

Faculty Senate Meeting

Minutes

April 5, 2019
1:00pm–2:30pm

Attendees: Dr. Emily Cutrer, Dr. David Yells, Dr. Nurul Alam, Dr. David Allard, Dr. Drew Morton, Dr. Jan Murdock, Dr. Craig Nakashian, Dr. Ben Neuman, Dr. Abbie Strunc, Dr. Wai Yuen Chan, Dr. Richard Parsons, Dr. Feodor Vainstein, Dr. Jim Harbin

- I. Call to order
- II. President's Report Dr. Emily Cutrer
 - Dr. Cutrer will be going to Austin with student ambassadors to advocate for the university. Things are looking pretty good in regards to legislation. There is a possibility of a small increase in formula funding from the house and senate.
 - Ben Stein event in Texarkana was very successful. All proceeds will go towards scholarships of transfer students from Texarkana College to TAMUT. This lecture series will continue to be hosted once a year with different guest speakers.
 - Retention and Graduation work group has been meeting. The group is currently coming up with a preliminary list to improve retention and graduation rates. Dr. Parsons expressed that TAMUT's retention rate is the lowest in the A&M System. The 6 year graduation rate isn't the lowest but it is not great. Dr. Cutrer did discuss the possibility of putting all the data on a share drive for faculty to view and submit recommendations.
- III. VPAA Report Dr. David Yells
 - The NSSE (Student Engagement Survey) of high impact practices has been submitted.
 - The system has been made aware of some export control issues, they will send a response with recommendations.
- IV. Approval of Minutes Dr. Richard Parsons
 - Motion to approve minutes Dr. WY Chan
 - Second Dr. Drew Morton
 - Minutes approved on a unanimous vote
- V. President of Faculty Senate Report..... Dr. Richard Parsons
 - Dr. Parsons discussed Retention Work Group (see comments under Agenda Item II)
- VI. Old Business
 - a) Scholarly Recognition Dr. Richard Parsons
 - Dr. Parsons created a list of all scholarly achievements that were submitted. A wine/cheese reception will be held at the April from 5:00-6:00 to recognize all achievements. A press release will be issued in regards to the recognitions. Sarah volunteered to help prepare data sheets for display and a poster of names.

- b) CORE Curriculum Issues Dr. Richard Parsons
While a number of helpful discussions have taken place between engineering and English on a technical writing class the key issue on process and shared governance remains.

Several faculty members expressed concern that the decision to immediately override a core class recommendation from the faculty was unprecedented and extreme. In the month that has followed, there have been opportunities to unwind the decision, but they have not been taken.

Options presented and discussed were

- No confidence vote
- Reporting the issue to SACS
- Shutting down either the curriculum committee or the senate.
- Several faculty members thought there was still a chance to unwind the decision.

In the end the faculty senate passed the following resolution and will try one last time to work the issue with administration:

Recently the administration made an unprecedented decision to overrule a vote by the Faculty Senate on CORE curriculum classes. Furthermore, there was no discussion with the Senate prior to overruling the significant 8 to 1 Senate vote. This puts in peril the concept of shared governance. In order to best support our students, the Faculty Senate is requiring that administration withdraw support for ENGR 2311 and 2312 core courses and support instead an English Tech Writing course. This move will reaffirm the administration's commitment to shared governance. Faculty Senate will hold all curriculum decisions until this issue is resolved.

This resolution passed 9 to 0 with one abstention.

VII. Consent Agenda Items

VIII. Committee Reports and Business Items

- a) Curriculum Committee - CORE Curriculum issues (see VI. b.)
- b) Education Technology – will be meeting with Dr. Yells for distance education quality (strategic plan)
- c) Academic Standards – Dr. Yells has request 3 faculty members for admissions standards committee, those 3 members are: Joe Burzynski, Walter Casey, & James Ngyuen
- d) Academic Rules and Procedures
- e) FRED – 3 new proposals were submitted, 2 approved and the other is for the Fall
- f) Faculty Status
- g) Budget Committee

IX. New Business

- a) Faculty Evaluations of Deans Dr. Richard Parsons
 - Senate will oversee evaluations this year instead the evaluations being submitted to the VPAA. They can be submitted to Sarah Newman or via e-mail to Dr. Parsons.

- b) Change in Smoking Policy Dr. Richard Parsons
 - Current smoking area is not ADA compliant; the cost to make it compliant would be around \$12,000. The senate did not want to spend any money to make a smoking area ADA compliant. The Senate discussed several options including moving the smoking area to the “back porch” of the UC next the loading dock. The Administration is considering TAMUT becoming a smoke free campus and is seeking input from Staff Council and Faculty Senate. A majority of the A&M campuses are already smoke free. We understand that a smoking policy would include vaping. Some consideration would need to be discussed for safety of smokers who would need to walk off campus to smoke. The Senate supported moving toward a non-smoking campus in a reasonable way with a vote of:
 - 7 yes
 - 2 no
 - 1 abstention.

Next Meeting: May 3, 2019