CAMERON UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
APPROVED MINUTES

September 27, 2006

I. CALL TO ORDER
The Cameron University Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, September 27, 2006.
Chair John Bachelor called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in Howell Hall, Room 106.

II. ROLL CALL
Captain Clinton Ward sat in for Major U.L. Armstrong.

Absent: Jason Duan, Keith Lavender, Phil Adrian, Harrison Watts, Major U.L. Armstrong

Special guests: President Cindy Ross, Vice President for Business and Finance Glen Pinkston, Vice President for Academic Affairs John McArthur

III. REMARKS FROM OFFICERS
Chair John Bachelor stated that today’s meeting would focus on two items of business.

1. President Cindy Ross would address the Faculty Senate. It is tradition to have the University President meet with the Faculty Senate at the beginning of each year.

2. Mike Davis would present the recommendations of the Academic Standards and Policies Committee regarding the selection of new faculty evaluation forms.

Chair Bachelor stated that committee reports would be presented at the next regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting on October 4, 2006. He then welcomed President Ross.

IV. GUEST SPEAKER PRESIDENT ROSS
President Ross stated that she appreciated the opportunity to meet with the Faculty Senate at the beginning of each year and thanked the members of the Senate for their service to the university. She addressed the following topics in her speech to the Senate.

Faculty salary increase
The Board of Regents approved the salary plan for 2006-2007, which includes a 3 percent COLA base salary adjustment and an average one-time merit stipend of 2 percent. President Ross hopes the merit stipend will be annualized next year. 463 employees received raises this year. There was also an increase in minimum faculty salaries. Across campus, the average salary increase was 5.5 percent. Everyone should have received a letter confirming their individual salary increase for the year. President Ross stated that Cameron is competitive compared to other institutions in Oklahoma.

Vice President Pinkston stated the September payroll check would be the first to include the 3 percent COLA increase. During the first week in October, faculty will receive two additional checks: the retroactive COLA increase for August and a merit stipend check.
Fall 2006 enrollment
President Ross stated that Fall 2006 credit hour production was down 2.4 percent from last year, translating to a total of 185 fewer students. Military enrollment was down 181 students this fall, with a total of 601 military students lost since September 2001. However, President Ross emphasized the good news was traditional students were replacing military students.

President Ross stated the high school graduating class for southwest Oklahoma was down 3 percent, reaching a 9-year low. The full-time freshman class was also down.

On a positive note, President Ross stated the number of students living on campus – a total of 406 – was the highest at Cameron since 1992. This increase in resident students greatly affects the ambience of the campus experience.

Strategic Plan 2008
President Ross stated it was time to seriously extend Plan 2008, and she will be working in conjunction with the Long-Range Planning Committee. She wants involvement in planning to be all-inclusive, encouraging comments from all faculty and staff.

Fundraising
President Ross stated we have an $8 million fundraising goal. Currently 14 months into the campaign, $6.8 million has been pledged. 79 percent of the goal for the Student Activities Complex has been reached as well as 93 percent for general university enhancement. $718,000 has been pledged for endowed faculty, $640,000 for scholarships, and $89,000 for the Centennial Gardens.

Cameron requested grants to fund the Student Activities Complex from three foundations, two of which are new. President Ross stated we have reached third base with all three foundations and hope to receive the grants.

President Ross displayed the plans for the Student Activities Complex as well as the new Business building. She noted the more collegiate look of the architecture created a sense of community and belonging among students and faculty. Demolition of the old Business building is in progress and construction on the CETES extension will start in November.

United Way
President Ross emphasized Cameron has always played a strong role in the United Way campaign. This year, to raise money for United Way, Cameron will hold a volleyball match pitting the Executive Council against the students. The match will be held on October 16, and tickets may be purchased from the second-year Plus Scholars for $5 for faculty and $3 for students.

New format for start-of-year faculty and staff meetings
President Ross was pleased to announce she has received a great deal of positive feedback on her Fall semester meetings with faculty and staff. Everyone appears to be in favor of the new format, which consists of individual meetings with each school rather than one meeting with the entire university.

President Ross called for questions and comments.

Questions and comments

- Scherrey Cardwell: Will the trees go by the wayside with the CETES expansion?
- Vice President Pinkston: Yes, some trees will have to be removed.
- President Ross: Trees are important to the ambience of the campus and are a high priority. Regent Stewart has already contributed more trees for the enhancement of Cameron’s grounds.
Chair Bachelor: What is included in the CETES expansion?

President Ross: The expansion includes a Data Disaster Recovery Center and dividable seminar rooms that seat up to 90. There will also be a covered porch that opens onto the south lawn.

James Heflin: What is the status of the Honors Program?

Vice President McArthur: We have an ambitious program this year, with the largest number of honor students in memory. Thirty-five students participated in a trip to Dallas/Fort Worth. Another trip to Washington, D.C., is planned, with 43 students attending. The planning of the Great Ideas courses for curriculum is still in progress.

Sarah Janda: If Cameron receives the three grants for the Student Activities Complex, how close will we be to our goal?

President Ross: We hope to start building a year from now, but we want to build it right. We will need more than our current goal, closer to $10 million. The Board of Regents requires that you have all the money before you start construction.

Chair Bachelor addressed the President, stating he has seen a huge difference on campus with involvement in student activities. Students are more involved than ever before. He also stated the Long-Range Planning Committee is looking forward to working on Plan 2008. He then thanked President Ross, Vice President Pinkston, and Vice President McArthur for speaking to the Faculty Senate.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Mike Davis, Chair of the Academic Standards & Policies Committee (AS&PC), presented the committee’s recommendations for universal course evaluation forms at Cameron University. He asked the Faculty Senate members to look over the three handouts he provided: the recommendations for course evaluations from the AS&PC, the IDEA information sheet, and the IDEA evaluation form. He explained the specifics of the recommendations, referring frequently to the recommendation handout for details.

The task. A year ago the AS&PC was asked to determine the best way for Cameron to implement a universal course evaluation procedure. They were given a deadline of September 2006 to make a determination.

The early lessons. The AS&PC found it difficult to draft a universal course evaluation form because it was difficult to reach consensus on wording and on which questions to ask. Furthermore, the committee heard from distressed department heads who did not want to give up their own carefully designed evaluations integral to their internal assessment process. However, the AS&PC agreed on two points: 1) the universal course evaluation form would be supplemental to existing department forms; and 2) any attempt to draft a universal evaluation form from scratch would bog down in endless debates.

A different approach. After attending a conference dedicated to the examination of course evaluation forms at universities, Lance Janda (ex officio) informed the committee of the advantages of outsourcing course evaluations to a commercial provider. The most important advantages included the availability of immediately useful data, the elimination of knee-jerk responses from students, the adjustment of scores across disciplines, and a cost lower than what would be available in-house.

Our course of action. The AS&PC reviewed forms from three commercial providers: IDEA, SIR II, and CIEQ. A test run of these evaluation forms was conducted at the end of the Spring 2006 semester and the committee members reviewed the results.

And the winner is. The AS&PC made a unanimous recommendation to adopt the IDEA form primarily because IDEA’s data is especially useful for relating teaching practices to course objectives. The SIR II form was a close second and is also acceptable. The CIEQ
form was determined to be unacceptable by the committee because the questions were unreliable and invalid.

- **Implementation.** Tom Sutherlin, Director of the Institutional Research and Support Services (IRSS) Division will provide the logistics support for the project (e.g., training, ordering, distribution, collection, and reporting procedures). Samples of the trial run IDEA evaluations may be viewed in his office. Samples of the SIR II and CIEQ evaluations may be viewed in Lance Janda’s office.

- **Additional points worth emphasizing.** This is a course evaluation form, not a teacher evaluation form. The selection of a commercial provider for evaluations represents a serious commitment on the part of the university, and Cameron must stick with the chosen provider for a minimum of three years.

Chair-elect Lambert motioned to accept the AS&PC’s report. Ted Snider seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mike Davis called for questions and comments.

**Questions and comments**

- **Chair Bachelor:** What is the committee’s deadline?
  - **Mike Davis:** The committee’s deadline is the end of September.

- **Scherrey Cardwell:** Who receives the evaluation results?
  - **Mike Davis:** The evaluation report is processed by IDEA. Professors receive the forms.

- **Chair Bachelor:** I took part in the testing of the evaluation forms last spring. The instructor initially completes a form listing the important objectives of the course. Additionally, the IDEA form has a section for student comments, which are often more beneficial to the instructor than the numerical scores.

- **John Moots:** How will multiple sections of courses be organized (e.g., Music Appreciation, American Popular Music)?
  - **Mike Davis:** Along with the evaluation form, the instructor can hand out specific questions unique to that course.

- **John Moots:** What is the cost?
  - **Mike Davis:** We have not received any feedback.

- **James Heflin:** Is it appropriate to have all this raw data on file? Will data be used by others in the university?
  - **Mike Davis:** Point 3, Adjustment Of Scores Across Disciplines, on page 2 of the AS&PC’s recommendations handout, addresses this concern.

- **Ted Snider:** Raw data is necessary to make comparisons year-to-year.

- **Sarah Janda:** The evaluation results are not meant to be punitive.

- **James Heflin:** I’m concerned about internal manipulation of data.

- **Edna McMillan:** Can it be defined how the data will be used? What kind of reports will be generated? How will they benefit the university?

- **Jeanne Gaunce:** The use of data could change over time.

- **Chair Bachelor:** Isn’t current raw data available?
  - **Scherrey Cardwell:** Yes, but it doesn’t go to the institution assessment. I’m concerned about security.
Sarah Janda: Why is it a bad thing? We will learn more about the needs of students. This is positive.

Scherrey Cardwell: We will not have complete control over data, but I’m not concerned.

Chair-elect Lambert: Is there a balance between student and mentor evaluations?

Mike Davis: This has not been looked into yet.

Ric Jerez: Will the evaluation results be categorized to affect retention and raises?

Sarah Janda: What percent of schools use this type of evaluation?

Mike Davis: The percentage is less than expected, but we will get good attention. IDEA is working with enough schools to provide us good comparisons.

Scherrey Cardwell: Why are the first 20 questions about the instructor if the focus is on course evaluation? Will questions 21-35 be worked into assessment?

Chair Bachelor: This is for Handbook evaluation purposes. This is not the only source for evaluation. Without instructor evaluation, the form would be inadequate.

Chair Bachelor motioned to accept the previous question. Sarah Janda seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Bachelor commended Mike Davis and the Academic Standards & Policies Committee on their progress.

VI. ADJOURNMENT
Chair Bachelor motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

VII. NEXT MEETING
The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be on Wednesday, October 4, 2006, at 3:30 p.m. in Howell Hall, Room 106.

Respectfully submitted
Monika Linehan
Faculty Senate Secretary