

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate

May 7, 2008, 2:00 PM, Conference Room, Hurley Administration Bldg

Executive Committee Members:

Name	Group	Dept.	Term	Present
Dornith Doherty	I	COVAD	2008*	X
Elizabeth Figa	II	SLIS	2008*	X
Dennis Mueller	III	PHYS	2008*	X
Emile Sahliyah	IV	PSCI	2010*	X
Steve Cole	V	FIRL	2008	X
Cynthia Chandler	VI	CHE	2010*	X
Jim Swan	VII	AGER	2008	X
John Holt	VIII	MUSIC	2008*	X
Michael McPherson	Chair	ECON	2008*	X
Richard Wells	Vice-Chair	JOUR	2008	X
Beth Thomsett-Scott	Secretary	LIBR	2008	X
Marcia Staff	Immediate Past Chair	FIREL	2008*	

Guests: President Bataille, Provost Wilkins, Vish Prasad, Mike Nieswiadomy, Steve Cobb, Bob Benjamin, Art Goven.

- I. Welcome. Senator Wells called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm and welcomed attendees
- II. Approval of Minutes. Motioned and seconded by Senators Sahliyah and Michael McPherson. One abstention otherwise unanimous.
- III. Senator Wells reported on the Space Assessment Committee. The College of Engineering now has all advisors in one location. The committee is looking for additional space for CVAD
- IV. Discussion of Topics with President Bataille and Provost Wilkins
  - a. President Bataille
    - i. Graduate Education Committee. This is being handled by Provost Wilkins. Dr. Wilkins noted that the internal committee met Tuesday and the report will be on her site shortly.
    - ii. Debt Load. UNT is in good shape. Although the raw amount of debt has increased, the budget has also increased, and the ratio has actually decreased. Current debt service coverage is 3.76 time which means that UNT has nearly 4 times the amount resources needed to cover the debt. For universities our size, our percentage of debt is in the low to medium range. Nearly half (49%) of the debt will retire in 10 years.
    - iii. Book store. The President recommended that the Faculty Senate engage in a bookstore study. She reiterated that the bookstore doesn't sell 100% of the textbooks needed (there are several other stores in Denton that also sell, as well as used and new textbook sites on the web) so it can be difficult to determine how many to order. As well the price of textbooks is

worrisome, and the increased trend in bundling textbooks with media, lab manuals and other information that is not used is causing problems. Aside from faculty not getting orders in on time, there are other issues and these can be investigated through a book store study. The President has served on several studies and will share the materials she used with Dr. Wilkins. She added that one thing other universities have been doing is asking faculty to determine whether the newest edition is really needed or whether the older edition would suffice. Senator Wells shared several messages from faculty indicating serious issues. The President encouraged EC to conduct a bookstore study so all issues could be brought to light. Dr. Wilkins noted that there is a best practices report on the VPAA web site that may also help. President Bataille added that some universities allow students to order books during orientation and deliver to the dorms to ensure there are enough freshman textbooks.

- iv. Bookstore selling cigarettes. The president noted that she does not want a quick reaction to this as there are a number of issues to consider. Cigarettes provide a high profit margin for the book store. She suggested handing the issue to the Sustainability Council to investigate air quality and other related issues.
  - v. Board Meeting. The Strategic Plan had recently been tweaked by the administrators and was presented to the Board of Regents for subsequent approval. In September, there will wide-spread activities to look at creating a new 5 year plan. Dr. Wilkins will be in charge of the process. The Provost suggested that we look at our peer institutions' strategic plans. The Dallas Campus is set to be independent in 2010. Dr. Wilkins noted that she wants to make sure that the Academic Plan is tied to the Strategic Plan. The Academic Plan needs some revision to rekindle the purpose and move it forward. The President noted that there are some initiatives for the upcoming legislative session: courses for Next Generation students, hiring more faculty, and continued expansion of UNT's research initiative. The President is confident that since UNT has a clear track record of investing in the initiatives, the Legislature will see the value of these initiatives and provide funding. There is a request for a new building for CVAD. One EC member asked about taking "all star" faculty to the legislative sessions. The President agreed that this is a good idea and the Provost noted that she is current compiling a list of the best faculty to provide 5 minute research updates to the legislature.
  - vi. The President noted that she has hired a Director of External and Government Relations for UNT and that this person will report directly to the President with a dotted line relationship to the System office.
- b. Provost Wilkins
- i. Evaluation of Teaching. Dr. Wilkins noted that the goal is to have a good evaluation tool that will be useful and provide informative feedback. The committee has a high level of expertise and will test the instrument fully. The Provost sees the instrument as becoming an integral part of the evaluation process. The mechanism for incorporating the instrument will be left to the departments, and she expects multiple measures of teaching effectiveness, including portfolios, peer evaluations etc. Faculty will need to know how to use the tools and PACs will need to know how to evaluate the results prior to incorporating them into the evaluation process. There was a question about whether the tool will provide for correctable bias. Provost Wilkins responded that this will be looked at and added that the tool should be ready in October. A Senator expressed concern that the evaluation tool will be online only. Members of the Evaluation of Teaching Committee responded that online classes will have online evaluations and face-to-face

- classes will have print evaluations initially. The Provost added that it would be premature to expect all evaluations to be online.
- ii. Senior faculty teaching classes. The Provost noted that the President is pushing for more full time tenure track faculty. Student learning outcomes are improved by having full-time faculty teach and that students should be exposed to a variety of faculty, including senior and junior faculty. She emphasized that the push to longer lecturer contracts is to provide for a full-time committed lecturer group and is not an attempt to reduce the number of tenure-track faculty. The ratio of tenure-track faculty to students needs to increase. There was a discussion about the need for and value of doctoral students teaching classes. Provost Wilkins noted that this is a good relationship to develop and that faculty need to know what the goal of having doctoral students teach is. Several EC members expressed concern that lecturers do not go through the same vetting process as tenure-track faculty. Dr. Wilkins reported that she expects more serious searches to be conducted and that a "pool" approach could be used to advertise all several positions at one time. She emphasized that the contracts are "multiple-year renewable" indicating that all lecturers would be evaluated on an annual basis with more thorough evaluations at the end of their contracts. She noted that there will be guidelines within the categories of contracts and measures available but prefers not to have a top down policy for hiring and evaluating lecturers. In response to a question, she agreed that a template or templates might be useful.
  - iii. Workload Policy. The Provost presented the synopsis of the policy that she provided at the Board of Regents meeting. The revised policy more effectively ties merit to workload, provides more flexibility for faculty and their needs, gives more decision-making authority to the departments, should maximize use of faculty time as their workload can be revised on an annual and even semesterly basis, and offer opportunities to increase the interdisciplinary nature of research. In response to questions, the Provost emphasized that departmental guidelines will need to be developed and that both Chairs and Deans will need to be educated on the policies to reduce any chance of favoritism or other misuse of the policy. She added that this does not take the place of the URC and hopes that everyone involved accepts the responsibility of making the process work. She noted that regardless of how detailed a policy is, there will always be issues and prefers to keep the university policy more flexible to allow for the various needs of the departments. Steve Cobb, chair of the Workload Committee, added that the policy helps to show where chairs and deans may be deficient in their administration knowledge. The Provost noted that the annual review of chairs should also bring up any "training" issues. She emphasized that the policy is a guideline with accountability coming through the PACs and URC. Once the workload policy is accepted, departments will need to revise their policies, especially in terms of workload and promotion and tenure but also related policies. She suggested that Faculty Senate look at creating a policy committee that examines a certain number of unit charters and policies a year to ensure that they are in compliance with university policies. It was noted that the URC deals with a lot of poorly worded or out-of-date charters and that their members should be involved in any committee of this sort. In response to a question, the Provost noted that there is an overall university goal of 40 40 20 (check this) and that departments are expected to work towards this but as a department and that faculty can work the various other combinations.
  - iv. Promotion and Tenure Policy. The Provost noted that she presented an update of the report to the Board of Regents and emphasized that academic freedom and academic integrity are linked. She expects that a

good policy will provide high quality evaluations with clear information provided so there will be no surprises. She added that the name of the committee will be changed from the UTC to the University Promotion and Tenure Committee. The policy provides for clearer timelines on when information is due, what information is required in the dossiers, and a general improved level of transparency. Mike Nieswiadomy presented his report of the highlights of the policy. He noted that the UTC/UPTC does not have a charter or bylaws and that the committee is working on these. Dr. Wilkins noted that the Legal Office had some concerns involving generally minor grammatical and cosmetic decisions. There were some concerns about the dates items are due and a suggestion that a visual calendar be available for every level of the process. The Provost noted that she needs at least 6 weeks before her decisions are expected. Slide 14 was revised to "submitted prior to ... receives acceptance". There is improved guidance as to the information required in the dossier. Dr. Prasad noted that some universities require two binders – one with the short dossier and required information and one with the supporting documentation. Dr. Nieswiadomy will see if some of the suggestions can be implemented soon to make the process easier this year.

V. Committee Reports

- a. Research Committee. Vish Prasad. The Research Office has hired some staff into new positions and will be hiring a few more. There is a research development team who will work with faculty on proposals, finding grants, and submitting grant applications in both the sciences and the humanities. New forms are being developed that will show the contributions of co-PIs and thus contribute to interdisciplinary research. There is a recommendation to create a "UNT Research Council" which will have several Faculty Senate Research Committee members and several other faculty sitting on it. There is a recommendation to change the distribution of indirect cost monies providing 10% to the PI and more to the Deans and Chairs. The extra monies will be used to create larger pools of money that the Deans and Chairs can distribute for big ticket items to help researchers, rather than PIs not being able to afford these items. Dr. Prasad also has funding for this items that he will use to match department funds. Thirteen research cluster proposals have moved into the next step of the decision process.
- b. URC. Bob Benjamin. Three members met with the Provost concerning the one appeal. It was determined that the appeal was not handled properly at the department and college level and was returned. It did not come back to the URC.
- c. Committee on the Evaluation of Administrators. Bob Benjamin. There were some concerns over who was evaluated. The committee recommended changing the current less than one year to less than 6 months for administrators to be evaluated. Results will not be released until the parties have been evaluated by their supervisors. The aim is to have the upper administration results out by June 1 and Deans by July 15. The committee will also work with the Provost to mandate a one paragraph summary of activities.
- d. Oversight Committee on the Core Curriculum. Jim Swan. Low activity except for working with the Core Task Force. There were issues with setting up meeting times

Due to the lateness of the hour, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by Beth Thomsett-Scott, Faculty Senate Secretary