The Faculty Senate met in regular session Wednesday, September 25, 1996 at 2:30p.m. in Conference Room 4, Davis Hall. Chair Rod Hissong presided.

ATTENDANCE:

Present were President Witt, Provost Wright, Senators Amster, Boone, Bradshaw, Bright, Brocklin, Burquest, Cantwell, Chrzanowski, Crowder, Danahay, Devarajan, Ellwood, Fairbanks, Gaupp, Harvey, Hermann, Hissong, Ingram, Jarboe, Luo, Matthys, McDowell, McKinney, Moore, Payne, Priest, Raja, Rajeshwar, Rodnitsky, Roemer, Rycraft, Walker, Wang, Watkins, Weems, Wilding, Wilmore, Wright, Yardley, and Young.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the April 24, 1996 meeting were approved.

REMARKS BY THE CHAIR:

Chair Hissong talked about the key Faculty Senate issues for 1996-1997. The grievance procedure, the Tenure and Promotion review document, the proposed post tenure review, and the SACS Review will be discussed.

The report of the special meeting of UT Faculty Advisory Council will be under new business.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT:

President Witt discussed the legislative budget. He talked about the spring enrollment that was down from last year, but was optimistic that this can be addressed and anticipates an increase with new students, problem-solving of retention and talking with students.

The issue of post tenure review process will be discussed. There is a need for post tenure because if we do not do something, the Legislature will do it for us. We will most certainly like what we will determine better than what the legislature will do. The exceptions that make it into the press attracts attention and the isolated incidents that happen are magnified are some of the reasons to have the post tenure review process.

The regents at their meeting will address and pass a post tenure review policy in November. The policy needs to be consistent. The faculty needs to govern themselves at higher educational institutions.

REMARKS BY THE PROVOST:

Provost Wright followed up on the legislative budget and the presentation of the programs that we already have or new initiatives that we would like to have. Among eight programs, we have two that we already have and two that we would like to have. The Automation Robotics Research Institute (ARRI) is one program that helps businesses start up and develop to a certain level. Engineering has received funding from this program and would like to see more. ARRI has exceeded their initial expectation of helping fifteen to twenty companies a year. They helped over five hundred companies this past year.

One of our programs at this institution that is highly respected all over the state is the School of Urban and Public Affairs (SUPA). They have worked with a wide range of governmental districts in various forms of legislation,
made new legislators aware of their responsibilities, and has been funded by the state since 1967. It is important that they receive additional funding as well.

He said that retention is a key and advising is very important. He said that we need to keep the legislature informed about the programs we have at this institution.

There is an ENCORE program for older than average students who have come back to school or coming to school for the first time.

There is a Mexican-American program that this institution has funded in the amount of $125,000 and could be put into other areas. Permanent funding could be used in this area.

The African Exchange Program received funding in the amount of $226,000 and would like to use some of the funds into the library resources for African studies. One commonality related to funding is that the state wants to see a service component from the programs, linking with city and local governments and private enterprise.

He said that the president, Dean John McElroy, and himself will meet with faculty of larger colleges and maybe have a breakfast meeting with the smaller colleges to get faculty input. There may be funding available for scholarships for students and assistance with smaller colleges for special speakers.

QUESTIONs FOR THE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST:

Burley Walker made a comment about faculty and inconsistent behavior and said that behavior may be merely different behavior. He said that administrators could lose sight of this and abuse the process. President Witt stated that he would not argue the point. He said the concern that something that is done for reasonable and rational purposes initially that contains the potential for inappropriate use or abuse must be considered very carefully.

Jerry Rodnitsky said that it was good to know that the administration and this system is doing their best to prevent the undermining of tenure by the legislature but did not think we had to protect tenure from the public. The public is generally not concerned and does not know about tenure. Is there any documentation or concerns about tenure? President Witt stated that it was a reasonable and valid point. The concern from the public probably is not with tenure and the vast majority of the public probably does not fully understand the concept or how important it is but the link that is being made is the growing responsibility and accountability of the academic community. Increasingly, people are making a link to irresponsibility and tenure. He would quickly say that there is not a large file of complaints but is frequently doesn’t take more than one or two irate letters to a legislator about an institution that enjoys lifetime employment.

Provost Wright added that he wondered if tenure is becoming a "buzz word" in the eyes of the legislature and others for any kind of criticism of education.

President Witt also said that any time anything is in the paper about an individual faculty member and inappropriate behavior, tenure is questioned.

Robert Young in Sociology commented that he hoped that somehow we make it clear to the press that the tenure review process is reviewed yearly. President Witt agreed.

Senator Hermann stated that many students come in late for class and they said the previous professor let them out late. He requested that all classes be adjourned on time. President Witt responded that they will follow up on this.

Senator Hermann also stated that there should be a time limit on grade changes. There is not a time limit in the catalog at this time. He requested that this be added to the catalog or some discussion on the time limit. Chair Hisson referred this to student services.
Senator Jarboe asked what was being done about the concern for drop in enrollment? He has been concerned for the last five years about the image of UTA, what is hurting the image of UTA, have we tried to isolate the reasons for the decline? Has there been a formal investigation done that addresses specific problems? President Witt said there has been a recent outside organization that has surveyed several hundred students who were here and elected not to return. That is currently being reviewed. A firm that he worked with in Austin will be doing a pro bono survey in the area of our image. Part of the reason for student scholarships is to send a consistent message to community colleges and others about the image of UTA.

Senator Campbe..l from Finance and Real Estate commented that we do ourselves an injustice when we react to everything in the news. There is no problem with the image of this university and we need to be gentle with criticism and not darken our own image.

Senator Devarajan from Electrical Engineering asked about the entrance requirements and if they are too easy. How does that effect us? Pres. Witt stated that our objective is not to enroll students but to educate and graduate students. If we knowingly admit students that have a very low probability of successfully completing a course of study, then the standards need to be revised. If the admission standards that are faculty driven elect to admit a student that has a fifty-fifty percent chance of successfully completing a course of study, we need to have a support system to help them succeed.

Senator Amster suggested we use statistical information to address the drop in enrollment. President Witt agreed that we do need to look at these statistics. For instance, the drop in enrollment was 3000 students from the fall of last year to the fall of this year. The graduate students remained consistent while the undergraduate, specifically lower division students, were almost exclusively the reason for the drop. The tuition is now three times the load of the community colleges. The recruiting effort was focused on high school students instead of quality community college students. Looking at those statistics can help identify some of the problems. We are looking at some and we will be looking at other statistics like that.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

A recommendation from last spring was made to set the date of the open forum regarding the proposed guidelines for promotion and tenure for October 9 at 2:30 in Nedderman Hall. Chair Hissong asked for the approval of the motion. The motion was approved, seconded and passed for the meeting to be held for faculty discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

1) Draft Guidelines on Periodic Evaluation of Tenured Faculty as proposed by Chancellor Cunningham

Chair Hissong referred to the Draft Guidelines for Periodic Evaluation of Tenured Faculty and opened the floor to debate and comments.

It was asked to read the last sentence under #4. Mike Moore read it as "supplemental materials that a faculty member wishes to submit."

Senator Bradshaw said under point 7, it would be nice to see written into this some kind of period of review to modify performance other than the normal five year time period.

Senator Hermann asked if everyone would receive a document of the open forum. Chair Hissong said this document was for the post tenure process which is different than the October 9 1996 meeting. Senator Hermann said the most important point was #7 about unsatisfactory performance. He asked if the regents rules would be available for next time.
Chair Hissong said the President was asked to form an on-campus committee to discuss this document and post tenure in general. The tenure and promotion committee will be the committee and comments can be passed on to this committee.

Senator Hermann asked if the committee could make an abstract of the pages needed.

Senator Bright from SUPA had a comment on the unsatisfactory review process. She said it is important to define how long the review would take place, what items would be appropriate to review, and how an unsatisfactory performance would be determined. Some guidelines should be made.

Senator Amster stated that she always had a copy of the Faculty Handbook in addition to the operating procedures and there are some sections that may already be in existence of the present policy. Could we receive a copy of the sections that pertain to this? Chair Hissong stated that the sections she is asking for are in the operating procedures of the HOP and the regents ruling.

Senator Walker stated that the issues about satisfactory/unsatisfactory performance appraisals are dealt with in some detail in the draft of the proposed promotion and tenure guidelines for the institutional policy. It lacks one procedure and that is the appellate procedure which is under #7.

Senator Gaupp asked for clarification that the Senate Equity Committee and the T & P Committee is going to be the body to review this document and not the Faculty Senate as a whole or input from faculty members? If so, or if not, to whom do we send input and by what day? Chair Hissong stated that the Senate Tenure and Promotion and Responsibility Committee is representing the Faculty Senate on university-wide committee that is going to be discussing the post tenure review process. He didn’t know the calendar but the decision will be made by November. Express your views to the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

Senator Gaupp asked about the time frame on giving faculty input to the committee. President Witt replied that the system-wide faculty committee is meeting on October 29, so backing off two or three days before that would be the end date. The formation of this committee will be announced early in the week. The only real change in the Tenure and Promotion Committee is that there would be a balance. Chair Hissong said they might also expand the October 9, 1996 meeting to include the open forum discussion of the pre-tenure and post-tenure review.

Senator Campbell asked if this would be included in the Handbook of Operating Procedures eventually? Chair Hissong said yes it would. Senator Campbell said he didn’t see any tie of decision-makers to the faculty. It would be important for accountability to be included in the document.

Senator Elwood stated that it was important to point out that the faculty is being evaluated every year. There needs to be a great deal of explicitness to this document. His concern was that we already have a complete five year tenure review and we need to be careful to have a specified document. Chair Hissong stated that the university is asking for input and it is a general document.

Senator Bradshaw asked if the assumption is that the regents are going to come up with system-wide guidelines and each component is going to come up with an implementation of those broad guidelines? President Witt replied that is was an important point to make and that Bill Cunningham wants this to be campus-driven and flexible.

Senator Payne stated that in paragraph 4, there should be a definition of "? Skeet WER peer" means and it is not addressed.

Senator Bradshaw said that in paragraph 7, there should be a probationary period for the professor to "shape up" and there should be a document that specifically deals with that. President Witt replied that a document that is too specific may not cover all the details, but a shorter document that places faculty responsibility and defines it as briefly as possible is preferred.
Provost Wright stated that the process should be developmental. There needs to be a center to review and enhance the teaching process that helps that person.

Senator Hermann said there is a due process procedure and there is no need to be more specific than that.

Senator Devaraj said even if this document is done perfectly, there will still need to be feedback.

Senator Amster said we may not need to "reinvent the wheel" and maybe we could try other university ideas that seem to be preserving their image, retaining good faculty, and seem to be doing a good job. We may need to weed out dead wood - "bad guys" - and find out what works, what the students think about what good performance might be. So, it is not necessarily a negative thing to undergo a periodic review of tenured faculty.

Senator Gaupp said that it was pointed out that the faculty are already undergoing this type of review.
Senator Amster said it is not uniform.

Senator Young said that it seems like there is a major difference in what brought this document on and where it seems to be heading. Maybe there needs to be a different type of review that does not exist currently.

Senator Payne agreed the existing review is not uniform and suggested there be a review for "cause". He could see future unnecessary reviews of faculty. He suggested that if there is inappropriate behavior, then review for that at the time needed. He said that the public could probably care less about the personal competence but the teaching competence was the issue here and why the tax payers pay our bills.

Senator Rodnitsky said there is a real "crunch" question of what is going to change with the burden of proof shifting from the individual to the university. He referred to the last paragraph and said "what" and "how" to be proven should be included in the statement about "for good cause."

Senator Campbell said the term "unsatisfactory" was ambiguous. All of the faculty know what is "unsatisfactory" behavior. Categories should be defined and reasons for termination should be given. Logic should be considered. Faculty review for raises may need to be examined in the policy.

Provost Wright said the plan for review would be working more in conjunction with the faculty than what the tenure process is doing now.

Senator Jarboe said it would take a lot of time and effort on the part of the faculty to review other faculty and 80-90% of the faculty meet the standards. "For cause" may not be enough to be reviewed for tenure where procedures already exist for this.

Senator suggested that item #7 is basically what needs to get attention. The basic premise is to "weed out" the bad seed.

Chair Rod Hirsch said the pre-tenure and promotion proposal and the Cunningham proposal will be copied and sent to the faculty.

Senator Bradshaw made a motion to send the Cunningham letter, the Tenure and Promotion document and a cover letter to every member of the faculty. The motion was seconded. It was voted and passed.

Senator Ellwood made a motion to also send it electronically to all faculty on campus. The motion was seconded.
Senator Moore said he suggested it last year to Ellwood Priest and it was pointed out that not everyone had e-mail. They don't know who has e-mail and who doesn't have it. It was suggested to send it only to the senators. The motion never came to a vote.

President Witt asked if there were any questions to address before he went to an internal audit meeting.
Senator Campbell made a motion that the committee reviewing this be members representing all of the schools, elected by the faculty body.

President Witt welcomed any guidance and the memo he received from Chancellor Cunningham said to appoint a committee representing your academic community. He consulted with Rod Hisson about the best way to get representation. It was felt that the Promotion and Tenure Committee would be an informed and interested group. He will take a look at the committee and determine the balance and if needed, he can add some faculty to that committee.

Senator Campbell said he felt that would be acceptable if the group officially brings it back to the faculty to vote.

2) Proposal from UT Faculty Advisory Council

Chair Hisson gave a report of the meeting with Senator Ratliff and Chancellor Cunningham. Senator Ratliff is the proponent in the legislature who will essentially write the rules of post tenure review then hand it to the system. Chair Hisson said the one thing he took away from that meeting was the emphasis on anecdotal evidence. If the system doesn’t write it, the legislature will. It was noted that there was only about 2-3% "deadwood" in the university system, which was an incredible amount of time to spend on this subject. The group in Austin was gravely concerned that this was the first step to getting rid of tenure completely - that the document would eliminate the review process because every five years you have to prove what you are doing. He discussed the academic freedom that would possibly be threatened, like having unpopular research. The speed of which this process had to be evaluated was also a concern. The Faculty Advisory Council passed resolution #1 to ask the Regents to postpone their decision until February so that the UT Faculty Senate could have a chance to evaluate it.

It was asked that the Faculty Senate pass resolution #2 that supports the UT Faculty Advisory Council’s resolution that the regents postpone their post tenure review proposal until their February meeting. There was a motion and seconded. After much discussion, the motion was carried by a majority vote - 20 to 11.

3) Task assignments to Faculty Senate committees 1996-97

Chair Hisson passed out copies of the document. The list of committees were faxed to the chair committee members. He said the Tenure and Promotion and the Academic Freedom committee will be overworked the next six weeks and he used his executive authority under advice from the Parliamentarian in giving the responsibility of completing the guidelines to the Ethics committee. After discussion, Chair Hisson said these were recommendations for committees and distribution of the work load to finish up the Tenure and Promotion document this semester or next semester. Because of the urgency of the Post Tenure Review, the Tenure and Promotion committee will serve on the university-wide committee and will be consumed with that.

Senator Wright asked if last year’s Tenure and Promotion committee would provide the Ethics committee with the most recent deliberations on the document being discussed. Chair Hisson agreed and said he would meet with the Equity committee to give them the most recent grievance proceedings document and any historical perspective they might want to give.

Chair Hisson asked everyone to meet with their committees. If you have more than one committee, make sure the Equity, Tenure and Academic Freedom, and Ethics committees meet and get a chair today. The other committees meet at your leisure but before the end of October.

Announcements: None

Adjournment: Motion for adjournment was made and seconded.