

Minutes of Faculty Senate 21 March 2014

Present: Alex, Ambrose, Anwar, Atchison, Crandall, De'Armond, Diego-Medrano, Drumheller, Fiaud, Jacobsen, Johnson, Kelly, Kuennen, Landram, Loftin, Pendleton, Rausch, Stuntz, and Takacs

Absent: Blanton, Jafar, and Ward

Call to Order: President Ambrose called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m. in Room 14 (Eternal Flame) of the JBK.

Approval of Minutes: Atchison made a motion seconded by Fiaud to approve as written the minutes of the 7 March 2014 meeting of Faculty Senate. All Senators present voted in favor.

President O'Brien discussed WT priorities for the year. A high priority is preparation for SACs reaffirmation to be decided in December 2016. Preparations started this past spring with a timeline and establishment of various committees. A compliance report begun this past summer had faculty, staff, and administrators responding to standards and determining whether WT is in compliance. The compliance report will be submitted in fall 2015. The QEP will be submitted in March 2016. An on-site visit will be in April 2016.

The second priority is to put into place the new core curriculum. The core curriculum submitted to the Coordinating Board was accepted and will be in effect through at least 2015.

The third priority is areas of budget. The System mandated a guaranteed four-year tuition rate to be put into effect for fall 2014. Students required to take more hours for certain degrees will have a longer rate. A separate rate is needed for students who become sick or have good reason for dropping out for a year. Between fall 2007 and fall 2013, undergraduate enrollment at WT increased by 1,000 students. WT has not been allowed to increase the advising fee although students are provided more resources such as the early alert system. A charge of \$50, rather than the current \$35 per semester per student, is proposed. This must be approved by Student Senate, then by vote of the student body on 1 April. A single transportation fee of \$80 per year for parking, transportation, and traffic safety is being proposed for each student. All students would receive a parking pass. The current \$50 parking fee for faculty, staff, and administrators will increase, but administrators would pay proportionally more and low-paid staff would pay less. Students in accredited undergraduate and graduate programs such as business, nursing, and the new education and social work programs will be charged more. Kelly asked how a tuition increase will affect graduate students. Dr. O'Brien said graduate and international students will pay 2.2% more. The Coordinating Board establishes the non-resident fee. Graduate student tuition guarantees cannot be computed easily because different graduate degrees require different numbers of course hours (30, 36, etc.).

WT will commit only \$700,000 of \$2.4 million in guaranteed tuition for the yearly budget. Dr. O'Brien said the full budget was due to the Texas Senate by 7 March 2014. He said he is putting into the budget a 2% merit increase, plus \$150,000 for market adjustments for WT faculty salaries to be on par with faculty ranks at other universities. Last year, WT concentrated on salaries of associate professors, but assistant and full professors are paid less than professors at most of the other 38 Texas universities. Atchison asked on what Dr. O'Brien is budgeting. Dr. O'Brien said a 3% increase is expected in enrollment. If WT enrollment increases, Dr. O'Brien hopes merit increases can be more than 2%. New faculty positions have been committed in communication disorders, music theater, communications, English, and mathematics because more freshmen are coming and taking core courses. Almost 50% of WT core courses now are taught by part-time instructors, which Dr. O'Brien said is too high. Money is needed for Admissions to travel to recruit students from Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, and elsewhere. The WT Police Department will have two new positions. The state mandated that UPD dispatchers must be certified. And better coordination is needed of buses and bus drivers. Another person is needed to certify qualifications of incoming transfer students. The Athletics budget did not increase between 1999 and 2007 so Dr. O'Brien plans to allocate \$200,000 more this year. Dr. O'Brien said until 2 years ago, all coaches' salaries were funded 80% from Academic Affairs and 20% from Athletics probably because benefits would be paid by the State if salaries were from 10-accounts. WT took 60% of the amount of salaries and shifted that to Athletics, but left the remainder in Academic Affairs because coaches teach a few courses each year. WT budget deficits used to be made up from auxiliary services such as dining, the bookstore, and housing, but money now needs to be spent to renovate residence halls.

WT is preparing for the next legislative session and requesting funding for a degree in electrical engineering. WT signed a contract with Underwriters Laboratories to establish at the WT Nance Ranch the largest land-based turbine in the U.S. Emphasizing power could greatly aid the education of some WT students.

ANS, Engineering, and Mary Moody Northern renovations need to be completed. Agricultural Sciences wants to expand the meat program and establish a meat lab at Nance Ranch. The target of the WT capital campaign was \$35 million; more than double the projected was obtained for faculty support, but only \$10 million of \$15 million projected for scholarships was raised. The Amarillo Economic Development Corporation with \$2 million from Harrington voted to purchase and renovate the Commerce Building and two parking lots near Chase Tower in Amarillo. WT is working to raise another \$4 million for the Commerce Building to become the Amarillo Center that would house graduate programs in education, counseling, communication disorders, the hearing clinic, and other programs such as small business development and a theater for the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum. Phases 1 and 2 would each renovate 50,000 square feet of the Commerce Building, for 100,000 square feet total. The Amarillo Center in Chase Tower now has only 30,000 square feet. Anwar asked if there will be seminar rooms in the Amarillo Center. Dr. O'Brien said there will be.

Fiaud asked whether the 4-year guarantee will account for students who do not return to WT. Dr. O'Brien said WT loses 35% of freshmen but juniors-seniors are stable. The guaranteed tuition will give students a greater incentive for staying at the

original university and for graduating. Fiaud asked about athletes graduating in 4 years. Dr. O'Brien said all female athletes have grade-point averages greater than 3.0 and most graduate. Kelly asked who is guaranteeing the tuition because he had to pay more than expected for his children to attend a university with guaranteed tuition. Dr. O'Brien said statutory fees and tuition would not change, but other fees might.

Landram asked how many WT students are from where. Dr. O'Brien said 78% were from the top 26 counties when he came to WT, but now 56% are. When Dr. O'Brien came to WT, 92% of students were Texas residents compared with 88% now. More students are from out of state (mostly border states); 176 more out-of-state new freshmen applied this year than last. Fifty-six percent of WT students are females. Twenty-three percent of students are Hispanic. First-generation students remain near 50%. Low-income, Pell-eligible students total 43%. More veterans are now coming to take advantage of the GI Bill.

Diego-Medrano asked the percentage of transfer students and the kinds of support they receive such as use of the writing lab. Dr. O'Brien said he is putting \$30,000 into the writing lab and \$30,000 into the math lab.

Rausch asked about students at other institutions coming back and taking it out on faculty members. Dr. O'Brien said he had not heard of any undergraduate revenge on faculty members.

Alex asked about parking. Dr. O'Brien said many spaces now are available where Silver Creek Apartments were torn down. He said a chalk study was done at 2 a.m. and found students were not parking at the old Fine Arts or Education buildings or on the street all night. He said freshmen and sophomores in residence halls might be required to park only in certain places. He said 18,000 rode the shuttle the first year, 90,000 last year, and more than 100,000 have ridden the shuttle buses so far this year. Four new buses are being put onto routes now.

Anwar asked about advertising WT student accomplishments on the Internet. Dr. O'Brien said he put some information from critical thinking tests onto the WT Internet site.

Old Business:

Faculty Senators need to nominate full professors for Regents Professor by 1 May. Jim Rodgers was nominated by Rocky Ward. Rausch asked if Associate Deans were eligible, and he nominated Jim Calvi.

Ambrose said that he and Pendleton wrote suggested changes to the proposed corrections to the Faculty Handbook following Jafar's suggestions and discussion by Senators at the last meeting of Faculty Senate. The suggested corrections compiled by Ambrose and Pendleton were given to Dr. O'Brien.

New Business:

Faculty Senators were asked to nominate faculty for the WT Magister Optimus award. The Magister Optimus award was created to recognize outstanding teachers at WT. The faculty nominated are to be kept secret until WT fall convocation. Current full-time faculty members who have taught at WT at least 6 years are eligible. The nominator should provide a brief summary of the nominee to justify the nomination.

At the next meeting of Faculty Senate, Senators will be given a list of vacancies on the university standing committees. All Senators in each College should decide among themselves how to fill the vacancies in their College. Positions open to faculty from any College will be filled by vote at Faculty Senate on 18 April.

Ambrose will send e-mail to the Deans to remind them of College meetings during which new Faculty Senators will be elected toward the end of this semester. The election for Faculty Senate officers will be on 1 May. The President of Faculty Senate must have served on Faculty Senate for at least 1 year.

Anwar said Faculty Senate should compile a list of accomplishments of what Senate did this year. Ambrose will prepare the report. Items for the report should be forwarded to Ambrose.

The meeting of Faculty Senate was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bonnie B. Pendleton".

Bonnie B. Pendleton, Secretary

These minutes as written were approved at the 4 April meeting of Faculty Senate.