ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING
September 18, 2002


ABSENT: Milind Dawande, Matthew Goeckner, B.P.S. Murthi, Suresh Radhakrishnan, Tres Thompson

VISITORS: Priscilla Beadle, Austin Cunningham, Richard Huckaba, Ellen Safley, Larry Terry, Laurie Ziegler

1. CALL TO ORDER, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Dr. Jenifer called the meeting to order and answered questions as presented by the Senators.

A question was raised about the average raise for the faculty. Dr. Jenifer responded that the average of 3% was approved and distributed to each of the Deans.

A question was raised about the remodeling of Founders Building. There are several possibilities about this renovation but nothing has been decided about what exactly to do. A time frame has not been established yet, but Dr. Jenifer indicated that we need to move reasonably fast because we need to get the Regents’ approval, etc. if we’re going to try to build a new building and we probably also have to go to the Legislature this year for additional funding in the amount of $10M to $15M more.

Were the final enrollment figures what were projected? Dr. Jenifer said that it looked like we would be close to a 7% increase which is good for us. The “mix” wasn’t what was projected. The lower division went up but the upper division went down so that lowers our revenues.
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of July 17, 2002 as amended. The motion carried.

3. SPEAKER'S REPORT

The main Senate activities since the last meeting of the Council have revolved around approval of candidates for degrees, appointments to the Senate and University Committees and bylaws for the Committee on Committees, the concern over the system policy regarding criminal background/criminal history checks, maintaining academic integrity, the proposal for a graduate council, the Council subcommittee on faculty involvement in planning and budget, and the effort to produce bylaws guidelines for schools and departments.

A. Results of email ballots on approval of candidates for undergraduate and graduate degrees: There are a total of 32 possible votes. Twenty three voted to approve and nine did not vote. The motions carried.

B. Committee on Committees. After the Senate approved the initial list of committee recommendations for the Senate committees and endorsed the recommendations for the University committees, there was one case of a recommended chair of a Senate Committee being unable to serve (because of an unexpected administrative appointment), two cases of declensions of recommended chairs of University committees, and, in association with this, some discordance between the recommendation approved by the Senate and membership suggested subsequently by the Vice President for Research and Graduate Education regarding the biosafety and human subjects committees. The Committee on Committees resolved the problem with the Senate committee on its own. Efforts to do the same thing with the University Committees, together with the differences over the lists of proposed members for the biosafety and human subjects committees, raised procedural issues. These were addressed in a meeting between the Speaker, the Provost, and the Vice President for Research and Graduate Education and resolved. The resolution appears in the bylaws of the Committee on Committees. These are attached as an information item. Basically, consistent with the idea that the Senate appoints members of the Senate committees but only advises the administration on the University Committees, the agreement is that once the Senate has voted on its recommendations, the
Committee on Committees will resolve further problems that arise with Senate Committees, but, while it will be available for consultation on the University committees, it will not become involved in contacting nominees, seeking replacements, and the like unless asked to do so by the Provost.

A further agreement, not appropriate for inclusion in bylaws, is that to assure mutual understanding in regard to complex issues of the sort represented by the Biosafety and Human Subjects committees, the Speaker will meet personally with the Vice President for Research and Graduate Education at the beginning of the nomination cycle, before the Committee on Committees makes its recommendations. Previously, recommendations were solicited from the VP for Research and Graduate Education by email.

C. Background checks. There is an apparent discrepancy between what the FAC was told about the general status of this policy at the FAC meeting last June and what the administration has been told since then. The FAC was told that this was only system level policy and that it was up to each campus to make its own interpretation. The administration has apparently been told it is policy for everyone and must be implemented as it stands. By now, you should all have received an email from our Human Resources director giving you a link to the system policy, with the unambiguous meaning that it is to be followed—although at present only for staff and not faculty. I have discussed this at considerable length with the President and the Chairman of the FAC. It has also been discussed in Staff Council and the Deans and Directors meeting. It seems to me that this is issue of such importance that it is essential that we maintain a unified and proactive position. The more we look at it the more mischievous it appears to be. Accordingly, at the Academic Council meeting it was agreed that the best way to approach it for the moment was to place it on the agenda for discussion and to set up a subcommittee to work with the Provost in framing a unified position.

D. Academic Integrity. I have sent a general memo to all faculty advising them of what we have done so far. Provost Wildenthal addressed the topic in the orientation program for new faculty. Dean Rachavong will send out a memo to the Deans asking them to invite her to attend school level discussions. I will also be available. She is also putting together what she thinks should go in an information packet to faculty. She will forward this to the Senate Subcommittee on Academic Integrity to add what they think advisable and design a brochure or pamphlet, and then she and the committee will work out a schedule for production and for annual reproduction and renewal of the effort.
E. Graduate Council. Dean Cunningham called a meeting of Deans and their graduate program coordinators to discuss Senate Subcommittee’s draft on September 9th. The present form has the Deans’ assent.

F. Faculty involvement in planning and budget. The subcommittee has met; the report is an agenda item. The main conclusion is that we should let this wait until we see what happens with the school and department bylaws.

G. Guidelines for Schools and Departments bylaws. The Senate Subcommittee met twice and had fairly extensive conversations by email. Two alternative versions were presented to the Council for consideration, one of which was, however, inclusive of the possibilities presented by the other. The more inclusive version, with some modifications in the interest of intelligibility, has been placed on the present agenda.

H. Email Workshops. Since we have many new faculty and at the same time the email system has become more complex because of changing technologies as well as more problems with security, Professors Scotch and Yasbin have suggested that Information Resources might offer a workshop on email for faculty. Mr. Hargrove would like to do it. Since the Council could not foresee any objection and the agenda for today was already crowded, it was agreed that Professor Yasbin would convey the faculty’s endorsement directly and place the item on the Senate agenda as an information item only.

I. Electronic Journals appearing in our catalog with delayed availability. The Senate has received queries from several faculty regarding a notification that certain electronic journals in our catalog are not available until several months or even a year after their actual date of publication. The Council asked the Speaker to refer the matter to the Library Committee. In the meantime, however, correspondence between Professor Yasbin and the library staff indicated that in all cases these journals are free. A follow up conversation with Dr. Safley, however, indicated that while they are free they are not actually secure. I have asked Dr. Safley to report on the situation today.

J. Senior Lecturers. The Senior Lecturers held their annual caucus to elect Senate representatives on Friday, 13 September, 2002. 27 of 129 Senior Lecturers attended. Those elected as representatives were Marilyn Kaplan (M), Liz Salter(GS) and Doug Benn (ECS). Joseph Picken will be alternate, in the event that one of the three is unable to complete their term. The Caucus also developed a tentative list of concerns, and agreed to reconsider the recommendations in the
list they developed two years ago, in accordance with the suggestion of the Senate at its last meeting. The tentative list included the timing of issuance of contracts and terms of contracts, the nature of the Senior Lecturer career path, and the inclusion of Senior Lecturers on the faculty email list. Issues raised but deemed to be resolved in principle already were the ability of Senior Lecturers to serve on Ph.D. committees and to apply for research grants. In both cases, the answer is that they can. If they are being told otherwise, this should be brought to the attention of the Senate or appropriate higher administrators.

K. Committee Reports: We have received annual reports from the Teaching Award Committee, the Committee on Effective Teaching, and the CQ. Although these came in too late to put in the packet sent to the Council, the Council has placed the CQ report on the agenda for this Senate. The reason is to let us receive it and hear the Provost’s report on the administrative response to it along with his report on the evaluations of administrators. The other reports will be placed on the agenda for next month.

4. HOMECOMING

Laurie Ziegler brought information about the Homecoming activities this year. She was encouraging faculty participation in any of these events, but recommended attendance at the Lindberg event on Friday night. There will be a parade Saturday and the dance on Saturday night.

5. ELECTRONIC JOURNAL UPDATE

Ellen Safley reported on the electronic journals concerns. The journals that have had delayed access are all free to the University. The come to us from the state in the TexShare Program. Since the Legislature will be looking at the possibility of cutting this program and faculty are making use of it, she urged the faculty to indicate this utilization by applying for the common card that is associated with it.

6. GRADUATE COUNCIL

Dr. Cunningham presented the proposed Graduate Council that had been presented to the Deans Council and was therefore approved. A motion was made and seconded to approve the charge to the Graduate Council circulated, with minor editorial amendments. The motion passed.
7. COMMITTEE ON QUALIFICATIONS REPORT

Dr. Leaf presented the annual report of the Committee on Qualifications. In the report is the tally of the CQ’s recommendations.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the report for the Senate. The motion was approved.

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

Dr. Wildenthal presented his report on the Committee on Qualifications report. He commented that the procedure has been refined a little bit regarding faculty that are wanting to be reviewed earlier. The tenure and promotion process has also been backed up to begin in the Spring as opposed to Fall. The problem of workload for CQ is still being discussed. Nothing has been decided to date.

9. REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF THE PROGRAM REVIEWS AND REVIEWS OF THE DEANS

Two programs were reviewed this year, Arts and Humanities and Human Development. A&H program reviewers were very supportive of the many diversities of the A&H program. Issues they thought needed improvement were at the undergraduate level where they recommended that the collection of courses be refined for a clearer hierarchy. At the graduate level the evaluation of the programs was that it was strong and healthy and did not need any change. The doctoral program in history they didn’t think was healthy and the graduate program would benefit from more disciplinary studies courses. A&H reviewers commented that the School needed more faculty, staff and space.

The evaluation of the Dean of A&H was handled this past year. There was a great deal of faculty participation and Dr. Wildenthal has relayed the information from the evaluations to Dean Kratz. There was positive feedback on his performance and the direction that the School is going under his direction. There was some discussion about the timing of the evaluation and not enough turn around time.

The School of Human Development was reviewed by national figures who said that the central administration is not meeting their responsibilities vis a vis Human
Development’s needs because of the quality of space, equipment, lack of faculty and staff, etc. They have also recommended a change of name from the school to Behavioral Brain and Sciences. The faculty have also agreed with this. The Ph.D. program would also be changed. This will be reviewed when officially submitted to the Central Administration. One challenge is that we need more faculty but with the budget problems, how do we give Human Development more and not other areas.

Dr. Jordan’s committee has been sent copies of these reports and his committee will be on campus the end of October.

The program review committee has not met yet to decide whether program reviews will be conducted this year considering budget cut backs.

A question was asked whether just academic programs were being reviewed. The Committee continues to review this same topic. The purpose of this committee is to make sure a program is not eliminated without being properly reviewed and faculty will not be terminated because of a program being eliminated.

A question was asked about the review of General Studies last year. Dr. Wildenthal reported that the school is unique with a small number of faculty and cooperates with a high level of collaboration with the other schools. The school is working well but the reviewers said the school wasn’t understood.

Dean Caldwell, Natural Sciences and Mathematics was reviewed. Dr. Wildenthal reported that there was a large number of faculty asked to review the Dean, but not a good return from the faculty. The results could be divided into thirds. One group was highly laudatory, a second was analytically critical of operational effectiveness, and the third group listed both positive and negative aspects of Dean Caldwell’s performance. A number of improvements and changes (that had been suggested by the faculty that had responded) were shared with Dean Caldwell. Provost Wildenthal stated that NSM is a big academic unit and it must decide what path it will be taking with respect to it actually being one large department with a Dean functioning as a super head or being a true school with multiple departments based on distinct disciplines. Provost Wildenthal also stated that NS&M is clearly in need of renovation and space increases and that this must be taken into account in any long range planning. These pressing needs have been discussed with the Dean and Dr. Caldwell was asked to continue as Dean.
10.  BY-LAWS SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Leaf presented the By-laws Subcommittee Report with changes that the Academic Council recommended. Three schools already have by-laws: Management, Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences. Social Sciences is redoing theirs, Engineering and Computer Science is working on theirs. At the department level, only the Biology Department and Mathematics in the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics have them.

The Guidelines include a recommended change to Policy Memorandum 75-III.22-3. The purpose of this change is to allow the School Personnel Review Committee to be either elected by the faculty or appointed by the Dean. At present, the wording suggests that is should only be appointed. The reason for the change is related to the possibility that the bylaws for the schools could establish an elected Executive Committee to advise the Dean. The amendment to the Policy Memorandum will allow this Executive Committee to be merged with the Personnel Review Committee if the faculty should so desire, whether the Executive Committee would be elected or appointed.

At present, no School in the University has an Executive Committee. Whether or not they wish to establish such a committee, however, all the schools will need to review their bylaws as they stand in the light of the discussions in the Guidelines. There are two main reasons. First, schools may wish to adopt ideas from one another or otherwise bring their policies into closer mutual alignment. Second, no bylaws as they stand are in conformance with all relevant present University policies.

A motion was made and seconded to approve acceptance of the report on the guidelines and to change Policy Memorandum 75-III.22-3 regarding the Policy Review committee. The motion passed.

A question was asked about whether the Senior Lecturers would have voting rights until this change. The answer is that as matters stand it is up to the several schools. This was discussed at some length but no action was taken.

11.  HANDBOOK OF OPERATING PROCEDURES, TITLE III, CHAPTER 21, SECTION I.B./DEFINITION OF GENERAL FACULTY

Dr. Beadle presented the changes that need to be made to this document to conform with the Regents' Rules changes, mainly involving changes to the list of available academic titles. These changes included Clinical Professor, etc.
The title of Instructor is used for a person who was expected to be hired as an Assistant Professor but has not yet received his or her Ph.D.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the recommended changes to the Handbook of Operating Procedures. The motion passed.

12. PROPOSED CRIMINAL BACKGROUND AND CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS

Dr. Leaf spoke to the U. T. System policy on background checks. The Faculty Advisory Council was told that these were only guidelines and each University will make their own interpretation. However, President Jenifer was told that these are policies and they should be implemented. Faculty being hired would be subjected to background checks but would not be told what was found. However, it is possible that the person may not be hired because of something found on the check. Some things that might be in the file could be accusations and not actually factual. The Chancellor thinks the background check is not something that should be done.

A meeting was held in Austin regarding this topic. This policy was developed some years ago. A small group is going to be convened to review the policy and possibly rewrite them so that each institution will develop their own policy. This group will submit their report to the System.

Dr. Leaf suggested developing a small working group to review this proposed policy.

Richard Huckaba spoke to the Staff Council’s discussion about the discrimination that staff have to undergo the checks while faculty do not.

Richard Scotch recommended support of the Staff Council’s initiatives from UTD or around the state undergoing background checks.

Dr. Jenifer agreed that we should support the Staff’s initiatives and coordinate our activities in supporting the staff and review the policy that comes from System.

Richard Huckaba said the Staff Council delayed taking action until they hear the results of the meeting in Austin.
Names were solicited to be involved with this small group and the following volunteered: Richard Scotch, Doug Benn, Ivor Page, Richard Huckaba and Cy Cantrell. Dr. Leaf will call the group together for a meeting.

Dr. Terry mentioned that guest speakers coming to campus wouldn't have to undergo background checks. This was a miscommunication that needed to be clarified.

13. ANNUAL REPORTS OF SENATE COMMITTEES: CEP, LIBRARY COMMITTEE, COMMITTEE ON STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

A motion was made and seconded to accept the annual reports as presented. The motion passed.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The business was concluded and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Goertzen
Academic Governance Secretary