Minutes
Faculty Senate
The University of Texas at Arlington

The Faculty Senate met in regular session Wednesday, October 23, 1996 at 2:30 p.m. in Conference Room 4, Davis Hall. Chair Rod Hissong presided.

ATTENDANCE:
Present were Dean McElroy (in the place of President Witt and Provost Wright), Senators Boone, Bradshaw, Bright, Burquest, Cantwell, Chrzansowski, Danahay, Del Castillo, Devarajan, Ellwood, Fairbanks, Gaupp, Harvey, Hermann, Ingram, Jarboe, Luo, Manry, Matthys, McDowell, McKinney, Moore, Nelson, Payne, Raja, Rajeshwar, Rodnitsky, Roemer, Rome, Rycraft, Walker, Wang, Weems, Wilmore, Wright, Wyers, Yardley, and Young, Director of Libraries Wilding, Student Congress Representative Wayne Huddleston, SAC Representative Jackie Van Brocklin.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
The minutes of the September 25, 1996 Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

REMARKS BY THE CHAIR:
Chair Hissong gave an overview of the Faculty Open Forum held on Wednesday, October 9, 1996. He also reported briefly on the Ad Hoc Committee meeting of the UTFAC.

Senator Rodnitsky asked who was on the Ad Hoc Committee. It was noted that senate chairs from different components of the UT System made up the committee.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT:
Dean John McElroy represented President Witt and Provost Wright who were not able to attend. McElroy said that although the President and the Provost did not send comments, he would be willing to take any questions and relay them to the President and/or Provost.

Questions were then directed to Dean McElroy regarding the Post Tenure Review issue:
1. A question was raised regarding the attitude of the Chancellor’s office toward the events surrounding the tenure review issue.
2. Senator Ellwood asked why the faculty aren’t in Austin, telling legislature that the proposed tenure review is onerous. He concluded by asking why the faculty is not fighting it instead of trying to preempt it.

McElroy said that he would relay these questions to the President and Provost.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:
There were no committee reports.

Senator McKinney passed out a handout and read the "Report on Council of Faculty Governance Organizations (CoFGO) Fall Meeting October 18-19, 1996".

Senator Young asked if any plans have been adopted pertaining to communicating to the public, specifically educating them as about the tenure issue and creating a positive rapport with them. Senator McKinney replied that CoFGO did not mention any plans specifically. Senator Young then asked if any one else had any suggestions and discussion was held. Chair Hissong suggested that Senator Young’s question be tabled until later in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:
The Chair made a brief report on Open Forum meeting held on October 9, 1996 in the Rosebud Theater in the E.H. Hereford University Center. During the course of the meeting two straw votes were held with outcomes being as follows:

1. The majority of the faculty present voted that the tenure review process should move forward unless the candidate chooses to stop it.
The majority of the faculty present voted to modify the Chancellor's report on Tenure Review.

Senator Bradshaw inquired as to the relationship between the Tenure Review proposal drafted in Austin and the Ad Hoc proposal. Chair Hisong responded that while there are some similarities, they are indeed two distinct documents.

Senator Cantwell commented that it looks as though the faculty were working "up to a proposal" as opposed to creating a proposal of choice for themselves. He said the proposition seems to suggest the notion of "hiring the best person every two years." Cantwell said that there seems to be a misunderstanding of what tenure is. He also asked what difference the proposal makes between performing unsatisfactorily and termination for cause.

Senator Ellwood reiterated his opinion to argue against any legislation/proposal at all to change tenure procedures.

At the direction of the Chair, Young re-presented his question regarding suggestions for informing/educating the public as to the daily duties and responsibilities of UTA professors, noting that even UTA students need to be informed.

Senator Ellwood agreed, citing introductory lectures at the beginning of the semester as a possible means of reaching students. He also suggested that the UTA faculty send President Witt to State Senator Chris Harris' office to tell him the faculty's views.

Also, in reference to President Witt visiting Senator Harris' office, Senator Rodnitsky noted that he didn't think it was wise to send President Witt to speak on behalf of the faculty, citing a possible conflict of interest on President Witt's part. Rodnitsky concluded by saying that the faculty should speak for itself.

Senator Payne suggested inviting Senator Harris on campus for a one-day informal gathering. Senator Michael Moore suggested that an effective way to encourage political support would be to supply politicians with the number of voters interested in tenure.

It was motioned and seconded that the Special Projects Committee become responsible publicizing and educating the public about the duties of professors. Discussion was held regarding the motion and the motion was passed.

NEW BUSINESS
Chair Hisong introduced Dr. Andy White, Physics, and Joyce Thomas, who presented the Status of Distance learning at UTA - Distance Education Powerhouse. Dr. White and Thomas passed out information packets relating to Distance Learning, including an article in the October 18, 1996 edition of the Shorthorn, entitled, "University, AISD form Educational Alliance". Facts/information presented included:

1. The Distance Education (DE) Steering currently consists of 25+ members and meets weekly.
2. The development of a DE center is underway and will have potential partnerships with Oracle, ED, Hughes Training, GTE, and American Airlines.
3. Some of the issues recently discussed to enhance faculty interest in developing programs include faculty support/training, release time, and adequate financial compensation.

During the question and answer portion of the presentation, Senator Devarajan prefaced his question by saying he is in favor of DE; he then asked what advantage, if any, would UTA have over some well known school who offers the same services in this area. White suggested that perhaps UTA would perhaps be more economical than other colleges.

Senator Hermann asked if students were credited purely by electronic means and, if so, how can one be sure that student is doing his or her own work. He also mentioned the Shorthorn article in which it was suggested that "people already in the workforce could use previous work experience as the first 60 hours of credit".

White said that while students will be credited primarily by electronic means, there will be measures to ensure academic integrity. In response to the last portion of Senator Hermann's question, Thomas acknowledged that the information in question from the Shorthorn article is misleading and that a correction had been noted and printed.

Senator Roemer submitted the following motion written by Senator Danahay:

The Faculty Senate of the University of Texas at Arlington urges the House Appropriations Committee to reconsider its recent recommendation that UT system administrators not be given long-term contracts or
tenure. The UT system needs its administrators to be able to make decisions based on long-term rather than short-term results. This recommendation erodes the ability of UT administrators to make such long-term decisions.

After discussion, the motion was defeated.

Hermann-Devarajan Resolution:

Senators Hermann and Devarajan passed out a handout which specified proposed changes in minimum acceptable SAT scores. He then made a motion to adopt this resolution. Discussion was held regarding the proposal. Senator Hermann noted that in no way will raising admission requirements lower enrollment.

Senator Ellwood raised the point that the Undergraduate Assembly would need to vote on the resolution before it became binding. Further discussion was held as Senator Rodnitsky commented that the resolution presented the problem of whether students who were struggling academically would be allowed to enter the University. The majority voted to table the resolution.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hissong asked that, upon adjournment, all committees meet and choose chairpersons. The meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.