

Minutes of Faculty Senate 26 September 2014

Present: Ambrose, Atchison, Browning, Commissiong, Crandall, De'Armond, DeOtte, Dursun-Kilic, Fiaud, Hartin, Hindman, Klaehn, Osei-Hwere, Pendleton, Stuntz, and Takacs

Absent: Blanton, Branson, Diego-Medrano, Lee, Ottoson, and Shao

Guests: Rebekah Bachman, Gary Byrd, Collette Loftin (substitute for Branson), and Mary Rausch (substitute for Ottoson)

Call to Order: Ambrose called the meeting to order at 12:17 p.m. in Room 14 (Eternal Flame) of the Jack B. Kelley Student Center.

Approval of Minutes: Stuntz made a motion seconded by Fiaud to approve as amended the minutes of the 12 September 2014 meeting of Faculty Senate. The motion passed unanimously by the Senators present.

Rebekah Bachman, Director of Advising Services in the WT Student Success Center, said Dr. O'Brien initiated program evaluation last year. Evaluation lets students plan and schedule classes in advance. There is an electronic record of what courses students have completed. The WT advanced residency requirement helps transfer students and faculty advisors keep track of advanced courses transfer students have taken. Programming of curriculum is done in the Dean's Office, and the Dean's Secretary can correct inaccuracies. Substitutions for students should be done electronically. Information is in the menu under faculty information on the faculty menu in Buff Advisor. Rebekah said she created student tutorials posted at students.wtamu.edu/StudentPlanning/index.html and will prepare and put faculty tutorials in a pdf onto Buff Advisor. She plans to have in-person training for faculty in Departments and Colleges.

Ambrose said Hueston will send additional information on ombuds officers.

Ambrose said no one this year has yet recommended changes for the Faculty Handbook. Faculty Senate should be made aware of mistakes in the Faculty Handbook. DeOtte said Dr. O'Brien said he wants the Faculty Handbook to be clear so the university is not culpable. Stuntz thanked the members of the Faculty Handbook Committee.

A revised post-tenure review policy after approved will be a change in the Faculty Handbook. Gary Byrd is chair of the post-tenure review committee whose members represent each College: Syed Anwar, Bill Ambrose, Tim Atchison, Chuck Chase, Randy Combs, and Jean Stuntz. Byrd said Provost Shaffer asked Faculty Senate to revise the policy because WT is not in compliance with the legal statement regarding the peer evaluation process. Texas Education Code (59.142) must be complied with by

all public universities in Texas. Document 12.06 TAMU System Post-tenure Review of Faculty and Teaching Effectiveness references the Texas Education Code. Texas A&M University System attorneys reviewed WT and other System universities and said some were not, but must be, in compliance with both documents.

Byrd researched how Texas A&M University and other universities such as Stanford, University of Miami, Harvard, and Texas A&M University, Commerce do post-tenure review. He talked to faculty at peer universities. Several universities are redoing their policies, including TAMU that revised their policy in July. Byrd said universities do post-tenure review differently. In the West (Wyoming, etc.), post-tenure review is characterized as an activity universities require faculty to do. In universities on the East Coast, post-tenure review is an activity faculty fully endorse to reinforce all aspects of tenure. Byrd polled WT faculty and found junior faculty do not understand the reason for tenure.

Byrd presented his research findings to the post-tenure review committee to provide information in a handout of changes recommended to Faculty Senate for discussion and insertion into the Faculty Handbook. Byrd intended for the WT Faculty Handbook to provide the context and processes involved for tenure and post-tenure. There already is a section entitled "philosophy" in the Faculty Handbook. The reason for examining post-tenure review might be because the Regents want to know why tenure exists. Tenure often works on behalf of the university, as well as the faculty member. Many faculty might not consider being employed by WT if tenure was not offered.

Byrd suggested using the term "required standards post-tenure" instead of "minimal standards post-tenure" for the section title. The rest of that section would remain the same. He recommended inserting into the procedures section information on two tracks of evaluation -- one is the present system that is not being changed, and comprehensive peer evaluation would be added. The reason for the term "comprehensive peer evaluation" is to word the section exactly as in the Texas Education Code. The evaluation should be by faculty peers, no less than once every 6 years after faculty are granted tenure, and cannot occur more than once a year. Comprehensive peer evaluation and annual performance evaluation have requirements. Byrd said in the event the faculty member does not meet the requirements of either evaluation, professional development would result. The Texas Education Code and Texas A&M University System address that a purpose of post-tenure review is to create a faculty development opportunity if professional development is needed. A few paragraphs on which the WT post-tenure review committee conferred and agreed are provided with a new subheading "comprehensive peer evaluation." One-sixth of tenured faculty would rotate in and then be peer reviewed every 6 years. The faculty member would assemble information, such as the annual professional summary from the past 6 years, but annual evaluation by the direct supervisor would not be included because he is not a peer. DeOtte said a direct supervisor might be starting a faculty member on a remedial process, but Byrd said that remedial process would be in the other track. Byrd said an extra four pages could explain what might not be evident in the 6 years of documents. Browning said "they may add" is confusing and should say "in case of extenuating circumstances." Mary Rausch said "should the faculty member feel it necessary, you may add four pages to explain extenuating circumstances."

Each college would have a comprehensive peer evaluation committee of three faculty members from the college and two from outside the college to review post-tenure faculty whose year it is to be reviewed. All committee members must be tenured, and the most senior faculty members would be preferred for the committee. DeOtte suggested using current college promotion and tenure committee members. Byrd said the committee decided to create a committee just for post-tenure review. He said having faculty serve on both promotion and tenure and post-tenure review committees would confound other processes with post-tenure review. Bryd said there is a strong tradition for tenured faculty to serve on the review committee. Commissiong asked if other small universities use just a college committee. Bryd said WT departments are too small and the university level is most removed from knowing faculty in different departments, so the college level was selected. Fiaud asked how the "most senior faculty" would be selected to serve on the post-tenure review committee; she suggested a vote and said the selection procedure is not written anywhere. Byrd said the proposed post-tenure guidelines are still in the works but he wanted to obtain input first from Faculty Senate. Stuntz asked why representation from the Department is so important to DeOtte. DeOtte said the post-tenure review committee members should be from the department because the departmental faculty know what is usual for publications and other professional requirements for that department. Ambrose said one idea for selecting members of the comprehensive peer evaluation committee would be to randomly select from a list of tenured faculty who have been at WT longest. If the post-tenure review committee decided a reviewed faculty member was unsatisfactory, another committee would evaluate that faculty member the following year. Two strikes are needed to be considered deficient. Browning said some departments already do peer review because of accreditation. But, not many departments at WT currently do peer review, and post-tenure review is for a different purpose. DeOtte suggested adjourning the Faculty Senate meeting.

Ambrose said Barbara Petty e-mailed all faculty the application for the Piper Professor award. Nominations must be submitted by 21 November. Faculty nominated must be full-time instructors and teach full time. There is a stipend of \$5,000 with the award.

The meeting of Faculty Senate adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bonnie B. Pendleton, Secretary

These minutes were approved at the 10 October 2014 meeting of Faculty Senate.