

Cameron University
Faculty Senate
November 8, 2013
Minutes

Members Present: Eric Abbott, Saeed Ahmad, Irene Corriette, Mike Dunn (chair), Bayard Godsave, Sarah Janda (chair-elect), Abbas Johari, Gary Kowaluk, Jeff Metzger, Alan Moore, Cova Newman, Yoonsin Oh, Pam Panzani, Kathy Scherler, Jason Smith, Ali Soylu, Kevin Stieb (SGA President), Benson Warren, Gabriele Wethern, Frankie White, Heather (Young) King, Chao Zhao, Yanjun Zhao

Guests Present: Marge Kingsley, Assistant Vice-President for Academic Affairs

Committee Reports:

Long Range Planning Committee met to discuss and respond to the Rules Committee survey about function and membership. The recommendations include increasing terms from one to two years and electing school representatives rather than having them appointed by the chair of Faculty Senate. The committee also recommended adding the phrase "as directed by the Faculty Senate" to the end of its mission statement. Long Range Planning Committee recommendations will be sent to Rules Committee for review.

Faculty Committee met to discuss criteria for Distinguished Professor but requested guidance from the senate about their preliminary suggestions before proceeding with formal recommendations. Faculty Committee suggested a one-time stipend be awarded recipients to recognize their accomplishments but to also underscore that it is an honorary title rather than the next step in promotion. Faculty Committee suggested that the awarding of this title be done sparingly and possibly by ad-hoc committee based on nominations. Much discussion ensued and a motion passed in favor of Faculty Committee drafting criteria along these lines to submit to the senate for consideration.

Faculty Committee also requested that senators and their departments review the paragraph in the Faculty Handbook (section four, page fifty): Probationary Period Adjustment to consider its implications and whether or not it is still necessary to include this particular paragraph in the handbook. It seems that it was generally used in the past as a mechanism for counting previous years of service toward tenure but under the current handbook this has to be negotiated as part of the hiring process. Moreover, if the President and the VPAA provide prior written authorization for "faculty members of extraordinarily high merit" to apply for early tenure, it seems that this could at least give the appearance of circumventing the role of personnel committees, chairs, and deans. Faculty Committee indicated that Dr. Vanderslice also had some concerns about the meaning of the language in the paragraph. Dr. Vanderslice is in the process of getting feedback on this issue from the president,

deans, and chairs. Faculty Senate members agreed to wait to hear from Dr. Vanderslice on the matter and to discuss it with their own departments before proceeding further.

Research Committee met and approved five or six grant proposals. They sent two additional proposals back for revisions. The committee still has approximately eight or nine thousand dollars left to award for this academic year.

Old Business

Tom Russell will address Faculty Senate in December to discuss his proposal to establish a committee on gender equity.

New Business

The discretionary leave proposal from a few years ago was raised which led to a discussion as to what happened to that proposal. Based on previous administrative feedback Mike Dunn suggested that a more concrete proposal was needed if the senate wanted to pursue this again. The issue of paid maternity/paternity leave was also brought up because current policy only applies to the maternal medical recovery period. A motion passed to send both leave issues to the Fringe Benefits Committee.

SGA concerns were raised about the IDEA Evaluations because students find them tedious and they do not get to see whether or not their suggestions are ever implemented. Frustration also stems from the wording of some of the questions that students feel do not relate to the class (such as the question over student commitment to personal values). Several members of Faculty Senate also expressed frustration with the evaluations and discussed the possibility of individual departments crafting their own forms with some sort of administrative oversight and the possibility of mid semester evaluations. Faculty Senate agreed to wait until Mike Dunn and Kevin Stieb could meet with Dr. Vanderslice to discuss the issue before taking any sort of action.

SGA would also like Faculty Senate to look at the issue of intra-semester grade challenges but this was tabled until the next meeting due to time constraints.

Faculty Advisory Committee (to the Regents) met and discussed Oklahoma Academic Standards and the implications that the shift to Common CORE in K-12 will have for higher education. In particular, they discussed the need to ensure some degree of parity in what students learn in high school and what is taught to college freshmen. Marge Kingsley offered to come discuss Common CORE with Faculty Senate which will likely happen in January.