

Baylor University Faculty Senate Minutes
9 October 2012 • 3:30 p.m. • Cashion 110

Absent: Garrett Cook, Mitch Neubert, Byron Newberry

- I. Call to Order
- II. Invocation by Senator Doug Claybrook
- III. Approval of Minutes from the 11 September 2012 Meeting: Moved by Sen. Patton, seconded by Sen. Baldrige. One correction: asbestos instead of asphalt in the report of the address to the Senate of President Starr.
- IV. Old Business
 - A. Master Teacher Policy:
Currently on Dr. Jim Bennighof's desk, may come to us by next Fac. Sen. Meeting.
 - B. Electronic Course Evaluations
Eric Baker presented the "Electronic Evaluations Committee" report.

His comments: percentage of responses to paper evaluations for Spring 2012 is approximately the same as is the percentage of responses to the electronic evaluations. The committee concluded, among other things, that the lowest-ranking evaluation responses were much rarer in the electronic evaluations than in the paper evaluations: Prof. Baker suggested that this can be seen as a favorable response, from the faculty-member's perspective.

He added that Law School students responded at a very low rate—something like 20%.

Further, he suggested several "Benefits of Moving to Electronic Course Evaluations" (see below).

Student comments: they like the half-hour off of class, do NOT like to spend the extra time in class that paper evaluations require.

After discussion, a faculty member suggested that when we give out the paper evaluation, we can almost ensure that 100%-95 % of the students respond. Eric responded that not all faculty members give out student evaluations in class: the implication is that the rating authority at Baylor seeks higher overall responses, though when a faculty member has these done in class, the response rate is something like 95%-100%.

C. Plus/Minus Grades

A concern of the Faculty Senate since last year: Senator David Hurt reported from the Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility, which determined that the issue is NOT one of academic freedom, so the committee did not consider the matter.

Another Senator noted that providing one simply indicates as much in his/her syllabus, he/she need not award plus or minus grades.

Another Senator noted that the charge to the committee was to discuss the effects upon student retention, satisfaction, GPA, etc. Senator Hurt said that he would take the issue back to the committee. He added that added minus grades would inevitably lower the GPA line, since the B+ line would inevitably become lesser, as the minus line grew. Another Senator noted that Baylor is the only one of the peer schools which has plus grades but no minus grades. Many of our peer schools have stayed with straight A-F grades, using no plus or minus grades.

Responding, another Senator said that there would be no change in the GPA if faculty members simply re-scaled their grading scale.

Dr. Still added, when asked, that the Student Congress preferred the status quo; they do not want to move to the 10-point blocks, which they see as a move backward. He added that the Student Congress would consider the change IF they could be persuaded that the change would increase the value of their degrees.

Another Senator suggested that Baylor GPAs “tend to be inflated” compared to those of other institutions. Another Senator said that medical school automatically drop the GPA one full grade if the system contains plus grades.

Final Decision: Senate Chair Todd Still asked that all Senators poll their departments to ask if members approve, or disapprove, of the adoption of plus and minus grades.

Finally, another Senator suggested that the long-ago Senate decision of April 2012 be exhumed and reconsidered by the Senate and the Provost.

D. Calendar for Academic Dean Evaluations

Chair Todd Still noted that he had photocopied a calendar, which he distributed. The Senate reviewed the suggested calendar.

E. Global Education Task Force Membership
Dr. Still next distributed the list of the “Global Education Task Force Membership” (see below).

F. University Calendar
The Senate is now being asked to affirm the calendar decisions as reported earlier, with the understanding that no contact hours will be lessened beyond comparable courses in peer institutions. The administration seeks Faculty Senate approval. There would be fewer days, but longer class periods, as Dr. Still understands it. “Less than ideal,” one Senator observed; Dr. Still agreed. Another Senator noted that for all four regular semesters and summer terms there would be no change; the May minimester is the only one that would be lessened in number of days. No one knew how many students enroll in the minimesters.

Another Senator had done a survey of the calendar, and found that two days would be subtracted from Summer Term 1. This, he suggested, would be a major problem. He added, “If the summer terms are the same lengths, that is acceptable; if lessened, UNacceptable.

Dr. Still asked for a response to the question of reducing the number of DAYS in Summer I and II. If the reconfigured calendar called for such a change, a majority of the Senate responded in a straw vote that they could not support the reduction of either summer term in number of days.

V. New Business

A. Recommendation Concerning Appeal Procedures at Baylor (Baird)
Dr. Baird noted that he perceives the need for a change in the appeal procedures: this appears in the Baylor policies under “University Grievance Policy.”

Dr. Baird noted that appeal of several kinds of grievances is rejected in the current document. The exclusions are bulleted on the page: there are seven of them. The seventh is “Grievances involving a faculty member’s annual evaluation or compensation, which are governed by the Evaluation/Compensation Appeal Process.” Dr. Baird reported that an entire new committee would have to be formed in order to have a body to deal with such a grievance. He suggests that such a committee already exists, as the University Grievance Committee.

Dr. Baird presented a “Recommendation Concerning Appeal Procedures at Baylor.” His overall point: we already have a University Grievance Committee, we ought not form another committee to serve

the same end. Dr. Baird's recommendation is appended to the minutes as "Recommendation Concerning Appeal Procedures at Baylor" (below).

Discussion followed. Motion made (Ron Beal) to approve; seconded by Ann McGlashan. Motion passed unanimously.

- B. Standardized Form for Senate Policy and Procedure Recommendations
Chair Todd Still noted a standardized form has been proposed for such recommendations (like the one presented by Dr. Baird) in order to increase efficiency and accountability. General Approval.

VI. Conversation with Mr. Richard Amos and Ms. Beverly Tieman Regarding CVS/Caremark "Step Therapy" Prescription Program and its Implementation.

Mr. Amos appeared and presented a response to the earlier Senate concern over this issue.

Since the first letter from CVS, another Senator has reported that he/she received a telephone call from CVS/Caremark which seemed to the Senator to be excessive. One Senator reported such a call recently; the Senator refused to give his/her social security number over the phone, and the caller was incensed. Another Senator reported that he was enrolled in the pharmacy-by-mail in spite of his refusal.

Mr. Amos said that he has found that CVS/Caremark has responded positively and promptly to such complaints when given directly to them. Mr. Amos suggested that Baylor personnel simply report such contretemps to his office; it will make the necessary response to the company. "Doesn't happen too often," he adds, and went on to say that such reports receive prompt responses. A Senator [Lori Spies, Nursing] reported several such complaints: Mr. Amos suggested that those people call or email his office.

Another Senator suggested that Senators email their constituencies and inform them of the way to report such problems to Mr. Amos and to his colleagues.

Another Senator reported a cancellation of a prescription by CVS/Caremark without physician approval and without approval of the patient (the Senator himself). Mr. Amos reported that this should not happen, and added that his office has known of this problem and thought it was worked out. The Senator approved him that it had NOT been worked out.

Another Senator noted that physicians are not willing to spend hours appealing a decision made by CVS/Caremark. At least some physicians refuse to do so, according to another Senator who had faced such a refusal.

Discussion continued: More anecdotes surfaced during the continued discussion. Mr. Amos responded to all comments, saying consistently “we will help Baylor employees work these things out.”

Dr. Still suggested that the Executive Committee (with Sue Koehler, chair of the Staff Council) draft a letter to Mr. Amos and Beverly Tieman, obtain Faculty Senate approval to the letter, circulate the letter to appropriate parties, then seek resolution of the perceived problem(s).

The Senate expressed its satisfaction to Mr. Amos and Ms. Tieman.

- VII. Reports: Given the lateness of the hour, Chair Todd Still asked to dispense with any reports not especially pressing. One issue resulted (below).

Dave Hurt reported that the *Lariat* had reported that a student organization registering students to vote had been restricted by Student Activities from a voter registration drive. Another Senator reported that student organizations were not allowed to bring politically partisan figures to campus. The Senator said, “We need to investigate these issues.”

- VIII. Adjournment at 5:20 p.m.

Recommendation Concerning Appeal Procedures at Baylor

At the present time a variety of appeal processes are in place at Baylor and are discussed in several policy statements. As a way of clarifying these processes and eliminating redundancies, the following recommendations are made.

(1) In the description of the University Grievance Policy, the seventh exclusion listed under the description of the scope of the grievance policy should be eliminated. Grievances involving annual evaluation or compensation should be referred to the University Grievance Committee. No need exists to create a separate committee (as is now called for) to hear such appeals.

(2) as a consequence of the first recommendation, section VI of the Baylor University Faculty Evaluation and Compensation Policy (note: this version of the Evaluation and Compensation Policy appears only in the print version of the Faculty Handbook and most of the items in this print version appear elsewhere, but the section to which reference is here made does not appear elsewhere and is still operative) should be amended to read as follows:

VI. Evaluation/Compensation Appeal Process

When substantial reason arises for a full-time faculty member to question either his or her annual evaluation or compensation set for the successive academic year, the following steps should be followed in the appeal process:

1. A faculty member who wishes to question either his or her evaluation or compensation should first confer with the administrator responsible for the initial salary recommendation to review and clarify the conclusions reached in the most recent annual evaluation and salary consideration.
2. If the faculty member is still dissatisfied with his or her evaluation or compensation following this conferral **he or she may appeal through the processes outlined in the University Grievance Policy.** ~~the dean of the unit, if he or she is not responsible for the initial salary recommendation, will appoint the chair of an ad hoc evaluation/compensation review committee. If the dean is responsible for the initial salary recommendation, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the dean, will appoint the chair of the committee. The chair of the committee will appoint the additional members of the committee.~~
3. ~~The evaluation/compensation review committee should meet to consider written material and oral remarks of all the parties involved.~~
4. ~~A written report of the review committee's findings should be given to the faculty member, the chair, the appropriate dean, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. With as much objectivity as possible, the committee's report should address the questions of fairness, accuracy, and appropriateness in the evaluation process and offer observations and recommendations to the faculty member and to those responsible for the evaluation.~~
5. ~~On the basis on [of] the report of the review committee, the appropriate dean, if he or she is not responsible for the initial salary recommendation, will make the final determination of the appropriate salary recommendation. If the dean is responsible for the initial salary recommendation, the final determination of the salary recommendation will be made by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the dean.~~
6. ~~The final performance evaluation and salary recommendation will be communicated in writing to the faculty member and to the administrator or administrators responsible for the initial salary recommendation. Further appeal will be considered only at the written request of the faculty member to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.~~

Global Education Task Force

In August 2012, Provost Elizabeth Davis appointed a Global Education Task Force charged with undertaking a thorough examination of all aspects of our global initiatives. This includes, but is not limited to:

Study Abroad Programs

Mission Trips

Area Studies Programs

International Travel and Research by Baylor Faculty and Staff

Enrollment Goals and Support Programs for Baylor's International Students

Structure of the Center for International Education

The goal of the committee is to produce a comprehensive self-study upon which to base recommendations to the Provost on how best to pursue global education initiatives in concert with the goals of Pro Futuris.

The Global Education Task Force members welcome your questions, comments and ideas. Here is the roster:

Global Education Task Force Membership

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