

# ***Faculty Senate Meeting***

## ***Minutes***

May 16, 2019  
1:00pm–2:30pm

**Attendees:** Dr. David Yells, Dr. David Allard, Dr. Drew Morton (via phone), Dr. Craig Nakashian, Dr. Ben Neuman, Dr. Abbie Strunc, Dr. Doug Julien, Dr. Joan Brumm, Dr. Abbie Strunc, Dr. Jan Murdock, Dr. Brian Matthews, Dr. Angela Sikorski, Dr. Mohamed Morsy  
**Guest:** Dr. Joy Goldstein, Dr. Del Doughty, Dr. Corrine Hinton, Dr. Rebecca Martindale

A “special called” meeting was held on May 16 to discuss the ENGR technical writing course that was disapproved by the faculty senate but approved by the provost, Dr. David Yells.

I. Call to order at 1:00pm

II. Dr. Yells gave a statement in regards to the ENGR Technical writing class:

As most of you are aware, we have deleted the ENGR technical writing class from the fall course schedule and from our catalogue. We have also requested that it be deleted from our inventory of core courses at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

I believe that this reflects the will of the Faculty Senate as expressed in a resolution from earlier this semester. A small group of faculty members from CASE and CBET have been meeting to continue exploring the addition of a technical writing course to our core. I am in favor of such an addition which was the motivation for my ill-advised decision to approve the course despite the senate recommendation against approval.

My approval of the ENGR course as an addition to the core despite the senate recommendation of disapproval was incorrect, as was the process by which I arrived at the decision to take that action.

I am firmly committed to shared governance. Events of the recent past lead me to think that in order to more effectively practice shared governance, we need to be sure we have a shared understanding of shared governance. Based on conversations I have had with a number of faculty members and administrators, an open and intentional discussion about shared governance is needed that is not driven by a particular administrative decision but instead by a mutual desire to better understand the principles and practices of shared governance.

I believe that shared governance works best when the processes by which decisions are made are transparent and consistent. I do not think this is the case with our current curriculum process. This is not just my observation, but one shared by some faculty members and other administrators. There are some practices such as accepting proxy votes at committee meetings that are not reflected in our own policy. There is an unclear timeline and procedures for communicating curriculum committee actions are not obvious.

Another essential element for the effective practice of shared governance is that all faculty members feel safe in expressing their views. Several faculty members have come to me recently expressing their reluctance to weigh in publicly on issues being discussed in various settings because they fear retribution. We all need to do a better job of encouraging colleagues to speak their mind and be heard.

For me, the most helpful comment from the last Faculty Senate meeting was along the lines of “The provost made a bad decision, but can we learn something from it?” Indeed, it has been said that we should never waste a good crisis, a sentiment attributed to Machiavelli and Churchill, among others.

I would encourage all of us to spend some time this summer considering shared governance and how it can best operate on our campus. Some readings have been identified and links to them will be posted to my website under shared governance. If there is other material you would like to have made available, please forward it to myself or Norma.

In the fall, we will begin exploring the meaning of shared governance for TAMUT. I have some ideas of what that might look like, but I also invite the senate and faculty at large to also consider how such exploration might best be accomplished. What I hope is that we are able to develop a consensus document that will capture the essence of what shared governance means for this institution.

My door is always open and I am always willing to meet with faculty members to discuss their concerns. I appreciate your work and the work of the faculty in general and I hope you all have an enjoyable summer.

### III. Faculty Input

- Faculty discussed the topic and expressed appreciation to Dr. Yells for his statement.
- LCMC (Department of Literature, Composition, Media, and Communication) will do two things:

Immediately they will offer at least a section (more if needed) of Technical Writing with the ENGL suffix in the Fall.

Doug Julien will send to the curriculum committee a proposal that they should use a blanket sub for the core so that those taking the course in academic year 19-20 can have it applied to their core curriculum.

It should then go to the faculty senate and then to the provost.

Once that's done, Doug Julien will email the deans and advising that the course will be offered and will satisfy the core curriculum requirement in CAO (Core Area Option) A.

Next cycle, they will propose the course as a part of our core curriculum in CAO A.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30