence, the best we can do is to make sure that faculty are aware of this aspect of the choice between the two plans. This will be done.

K. Finally, I should report that letters of appointment have gone out for all Senate and University Committees. Only three appointees have declined, one on a Senate Committee and two on University Committees. All chairs have accepted their appointments.

4. DISCUSSION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Speaker Leaf introduced Dr. Darrelene Rachavong, the Dean of Students, who spoke about academic integrity, the number of discipline cases in the previous year and what the faculty can do to assist her in the handling of discipline cases.
Dr. Rachavong explained that under current rules no distinction was made between graduate or undergraduate cases. There were only three second time offenders last year. It is very rare to have repeat offenders, but all cases are handled on a case by case basis.

A question was asked, “Can faculty members confer with other faculty to see if a student has cheated in another class?” Dr. Rachavong’s response was “No, due to confidentiality laws.”

She also responded to another question about whether the punishment can be harsher for graduate students. The Senate could make such a decision, but if the Senate does so, there would be a tremendous increase in the workload for Dr. Rachavong as well as the President and OGC. Management and Engineering and Computer Science have the greatest amount of students undergoing discipline. Penalties vary depending on the severity and extent of the cheating or plagiarism. Dr. Rachavong thanked the faculty for their participation and assistance in the discipline cases. She also reminded the faculty that a student cannot be penalized without due process. She also indicated that the discipline process will be a continuing concern. There were a total of 230 discipline cases this past year which included drugs, alcohol, etc. Only 135 of these were for academic discipline.

5. ANNUAL REPORTS

COMMITTEE ON EFFECTIVE TEACHING
Speaker Leaf gave the CET report on behalf of Dr. Kiel. The Senate moved to accept the report.

COMMITTEE ON CORE CURRICULUM
Dr. John Hoffman, chair of the Committee on Core Curriculum gave the report from the committee. The Senate moved to accept the report.

COMMITTEE ON STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS
Speaker Leaf represented the report on this committee’s work on behalf of Dr. Mary Chaffin. The Senate moved to accept the report.
COMMITTEE ON QUALIFICATIONS

Dr. Stephen Rabe, Chair of the Committee on Qualifications presented the CQ report from the last year. He indicated that the CQ and the President and Provost agreed 28 of 29 times. There have been fewer new appointments due to budget constraints. Dr. Rabe also mentioned that the faculty members serving on the committee must devote considerable amounts of time reviewing files, etc. and they should be asked if they are willing to serve before they are officially appointed to the committee. The Senate moved to accept the report.

6. PROVOST’S REPORT ON THE COMMITTEE ON QUALIFICATIONS REPORT

Dr. Larry Terry presented the Executive Vice President and Provost’s report on the CQ report for the year. As mentioned above, there was only had one disagreement with CQ’s recommendations. He also indicated that the faculty really need to adhere closer to the time frames, and he will be working closely with the chairs of the various review committees this year to assist them in adhering to the time frames.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The business was concluded and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Goertzen
Academic Governance Secretary