

Baylor University Faculty Senate Minutes
17 Jan 2017
109 Rogers Engineering & Computer Science Bldg • 3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Senators Nichols, Curt for Allman, Dwight; Baldrige, R.S.; Bolen, Bradley; Burgess, Cynthia; Burleson, Debra; Cook, Garrett; Cordon, Matt; Dixon, Andrea; Edwards, Elise; Ellor, James; Farwell, Beth; Hultquist, Beth; Hurtt, Kathy; Johnston, Hope W; Long, Mark; Macgregor, Jason; McGlashan, Ann; Mencken, Kimberly; Morgan, Ron; Neilson, Bill; Newberry, Byron; Ostlund, Sandor; Parrish, Michael; Pounders, Steven; Raines, Brian; Robinson, Eric; Marks, Robert for Schubert, Keith; Sielaff, Steven; Souza-Fuertes, Lizbeth; Stone, Sara; Stroope, Michael; Supplee, Joan; Tsang, Jo-Ann; Umstead, Randall; Walden, Dan; Walter, Janelle; Wilcox, Walter; Wood, Randy M.; Wooddy, Margaret

Members Absent: Senators Beal, Ron; Faucher, Mary Ann; Staff Council Representative Lori McNamara

I. Call to Order

Senate Chair Byron Newberry called the meeting to order at 3:33.

II. Invocation

Senator Mark Long offered an invocation.

III. Approval of Minutes: December 2016

Senator Robert Baldrige made a motion to approve the minutes for the Senate meeting of Dec 06, 2016; Senator Cynthia Burgess seconded. The minutes were approved.

IV. Substitute Consideration

Senator Brian Raines, noting that he would be on leave during the spring semester, made a motion to empower Professor Paul Hagelstein from the same department as his substitute for the remainder of the academic year. The motion was seconded by Senator Baldrige and approved unanimously.

V. A&S Transfer Credit Task Force Report

Senate Chair Byron Newberry distributed the report of the Task Force on Arts & Sciences Transfer Credit Policy to the provost. This task force was assigned in the fall to review the policy previously approved by the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's office to accept transfer credit through the Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS). A number of concerns had

been raised about the policy including the inadequate preparation of transfer students through courses that are not comparable and/or online courses that are not proctored. Based on a review of data and a survey of Baylor faculty, deans, and chairs across the university, the task force made a series of recommendations including the acceptance of courses through TCCNS, working with TCCNS to encourage the adoption of best practices, and tracking outcome measures. The task force noted that the decision was not unanimous and included the concerns raised by department of Mathematics.

Through Chair Newberry, the provost asked the Faculty Senate to discuss the report before a final decision is made. In the discussion that followed senators raised points such as the need for clear metrics in tracking outcomes, the possibility of creating additional test barriers for admission to courses for which transfer courses fulfill prerequisites, and the importance of careful advising of transfers. A senator noted additional opposition to the policy from the department of Political Science; another senator noted support for the policy from the school of Nursing. Senators representing the department of Physics raised the issue of content verification of courses. The discussion concluded with a plan for Chair Newberry to communicate to the provost the need for detailed tracking of outcomes.

VI. Student Course Evaluations & Teaching Evaluation

Senator Brian Raines revisited the report of the Faculty Senate Task Force on Student Course Evaluations first presented at the senate meeting of December 06. The task force worked with the charge “to evaluate the effectiveness of the student evaluation questionnaire”, and “to suggest changes or modifications, if any, to the evaluation form if it will enhance the value of the feedback received”, and with the initial assumptions that Student Course Evaluations (SCEs) are here to stay, and will not return to a paper format. The following findings, goals, and proposals were presented:

Findings

1. SCEs are being used to evaluate teaching for tenure and promotion in various departments on campus. In some departments this is the only teaching evaluation being considered.
2. Response rates have dropped since we switched to electronic SCEs.
3. Our current SCE instrument hasn't been revised in almost 30 years. Some questions are considered biased.

Goals

1. Increase response rate, without polluting data
2. Implement a mid-semester SCE for formative purposes
3. Implement an online peer teaching evaluation

4. Revise SCE instrument to remove gendered language and increase response rates

Proposals

1. Incentivizing Completion of Student Course Evaluations
2. Electronic Peer Course Evaluations
3. Mid-Term Student Course Evaluations
4. Revisions to the Student Course Evaluation Instrument

In the discussion that followed senators noted that clarification was needed on whether the SCE instrument evaluated the course or the instructor, questioned the use of the SCE as a sole teaching evaluation by chairs, discussed means of incentivizing completion of the SCE, and considered alternate revisions to the instrument.

The task force presented the proposals as a motion for the senate, noting that an implementation team would be needed to act on the proposals. The senate approved the motion with one vote opposed and no abstentions.

VII. Possible Special February Meeting

Chair Newberry requested informal senate approval for an additional senate meeting on February 21, during which the chair of the Baylor Board of Regents would be invited to respond to recommendations made by the Baylor Faculty Senate.

VIII. Reports

a. Faculty Athletic Council

Senator Randall Umstead reported positively that Vice President and Director of Athletics Mack Rhoades has been in good communication with the council, providing timely reports of important news.

b. Presidential Search Committee

Senator Andrea Dixon reported that the Presidential Search process is well underway. The search firm has helped the committee review hundreds of candidates, vetting the candidates against the profile developed on the basis of the on- and off-campus listening sessions. The committee is conducted face-to-face interviews with qualified candidates. A list of finalist candidates will be advanced to the Board of Regents who will make the final selection. The committee's goal is to have a new president in place for the 2017-18 academic year.

VIII. Reports (continued)

A request was made for a new senator to attend the meetings of the Council of Faculty in Residence.

A senator raised concerns about new admissions procedures that sometimes lead to highly qualified student applicants being delayed acceptance based on factors related to their likelihood of attending. Chair Newberry will raise the concern with the provost.

IX. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Senator Baldrige and seconded by Senator Robinson. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Pounders
Recording Secretary