

DRAFT
FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
Meeting: December 1, 2009

PRESENT: M. Moosally, B. Belbot, T. Davis, C. Bedard, R. Beebe, J. Caro, R. Chiquillo, D. de la Pena, H. Eliassen, T. Emeka, J. Flosi, B. Gilbert, A. Gomez-Rivas, S. Henney, A. Hewitt, G. Jackson, K. Jegdic, J. Johnson, C. Nguyen, O. Paskelian, , D. Pence, N. Rangel, T. Redl, K. Robertson, D. Ryden, J. Schmertz, P. Simeonov, S. Singletary, N. Sullivan, F. Williams, Z. Zhou

ABSENT: J. Creighton, O. Gupta, P. Lyons, J. Pavletich, R. Pepper

GUESTS: President W. Flores, Provost M. Woods, P. Williams, D. Bradley, P. Ensor

President Michelle Moosally called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Minutes for the November 17, 2009 meeting were distributed but due to lack of time to read them were tabled until the January meeting.

President Moosally's Report

President Moosally called attention to two policies that have been revised: the domestic animal policy and the policy on recruitment and employment of staff.

President Moosally announced that the Search for a new provost is progressing. There have been nominations from faculty, and faculty were encouraged to continue to nominate candidates. Senator T. Redl asked what kinds of backgrounds candidates needed to have. President Moosally indicated that experience as a dean or department chair (or provost) might give candidates the range of experience we are seeking.

President Moosally said that, as a Senate, we had passed a resolution on admissions standards, and a part of that resolution called for a faculty committee to work on admissions standards. Dr. C. Birchak is pulling the group together for the committee. The names of Senator J. Pavletich and Senator J. Johnson will be sent forward to represent the Senate. Please let President Moosally know if you are interested in serving on this committee.

President Moosally called attention to an article on admissions standards in the *Houston Chronicle*. She said that there have been a number of phone calls with questions from people in the community.

President Moosally called for input on topics for Senate discussion for next semester. She said that there seems to be a big push to put courses online and therefore the Senate needs to discuss online courses. Senator D. Ryden volunteered to take the lead on this topic. Senate VP B. Belbot agreed to serve on a subcommittee to explore the topic of online courses. A second topic for Senate discussion during spring semester is the status of lecturers; President Moosally asked for volunteers to address the topic. Since no one volunteered, President Moosally requested that anyone interested contact her. A third topic for Senate discussion is the Faculty Handbook; President Moosally said that it is important for the Senate to look at this and that faculty should

have a lot of oversight. The current Faculty Handbook is one that Associate VP Fairbanks wrote for the purpose of SACS. Other issues that may be considered by the Senate during the spring semester are planning issues and resource allocations.

Senator T. Redl asked about the status of the mission statement. President Moosally said that it was discussed vigorously at the Academic Council. Senator Redl asked if the issue with the faculty/staff wording was addressed. President Moosally said the wording was changed and both words (faculty and staff) were taken out. President Moosally thinks the mission statement will probably be sent back to us again. Senator N. Sullivan said that she still has problems with the last sentence of the mission statement. Senator J. Caro asked about the wording and President Moosally said there is new wording that says something such as "...to develop students' talent and prepare them for success..."

Old Business:

Professor A. Pavelich, the chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee, was asked to inform the Senate about the progress of the revision of the Faculty Development Leave policy. The revised policy addresses whether junior faculty are eligible to apply; junior faculty can apply but the year of leave will count toward tenure. Therefore, the junior faculty member would still be on the tenure clock.

The question of who writes letters for recommending the leave was discussed. The Faculty Affairs Committee thought about having deans' and chairs' letters—and decided that they would have neither. The most compelling information they had was that the chairs' letters were only a negligible part of the consideration so they would not be needed. FAC changed the due date for leave applications (from applicant to the department FDL subcommittee) from mid-December to the first day of classes in Spring semester. Senator Sullivan asked if the faculty member would have to wait to take the leave if there was external funding. Someone pointed out that it could be in the ORC policy that it says the faculty member cannot accept both (internal and external funding). Senator D. Ryden asked if the R&T Subcommittee members are supposed to rank the proposals that come in. Professor A. Pavlevich said that they are supposed to evaluate based on the quality of the proposal/research. He said the time requirements have been set up so that the faculty member could actually address any issues that evaluators had with the proposal. Senator J. Pavletich asked why the rank and tenure committee was used to evaluate proposals. Professor A. Pavlevich said FAC committee members thought that the R&T committee members were the ones who would have the familiarity with the applicant's proposal. Senator J. Creighton seconded the notion that department chair and dean letters were not necessary and that a well-done proposal should be obvious, regardless of whether tenured.

Senator Sullivan asked about term limits for the committee members on the Faculty Development Leave Committee. There are two-year terms of service—not term limits. Professor A. Pavelvich says he thinks that once this goes to the Academic Council, they are likely to hear more about needing letters from deans, etc. Senator J. Flosi asked what happens if the recommendations of the letters are split on whether the proposal is good or not. Professor A. Pavelvich said he sees no problem with the voices saying different things. President Moosally

asked if there had been any consideration of moving the dates up even more—so that there would be more planning time for the coverage of classes.

The Sponsored Research policy will be the next item that the Faculty Affairs Committee works on.

The next topic for discussion under old business is the revision of the Constitution. President Moosally led the discussion while displaying the potential revisions overhead. The discussion occurred as follows:

1. No comment on the Senate membership issue.
2. Size of Senate: 1 in 10—this would make the Senate smaller (25 as opposed to the 35 we have now). Senator G. Jackson thought the more members on the Senate, the more it will mean to faculty. President Moosally said she thought this was “forward-thinking” about growth and the ideal number of Senate members. Senator T. Redl suggested an upper and lower limit on the number of senators. Senator S. Henney suggested using a target number for the size of the Senate. President Moosally said a target might not work out right. Senator N. Sullivan thought percentages were easier to work with.
3. Representation of different categories of faculty: President Moosally said it has been hard to identify different categories of faculty.
4. Importance of having tenured representation on the Senate: The recommendation is that at least one representative from a department should be tenured. Senator D. Ryden suggested doing this by percentage of the number of reps that a department has (e.g., 50%). Senator J. Schmertz said it would be difficult to do this way. Senator T. Redl suggested using “desired” instead of “required.” Senator B. Gilbert said he thinks it is the tenured faculty’s responsibility to lead the Senate and that he would favor stronger language. Senator C. Bedard suggested a different perspective—in their department, they often say “let’s let the tenure-track faculty do it” because they need the service. She thinks tenured faculty would serve if it were expected. Senator N. Sullivan said that she thinks that now tenured professors have to have service to get rewards.
5. Terms of Office: Want to change from May to August. Senator N. Rangel suggested beginning the term on the first Monday in August.
6. Senator G. Jackson asked about the rule for attendance, i.e., three meeting absences. The new proposal is that a letter would be sent to the department faculty. Senator J. Pavletich said that it sounds awfully “petty” to her. Senator R. Chiquillo said that, for her, the issue is that this counts as service and those who miss meetings are getting credit for service. Senator J. Pavletich suggested that the note be sent to the Senator. Senator N. Sullivan said she would want to know if her department’s representative was not attending. Senator N. Rangel suggested adding “for cause.” Senator Moosally said this would add more problems of implementation. Senator N. Sullivan said this is not much of an issue.
7. Officers: It is suggested that there be a president, past president, and president-elect. Senator T. Redl asked if this would require having 3 different people. President Moosally said, “Yes.” The Secretary would continue to serve for two years. This change would serve the purpose of continuity. Senator N. Sullivan said this would be a lot to ask to have a person serve 3 years. She thinks that the Senate President needs to have two years—in order to learn and build relationships; furthermore, she thinks this

would be a weakening of the Senate and would not serve the faculty well. Senator J. Schmertz asked about job descriptions for each of these offices. President Moosally explained that the president-elect would take on the role of the vice-president. Senator J. Caro said that a past president may hold things back. Senator T. Redl suggested that the past president serve as an advisor to the executive committee. Senator J. Flosi said you would still have to have an election on the ascendancy order. Senator C. Bedard asked how would this work; President Moosally said officers (with the exception of secretary) would be elected every other year. Currently, officers are prohibited from running for the second term. Senator J. Pavletich said she would exclude the secretary role. President Moosally noted some interest from the Senate in having a president-elect for one year followed by president for two years with no past president.

President Moosally asked Senators to please let their constituents know that the changes in the Constitution are being considered.

Climate Survey:

A subcommittee of the Senate has reviewed the results of the climate survey. A coding process was used to categorize comments; approximately 108 people offered comments in the written portions of the climate survey. Based on the comments, the subcommittee thought that some results were clear. The broadest theme is the lack of an academic culture and related issues (i.e., no resources for helping students who are not prepared, workload, etc.). The biggest issue is the question of resources available to address these problems. The value of the survey is that it can guide what we want to do. Senator J. Paveltich suggested that maybe the results should be presented to the administration along with a request for a response—maybe to Senate. It was definitely thought that the Senate should issue a formal report. Workload is an issue that is still out there. President Moosally has gotten about 5 department plans for workload; she would like to have the rest of these by the end of the week. She said it looks like it may not cost as much as it was initially thought. President Moosally thinks this survey helps us build the case for workload and that the 4/3 is probably not enough. There are also other issues like research support. Senator J. Creighton affirmed these positions. Senator J. Schmertz asked which departments have submitted workload plans. She was told that CMS, ENG, UE, ET, and CJ have submitted, but the FACIS, MMBA, SOS, NS, Arts&Humanities have not submitted plans. President Moosally said that if the workload policy does not go forward, it will have to be done with a very clear statement from administration that the workload policy is either being suspended or revoked.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tammy Davis