

University of Texas of the Permian Basin
Faculty Senate Minutes
November 18, 2009

Members Present: Linda Autry, Derek Catsam, Shirley Davenport, James Eldridge, Joanna Hadjicostandi, Nancy Hart, Jeannine Hurst, Rachel Juarez-Torres, Gae Kovalick, Jim Olson, Prakash Pai, Todd Richardson, Mike Robinson, Joe Stauffer (for Wilma Dye), Chad Vanderford (faculty secretary).

I. Call to Order 2:05 pm

II. Approval of Minutes

Senate unanimously approved amended minutes.

III. QEP Presentation

Pat Sherblom gave a presentation on the QEP (Quality Enhancement Program) at UTPB. She described the various stages the committee went through before creating the current model: “C⁴: to Clarify, Collect, Consider, Conclude.” She also introduced the three-stage Paul and Elder Model of Critical Thinking. Finally, she described the next four stages for implementing these programs, with a time-line running from the present to 2014.

IV. Senate President’s Report

A. University Committee for Environmental Sustainability

President Watts has approved the plan for this committee. It will report directly to him, making recommendations regarding sustainability practices. The director of the Physical Plant will serve as an ex officio member. Senate President welcomes further suggestions regarding the best way to set up the committee and regarding other tasks it should assume.

B. Master Plan

Senate President forwarded the Senate’s comments regarding the Master Plan to President Watts. Comments are now part of the Senate minutes for October 21, 2009.

C. Parking

President Watts has called for a committee to address the issue of parking. He would like to have two Faculty Senators on the committee.

D. Senate Website

The website now has a link to the HOP, Senate minutes going back to 2008, and a list of pending issues.

E. Texas Council of Faculty Senates

Members of the Council devoted much attention to the THECB’s interest in standardizing the core curriculum. Senate President has been in contact with Dr. Kovalick about locating a “point person” at UTPB to deal with THECB on this matter.

V. Subcommittee Reports

A. University Curriculum

At their next meeting the Committee needs to approve a series of documents.

B. Faculty Affairs

1. Student Clubs

a. Motion One

“For Student Clubs, allocate funds from student activity fees to defray 100% all table/chair set up fees, custodial fees, and utility fees charged by Physical Plant, and Police/Security fees charged by UTPB Police.”

The Senate approved this motion with one Senator voting against.

b. Motion Two

“Establish a permanent university committee with its aim the ‘care and nurturing’ of Student Clubs. This committee is designed to be a ‘Student Club Advocacy Committee,’ and will make recommendations to the President of the University and/or the Vice President of Student Services. It is aimed at raising awareness of the importance of Student Clubs to campus life, of increasing seed monies, and generally stimulating the growth and financial viability of Student Clubs.”

The Senate sent this motion back to the Faculty Affairs committee, asking them to investigate whether a similar committee might already exist.

c. Motion Three

“Retroactive to September 1, 2009, establish a ‘care and nurturing’ process where Student Clubs may receive seed monies for their campus activities as follows. First, \$50 for Student Clubs who participate all day during Club Day. Second, \$25 for each of two executive officers and the faculty supervisor of a Student Club on the Leadership Training Weekend, up to \$75 maximum. Third, \$50 for each booth a Student Club staffs during the Halloween carnival, which is largely a community event designed to bring local citizens on campus; \$100 maximum.”

[Note, for each of 40 Student Clubs, who were seeded the maximum of \$225 in the three ways specified above, this would amount to a total of \$9,000. Considering the value clubs bring to the social life of campus, student engagement, student retention, and graduation rates, this seems a very economical way to reinforce Student Clubs for their elevation of campus life.]

The Senate approved, with one Senator voting against.

2. HOP Revisions

Committee chair circulated a four-page handout with various parts of the HOP that he thinks the Senate should consider changing. Doing so would require a motion to be introduced at a future meeting.

C. Student Affairs

No business brought before the Senate

D. Academic Affairs

1. Plagiarism

Committee Chair noted that UT Dallas has a Faculty committee that deals with plagiarism issues. Several Senators suggested that the Academic Affairs committee produce a motion to create a similar committee at UTPB.

2. Motion: Create a Committee on Dual Credit

“Establish a committee with the purpose to deal with issues of dual credit students. The committee will work directly with councilors at the high schools and establish rules to facilitate the high school students’ transition into college classes.”

The Senate voted to table this motion.

3. Pending Issues

The Committee discussed the issue of GPA requirements, noting that the College of Arts and Sciences and the Schools of Business and Education can adopt distinct policies if they so choose. They have begun investigation of the safety issues regarding the locking of classroom doors. They also considered the merits of adopting a distinction between “WF” and “WP” grades.

E. Budget and Governance

No business brought before the Senate.

F. GEOC

No business brought before the Senate.

G. HOP

Committee met recently to discuss IRD issues. Much of the material in the HOP regarding IRD issues needs to be updated.

VI. Adjournment: 4:00

VII. Appendix (Pending Issues)

A. September 2008

Strategic Plan

Senate changed wording to include faculty from other disciplines besides STEM. Senate will ensure the implementation of changes.

B. March 2008

1. Campus paper and cardboard recycling

Dr. Watts approved plan to resume recycling on campus; faculty await implementation by Physical Plant. Senate President has followed up on this with Lail Grant, interim director. No response yet.

2. Parking Issues

Senate voted that all seven existing parking spaces by the dumpsters west of silver parking be converted to handicapped parking. They also voted to put flashing lights, painted lines, and 15 mph speed limit signs for pedestrian crossing in front of GAB. Finally, they voted that, Physical

Plant should, where necessary, make sure there are curb cuts for wheelchair users. Lail Grant, interim director of Physical Plant, indicated in November 2009 that it is not practical at this time to transform these places into handicapped spots.

C. January 2007

Online course evaluations

Dr. Fannin has approved transfer of course evaluations to an online medium, academic affairs committee currently developing a working plan.

D. April 2006

Changes to HOP and/or catalogue regarding minimum GPA required for graduation.

Senate President will check history of this senate action for possible resubmission to Dr. Watts.

E. March 2006

Child Care Center

There will be a child care center in the new student center. Faculty likely will not be able to make use of the facility because the student center was built with student funds. If student use is low after two years in operation, faculty then may be allowed to make use of the facility, according to Dr. Watts on October 26, 2009. The development office is still trying to raise funds for a free-standing child care center which faculty may use.

F. November 2005

Labor reimbursements for Physical Plant

Senate argued that student organizations should receive a waiver for these fees. On October 26, 2009, Dr. Watts maintained that Physical Plant must assess these fees because the full steam plant must be in operation in order to send HVAC to even a single room, and this procedure costs money. Even so, Dr. Watts will ask Dr. Chris Forrest to review these policies for possible revision.

G. October 2004

1. Faculty development leave

Administration has approved; faculty awaits implementation. Senate will follow up with Dr. Fannin.

2. Faculty work load

Senate requested that this load be changed to 9/9. Administration plans to keep it at 12/12. According to Dr. Watts on October 26, 2009, UTPB faculty have not brought in as much research funds as faculty at other universities, and our faculty student ratio remains one of the lowest in the state. Dr. Watts maintains that keeping a 12/12 teaching load on the record defends UTPB from attacks from some in positions of power who try to cut university funding on the basis that faculty do not do enough work.