

*University of Texas of the Permian Basin*  
*Faculty Senate Minutes*  
December 9, 2009

**Members Present:** Linda Autry, Derek Catsam, Shirley Davenport, James Eldridge, Paul Feit, 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. Directed Self-Placement (DSP)***

Dr. Rebecca Babcock presented a proposal to the Senate. This proposal begins with the premise that the current placement test for deciding whether freshman students need to take ENGL 0399 “does not reflect the actual practices students will use when writing in their required composition courses.” The proposal then moves to a second premise: “that students are the ones who can best judge their writing backgrounds, skills and needs.” Finally, it reaches the conclusion, backed by a citation of sources, that by giving students the option of skipping ENGL 0399 and enrolling directly in ENGL 1301 one can expect an eleven-percent increase in retention. The University thus plans to begin a DSP program during Fall Semester 2010. No action taken by the Senate.

***IV. Faculty Athletic Representative Report***

Dr. Spencer Thompson reported to the Senate regarding an NCAA training seminar that he recently attended in Indianapolis. He described some of the new regulations that the NCAA plans to implement regarding certification of athletes. Some of these regulations include: requiring freshman athletes to have a degree plan on file and requiring them to have completed 12 hours of coursework with appropriate grades before then can participate in athletics during the Spring Semester. Dr. Thompson also described several ongoing compliance investigations, noting that even the smallest infractions receive serious attention. No action taken by the Senate

***V. Senate President’s Report***

***A. Faculty Assembly***

Senate President noted that the Faculty Assembly will meet on December 11, 2009. At that meeting each Senate sub-committee chair will give a brief presentation regarding the business they have conducted since the last meeting of the Assembly.

***B. News Updates***

***1. Paper Recycling***

Beginning in early 2010, UTPB will commence a paper recycling program.

***2. Student Clubs***

President Watts has approved the following motion recently passed by the Senate: “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 following motion, however, remains under evaluation: “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.”

### *3. Senate Webpage*

Dr. Richardson noted that Senate minutes can now be accessed on-line. He then inquired whether pending issues should go on the web-page as part of the Senate Minutes or as a separate document. Senate introduced following motion: “That pending issues should be posted on-line separately from the Senate Minutes.” Senate unanimously approved the motion.

### *4. Senate Bylaws*

Beginning next semester, the executive committee will need to begin the process of updating the Senate by-laws.

### *5. Emeritus Nomination*

The Senate has received two letters nominating Duane Leach to the rank of Professor Emeritus. Reports state that a third letter is on the way. The Senate will, therefore, prepare to issue a report to the administration.

## **VI. Subcommittee Reports**

### ***A. University Curriculum***

No business brought before the Senate.

### ***B. Faculty Affairs***

The Committee continues to welcome comments and suggestions regarding the best way to revise the Handbook of Operating Procedures.

### ***C. Student Affairs***

No business brought before the Senate.

### ***D. Academic Affairs***

Senate briefly discussed a variety of proposals for establishing a committee for dealing with plagiarism. The Senate then unanimously approved the following motion: “All candidates for undergraduate degrees for the fall 2009 graduation who have met all degree requirements shall be awarded their respective degrees.”

### ***E. Budget and Governance***

Committee chair noted that they would have a report out early next semester describing a proposed 3% raise in tuition.

### ***F. GEOC***

Committee Chair distributed a report outlining a three-phase change in the Higher Education Accountability System. Phase 1 involves the introduction of core curriculum learning outcomes. Phase 2 focuses on learning outcomes in individual courses. Phase 3 “will focus on how learning

outcomes, particularly general education/core curriculum outcomes, can be assessed as a way of determining the value that the higher education experience has on students.”

***G. HOP***

At a recent meeting members of the committee discussed the issue of “low-performing majors.” The University may have to cut programs that fail to graduate enough students. The committee investigated what would happen to tenured faculty in these disciplines.

***VII. Adjournment: 4:00 P.M.***