

# Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

April 11, 2007

## Attendance:

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Dan Formanowicz – Chairman                  | John Priest – Chair Elect             |
| Peggy Swanson – Finance/Real Estate         | Ken Price – Management                |
| Kamesh Subbarao – Aerospace Engrg.          | Siamak Ardekani – Civil Engineering   |
| Wei Jen Lee - Electrical Engineering        | Kambiz Alavi – Electrical Engineering |
| Andrew Ortiz – Art & Art History            | Rhomda Dobbs – Criminology & CJ       |
| Chyng-Yang Jang – Communication             | Laurin Porter – English               |
| Johanna Smith – English                     | Joyce Goldberg – History              |
| Mark Quелlette – Linguistics                | Aimee Israel-Pelletier – Modern Lang. |
| Doug Stotter – Music                        | Lewis Baker – Philosophy              |
| Raymond Eve – Sociology                     | Joe Kongevick – Theatre               |
| Paul Chippindale – Biology                  | Rasika Dias – Chemistry               |
| Merlynd Nestell – Earth & Environment       | Michaela Vancliff – Mathematics       |
| David Jorgensen – Mathematics               | Suresh Sharma – Physics               |
| Perry Fuchs – Psychology                    | Joe Guy – Architecture                |
| Mary Lynn Crow – Education                  | David Stader – Education              |
| Mary Weber – Nursing                        | Cheryl Anderson – Nursing             |
| Sharon Judkins – Nursing                    | Norman Cobb – Social Work             |
| Maria Martinez-Cosio – Urban/Public Affairs | Gerald Saxon                          |

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 2:38 p.m. by Senate Chair Dan Formanowicz.

**Approval of Previous Minutes:** Motion and second was made to approve the minutes from the 3-7-07 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**Remarks by the Faculty-Senate Chair:** We have kind of a busy meeting today. I have very little in the way of comments or remarks. I do have one thing that I want to do. I want to recognize the fact that this is Dana's last meeting with the Senate as Provost. In recognition of that, I would like to give her something from the Senate. This reads, "The Faculty-Senate recognizes Dr. Dunn for her commitment to open, honest avenues of communication between administration, faculty, and staff. It commends her effort to foster an atmosphere of trust and cooperation between the faculty and the Office of the Provost."

**Remarks by the Provost:** This is very special. Thank you so much. I can't tell you how special it has been to work with the Senate. I appreciate very much the open communication we have and the very positive atmosphere. It is to your credit that we have been able to foster this atmosphere. It is critical that it continues for the success of the University. To receive this means a great deal, so thank you.

**Remarks by the President:** I guess I can't help but add a footnote. I don't want to embarrass the Provost, but I have to second the sentiment and language on the plaque. I think UT Arlington has been truly blessed by having such an outstanding Provost. I have said in front of UT System officials that we have had, and still have, the best and most effective advocate for

the academic mission of any university in the UT System here at the University of Texas at Arlington. Dana and I have had a great partnership and will continue to have a great partnership as colleagues. Her contributions to the growth and strengthening of our university over the recent years are priceless. I would add my words of appreciation. I have just two quick things before I introduce Rusty Ward, who has a short presentation to make. One is to remind everyone about Academic Excellence Week which is next week. In particular, I would like to encourage you and your colleagues to join us for the President's Convocation next Thursday afternoon. We have a truly outstanding speaker, in addition to all the other recognition that we are going to have. Stephen Carter, who is a law professor at Yale Law School and widely acclaimed author in fiction as well as non-fiction, will speak. I encourage you to be there. The other thing is I am going to tell you something off the record and I need to ask you to keep this as a secret for about 12 hours, maybe 24., As you know, we invite a speaker each year to come and address our graduation celebration in May, with fireworks, to really celebrate our graduates and their families. Tomorrow, the White House is going to announce that the first lady Laura Bush is going to be our speaker this year. The White House has this thing about wanting to announce things first, so they told us not to say anything. I think it is an exciting opportunity for the campus, for graduates, their families, and for all of us. This is on the evening of May 11. One of the things that you have been aware of if you look at the local news or read the newspaper, is that the words "Barnett Shale" have become part of our household words. You have heard and seen, depending on where you live, you may have even been visited by some of the companies who are doing leases with Ft. Worth, Arlington, and other communities. We have been exploring, in a serious way over the last six months, the possibility of having a lease here for the gas under our campus. We have been informed that the campus sits on top of a large natural gas deposit. Rusty Ward, our Vice President for Business, has become our resident expert on Barnett Shale. I asked Dan whether we could just give you an overall briefing on what some of the issues are and a little background on it. We are pursuing this in a serious way. We think it represents something that would benefit the University over a period of years assuming that there is as much natural gas under the ground as we think there may be.

Rusty Ward followed with a presentation, with handouts, concerning the Barnett Shale gas basin. He explained the basics in what is required to establish drilling leases. He went on to explain some of the drilling techniques being used today. Some of the newest techniques are the ability to drill lateral lines that will reach six to seven miles. He explained how one hole will generate multiple wells. He went on to say that the administration feels it is worth the risk to give this company the lease. He stressed that we don't want this to be a situation where the entire campus is being inconvenienced. He then opened the floor to questions and one of the concerns was when the drilling was to begin and its ecological impact. President Spaniolo stated that the process was underway but that it was too early to have a definite timetable. This being said, the president explained that once the drilling began it would take about 30 days to drill the hole. There might be some inconvenience and noise but there were ways to minimize it. However, Spaniolo reassured the senate of the minimal presence of the production of the gas itself. Rusty Ward spoke about the environmental factors involved. The Texas Railroad Commission and the Environmental Quality Commission regulates in manner in which these wells are drilled. In addition, he added that the company leasing the land is required to return the land to its original condition.

Senator Martinez-Cosio wondered about how the gas would be transported offsite and if parking would be affected. Rusty Ward explained the system of gas lines that are built around the well site and that tie into transportation companies. All of Arlington will be involved in this drilling in the next few years. The only parking lot involved is the south lot.

To Senator Judkins' question of how are we preparing our neighbors for this, Rusty Ward responded that companies are trying to buy out leases in the area. President Spaniolo stepped in to remind the senate that we have not finalized a lease with anyone as of yet.

The discussion then turned to issues of how long the wells might remain active. One senator queried the president on the use of the income with respect to UTA's program or research. To which President Spaniolo responded that when we get to the point where there are enough funds generated, that thoughtful planning was needed and the research mission was high on his priority list.

Chairman Formanowicz then pointed out that the environmental impact should be low and drilling might be starting already at River Legacy Parks whose foundation is very careful about ecological impact on the environment.

### **Committee Reports:**

Chairman Formanowicz: I want to move on to Committee reports. We have several reports and updates from committees that have been working. The first is from Academic and Student Services which has been looking at the question of the drop date that we discussed at our last meeting.

Senator Vancliff reported on the issue and stated that after polling the faculty 42 percent were happy with the current drop date, 30 percent neutral, and 20 percent would prefer the drop date be later than week ten, while 8 percent would prefer the drop date to be earlier than week ten. So, given these results, the move to change the drop date will be abandoned for now to be revisited in a few years.

### **Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee -**

Senator Smith: We met, briefly, to discuss the kinds of things that we might need to address regarding post-tenure review. As far as we got is this resolution. We agreed that this is one thing that we need to establish. It reads, "The annual post-tenure review process for tenured faculty must be entirely separate from the annual evaluations of tenured and tenure-track faculty made to determine merit for potential raises."

Chairman Formanowicz: Is this intended as an addendum to the post-tenure review policy that is in the House?

Senator Smith stated that the committee had not yet reviewed the policy. But that this was the policy that the Senate had agreed upon previously.

Chairman Formanowicz explained that the Provost and Michael Moore had brought up the issue. There were concerns as well from the Executive committee as to how the post-tenure review results were being used or abused with regard to merit increase.

Senator Alavi expressed concern that post-tenure review would be used against the older members of departments. This concern was seconded by Senator Porter

Chairman Formanowicz: The post-tenure review process involves determining whether individuals have met minimum standards in the three classic areas. That is different from the merit raise review. The merit raise review is reviewing merit – how meritorious they are in the areas, particularly in terms of scholarship, etc. I would say those are two very different things.

The question arose because there was some question from the administration about using merit reviews as part of the post-tenure review process.

Chairman Formanowicz: I would like to thank the committee for moving quickly on what is going to be a complex problem. The next report is from Special Projects.

Senator Nestell: We have all the applications. If anybody has anyone they want to nominate for emeritus, I would like to begin next week. We did take several that are presumably retiring this semester.

#### Operating Procedures Committee –

Chair-Elect Priest: I am trying to gather information so that the committee will have something to work on. We are looking at the requirements of the reviews of deans, associate deans, and directors. I don't know how many of you have ever looked into the "hop" on this, but there are quite a few things that you have to do. There are 25 questions on the survey. We are trying to identify people that have done some reviews of deans and associate deans to give us some feedback on what are some of the problems, are there too many questions, etc. I would like some feedback on how did those reviews go. There are specified questions in the operating procedures. It is quite an elaborate review and if there are some suggestions on how to streamline it or make it more helpful, that is what I am looking for right now.

Chairman Formanowicz: The feedback that we got from the Provost's office was that some of the people who were conducting these felt that some of the questions that are listed on the standard questionnaire aren't very helpful. Also, the titles of administrators on this campus seem to change with every change in direction that the wind blows and that the current policy doesn't cover all of them that it probably should. There are probably some in there that no longer exist.

#### Texas College of Faculty Senates -

Senator Ingram: On about February 22, we met in Austin. The Legislature was just coming back into session. We were briefed on a number of potential bills, some of which have moved forward to various forums. One thing that was made clear to us was that the expectations of the State House in Austin for Higher Education relative to the funding and academic excellence they want us to pursue have some measure of gap between them. The expectations just far exceed what they are willing to put out in resources. We heard that from a number of different individuals. A couple of key things that were kicked around from representatives from across the public university attendees were the web-based courses, distance learning, etc. – how development, on-going use, rights, compensation for faculty and content developers, as it was brought forward very widely. Not only across the state, but within individual systems within the state. It looks like every university is making up their own rules and, in some cases, people are compensated fairly well. In some cases, they get no compensation whatsoever. It is just like another course assignment. We were briefed on a number of the textbook bills that were being discussed from one simple committee making all the textbook decisions to moratoriums on how often you could change textbooks, an approved list of textbooks, etc. Some of the more recently seen in the newspaper, etc., has to do with sales tax. That is certainly something to watch. We also heard a few briefings on the continued push from a number of different sources for community colleges and high schools to grant college credit in very suspicious situations with very little documentation, accreditation, etc. The discussion continues to be that there is a faction across the state within the Legislature that would like to see community colleges granting university degrees with so-called associations with universities so they don't have to build anymore universities, fund them, etc. In essence, the community colleges would eventually

take over the granting of baccalaureate degrees. In short, I would say the discussion was there that the Legislature continues to want to claim a college-degreed Texas population, but not necessarily a college-educated population.

Chairman Formanowicz: This issue of granting college credit for courses being taught by high school teachers is something we have been talking about at the Faculty Advisory Council as well. The only unit in the system that appears to be doing it, right now, is UT Brownsville. They have a very interesting situation. The students pay less than \$50 per course. They are paying the teachers \$500 to do it. We are concerned at FAC about quality control on this issue. I have been assured by our administration that we have no interest in getting involved in this. What we should be aware of is that community colleges will be getting involved in it, including those in our area. This is a result of something that was attached to the K-12 funding bill in the special session. I was actually buried in that bill that was passed during the special session. We were aware that it was going through. The only place in the system where it has any legs at all appears to be Brownsville and they are using it to pump up their students numbers.

Senator Israel inquired about the incentive to support this or whether this was being pushed by a particular lobby.

Senator Ingram: One of the things that was reported to us is that some south Texas legislators, as it was reported to us, were concerned because a number of students from that area could not pass AP courses and were not receiving college credit for a lot of things they thought was, maybe, biased or stilted towards that and found a way around that. They pushed the granting of high school teachers to essentially circumvent the AP.

Chairman Formanowicz: If you look at the bill, it actually talks about the AP failure rate. It is clear that this is a way around it.

I didn't put it on the agenda, but the ad hoc committee that is looking into changing our teaching evaluations, myself, Tom Ingram, Mary Lynn Crow, and Toni Sol, has been looking at some possibilities. I don't think we are ready to do anything yet. Hopefully, we will have something to report early next semester.

#### **Old Business** –

Senator Dobbs: A couple of times campus safety has come up. Last time we were kind of volunteered as criminologists to get our students involved. We have started to do that or started to talk about it, at least. We met with Rick Gomez about having student volunteers doing student escort and patrols on campus. This was something the Police Department had already thought about. They are in the process of working out how that would happen. It is going to take more than our student organizations to get a week covered consistently. They will likely be coming out to other departments to talk to students about volunteering. They do recognize there is a shortage of escorts and they are working to try to resolve that.

Chairman Formanowicz: That reminds me that there has been a Campus Safety Task Force that has been formed which currently has representatives from the Police Department and Academic Affairs. I can't remember what the original makeup was. The Chief just put out a call and invited Criminology, students, and the Senate to be represented on that task force. Clearly, they are taking some of our concerns seriously.

Senator Anderson: As a member of that task force, we had over 30 candidates that were quite excellent and that we are interviewing.

Chairman Formanowicz: There is one more thing. I want to assure everyone that I have had conversations with President Spaniolo and so has John about the upcoming search for a Provost and about the need for this to be an open search. I am going to be meeting with President Spaniolo and one of the things we are going to talk about is the composition of that search committee and the search itself. He appears to be very committed to an open search at this point.

Senator Porter: I am Co-chair of the One Book Program. I wanted to announce that book selection for next year has been made. The committee looked at 32 books for next year. The one selected is *Maus: A Graphic Novel of the Holocaust*. I will be putting out a call for people who would like to participate in our brown bag lecture series next year.

With no further business, meeting was adjourned at 3:44 p.m.