

# Minutes of Faculty Senate

2 March 2012

**Call to order:** President Byrd called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m. in 11 JBK.

**Senators present:** Alex, Ambrose, Anwar, Bartlett, Bigham, Byrd, Castillo, Crandall, Drumheller, Johnson, Loftin, Parr-Scanlin, Pendleton, Severn, Vizzini, Ward, and Wilson

**Senators absent:** Jafar, Kuennen, Landram, and Rosa

**Substitute:** Anand Commissioning for Rausch

**Approval of minutes:** Ambrose made a motion seconded by Vizzini to approve the minutes of the 17 February 2012 Faculty Senate meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

## **IT Services:**

James Webb said Dropbox.com has been the biggest contention on campus and has been somewhat miscommunicated. Dropbox added more IP addresses to the domain name and started without IT's knowledge. Drumheller said the original problem was brought to Dr. Hallmark in June. Lane Green sent campus an e-mail on 23 June explaining the problem. Webb discussed with Dr. Hallmark before he left how to turn dropbox back on and also minimize risk. Webb said grade-point averages, credit card numbers, faculty evaluations, etc. were being uploaded onto Dropbox.com. A data loss prevention filtering system on everyone's computer checks for and blocks nine-digit numbers such as social security and credit card numbers. The State of Texas mandates social security numbers cannot be passed unless encrypted. If there is a security breach, the Texas security code requires notifying people whose information was breached, and WT is in trouble.

Webb is a member of the President's Cabinet and President's Council with all academic Deans and communicates issues once each month to the President, Provost, and Deans. But, sometimes information does not flow from administrators down, and e-mail might not be an efficient way to communicate with campus or students. Byrd said Faculty Senators want to help Webb and IT comply with all System policies but are concerned about lack of communication. Security by IT might be taking precedence over the mission of the university which is to engage faculty, students, and education. Byrd suggested the WT IT committees already in place whose members are more representative of faculty could be used to inform faculty and minimize potential impact to faculty and research. IT committees need to meet more often than quarterly as they do now. Perhaps an information security committee is needed. Anwar suggested an open dialog time where everyone could meet in person once a semester to discuss IT issues. Webb said he will document concerns and impact, but Dr. O'Brien makes the ultimate decision because he is in charge of the campus and reports to the Chancellor.

An audit in December 2004 showed every university in The Texas A&M System, including WT, scored 4 on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being worst. The auditors in summer 2010 gave WT a 2 rating and every other university in The System earned a bad rating. The Chancellor is bringing in a security company to review for problems and suggestions. Senate Bill 988 formed a Texas Cyber Security Council.

Drumheller asked how WT takes care of user failures. She said people uploading sensitive data could happen in dropbox, but suggested it would be user failure, which is a FERPA violation. Webb said IT files a security incidence and reports to the department or division head. He said someone in each department is trained each year and does risk assessment for the department. Everyone goes through training in HR Connect every two years which might change in the future to training every year.

Severn asked about the number-filtering system. He said he sent a flight number through e-mail that was quarantined. Anwar said e-mailed overseas telephone numbers with hyphens also are filtered out. It would be helpful to be able to remediate a problem immediately and not go through IT, especially after hours. The current remediation process does not have a contact person.

Crandall asked if computer storage systems were researched to determine the best system before Cloud was selected. Drumheller suggested that students can use Cloud services to share documents. Webb said WT is building a Buffbox university dropbox. Anwar asked if Skype might be used; Webb said WebX (CISCO) provides technical support.

Webb said changes, such as cost savings, could be coming. Thin Client came about because of cost savings. IT used to receive \$125,000 per year to replace about 125 computers on campus, but the amount was reduced 65%. Every campus in The Texas A&M University System is implementing Thin Client that is more cost effective, but does not always work for every faculty member. A full Dell computer costs \$785, and WT IT will support a Dell computer, but only \$350 is allocated per computer. Webb said 25% of WT personnel are changed over to a new exchange server with 2-3 gigabytes of storage.

Webb said that moving forward he will have more communication with faculty, a liaison, more frequent IT committee meetings, and information on new items passed to Faculty Senate. Dave Rausch who is on the WT IT committee was volunteered to report issues back to Faculty Senate. Faculty Senators will be used as a fast way to spread IT information across the entire campus. Byrd said Faculty Senate appreciates what Webb and IT do at WT. Anwar said IT has good and helpful people working for it.

**WT Committees:** Byrd said a traditional responsibility of Faculty Senate is filling vacancies on WT Standing Committees. Ambrose provided Senators a list of WT committee vacancies to be filled by Faculty Senate. Only the Grievance Committee requires a tenured faculty member. Faculty Senators are to communicate with faculty in

their departments and with Faculty Senators in their Colleges and bring names of potential interested committee members to the 6 April Faculty Senate meeting.

**Regents' Professor nomination:** Dr. O'Brien asked Byrd to remind Faculty Senate to nominate a Regents' Professor. The nomination packet is due to Dr. O'Brien by 1 June. Dr. Bruce Brasington was recognized last year. A large packet of information is required from nominees. Faculty Senators should come to the 23 March Faculty Senate meeting with names of faculty to nominate.

**Ombuds Officer update:** Byrd visited with Dr. O'Brien and agreed they could not get over The System attorneys' office stipulation that discrimination, harassment, or retaliation be reported immediately. Byrd and Dr. O'Brien agreed that warning a person before discussing a potential problem might change the way the person talks so the problem can be solved without immediately reporting to The System. Dr. O'Brien will be naming a person on campus who is officially in charge of receiving such allegations to turn in within a certain time. The Ombuds Officer could assist with problem solving, rather than merely reporting problems. An e-mail from Dr. O'Brien describes what is needed to move forward to have a WT Ombuds Officer.

**Issues with Tenure and Promotion process:** Byrd plans to meet with Dr. O'Brien about the tenure and promotion process to resolve issues such as experienced this year and prevent problems and potential embarrassing situations for WT in the future. Byrd said the ways every department or discipline now will be evaluating instructional responsibilities should be used in the tenure and promotion process; if not used, the reviewer should be held responsible.

**Parking initiative:** Byrd did a quick study of his department's faculty face-to-face classes and thinks faculty might be unintentionally discriminated against because if they arrive to campus after staff who arrive at 8 a.m., only distant, leftover parking places remain. Faculty arrival time does not mean faculty leave at 5 p.m. Byrd suggested partitioning parking lots into faculty, staff, and student only spaces and not competing. Severn suggested checking the ratio of staff to faculty on campus. Johnson said the Parking Committee met that morning and might propose open parking for everyone. Byrd will further research the issue.

The meeting adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonnie B. Pendleton, Ph.D.  
Faculty Senate Secretary

*These minutes were approved as amended on 23 March 2012.*