

CAMERON UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE APPROVED MINUTES

December 10, 2010

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Cameron University Faculty Senate met on Friday, December 10, 2010. Chair Matt Jenkins called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in Burch Hall, Room 107.

II. ROLL

Present: Matt Jenkins, Abbas Johari, Monika Linehan, Brad McCoy, Frank White, Andrew Baker, Michael Dunn, Syed Ahmed, Ali Soylu, Paul Crandon, Chris Keller, Mike Estep, Sheri Jenkins-Cruz, Tanisha Billingslea, Lynda Robinson, Marie-Ginette Baillargeon, William Carney, Phil Adrian, Sarah Janda, Jeffrey Metzger, Mandi Smith, Irene Corriette, Gregory Herring, Jerry Williams, Linda Smith, Jan Logan, Keith Vitense, David Fennema

Also in attendance was Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. John McArthur.

Absent: Stacey Treadway, Terry Shannon, Roy Couch, Joanni Sailor

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Faculty Senate reviewed the minutes from the November 12, 2010, Faculty Senate meeting. David Fennema moved to approve the minutes without amendment. Abbas Johari seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Progress of Investigation Into Adoption of New Faculty Handbook

Chair Matt Jenkins reported that VPAA John McArthur and the team of three faculty members formally assigned to review the revisions made to the proposed Faculty Handbook are making great strides, with the intent of completing the review process in the spring for submittal to the Faculty Committee. He explained that the team was sorting through the extensive changes made to Section 4 of the Faculty Handbook, comparing the current and proposed versions and determining what was added, what was deleted, and what was moved where and why.

Report from Going Green Committee on Excessive Paperwork Study

Sheri Cruz reported that the Going Green Committee has not yet begun the study of excessive paperwork at Cameron. However, she stated that the committee met to elect a new Chair and then addressed the ongoing issues of establishing recycling bins on campus and installing a sign for the Bentley Gardens. The committee is collecting additional information to determine the location of the recycling bins and the logistics of unloading the bins. The bins will be the same as those located at Eisenhower High School, and the products recycled will include cans, cardboard, newsprint, and magazines. Syed Ahmed commented that Cameron should take the initiative to go green in order to set an example for the city of Lawton.

Chair Jenkins inquired if there were enough members on the Going Green Committee. Sheri Cruz stated that the committee currently has seven members but could always use more. Chair Jenkins informed her that Don Evans had expressed a desire to become a member. Lynda Robinson also volunteered to serve on Going Green.

Teaching and Learning Committee Report

Abbas Johari gave an overview of the November 19, 2010, meeting of the Teaching and Learning Committee and provided a handout of the committee minutes. Three topics were on the agenda: 1) the Cameron Innovative Instructional Grant Program; 2) Softlink Class Control; and 3) Dimdim software. The Teaching and Learning Committee members examined the Guidelines and Application Form for Innovative Instruction (grants valued more than \$500) and submitted

suggestions to add, eliminate, and modify items on the application. Professor Don Aguilar gave a presentation to the committee on Softlink Class Control, a new technology that allows instructors to control and annotate students' computer screens, monitor students without their knowledge, survey students and receive instant feedback, and send files and text to and from students among other things. The Teaching and Learning Committee also discussed Dimdim, a software on the Internet that can be used for distance teaching and learning.

Absence Policy

Keith Vitense reported that the Academic Standards and Policies Committee will address the absence policy after the Christmas break. However, the committee has already collected data on the absence policies of several other universities.

Faculty Parking

Phil Adrian reported that the Fringe Benefits Committee has not met in quite some time and that their last discussion regarding parking dealt with the availability of handicap parking spots. Chair Jenkins clarified that the Fringe Benefits Committee has been charged with examining the university parking situation in general, since problems are arising due to students parking in spots designated for faculty, with no apparent consequences or ticketing by the campus police. Phil responded that Fringe Benefits would study the matter.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Senate Open Floor Discussion

Chair Jenkins opened the floor to discussion of additional topics.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

Sarah Janda voiced concern that plagiarism and academic misconduct are on the rise, and a clearer and stronger mechanism needs to be in place to deter these practices. She stressed that the current policy as stated in the Student Handbook, which subjects guilty students to one or more of the following sanctions: 1) performance of additional academic work; 2) withdrawal from the course with a "W" or "F"; or 3) reduction in grade, including a reduction to failure, is too lenient when presented with substantial acts of plagiarism or academic misconduct. She showed concern about the amount of effort and funds currently invested in attempting to catch acts of plagiarism and stressed the need for a penalty that would be a sure deterrent to others. A lengthy discussion of the topic ensued, with everyone agreeing that plagiarism and academic misconduct were indeed a cause for much concern.

Lynda Robinson noted that it is important to record and keep track of all instances of plagiarism. Sarah Janda responded that although a letter is kept on file with Student Services, some students try to circumvent the system and the punishments are not strong enough.

Sarah Janda moved that the Academic Standards and Policies Committee look into the current policy on how to handle plagiarism. Keith Vitense amended the motion to state that the Academic Standards and Policies Committee look into the current policy on academic misconduct. Abbas Johari seconded the motion as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Chris Keller suggested that Academic Standards and Policies should recommend a change to the academic misconduct policy in the Student Handbook, emphasizing that the policy "must have teeth" because it is far too easy for students to cheat. When asked how a new policy would be passed, he explained that Academic Standards and Policies would make a recommendation to the Faculty Senate, which if passed, would then go on to the Administration. If passed by the Administration, the revised policy would be forwarded to Student Services, who would make the change to the Student Handbook.

Syed Ahmed inquired whether academic misconduct included texting during class and if there should be a policy regarding texting. Everyone agreed that student texting was an increasing problem and a new avenue for students to cheat. However, Lynda Robinson presented an opposing point of view, explaining that she uses texting as a teaching tool in her ITV courses. She stated that she would not be happy with a global university policy banning texting and that it should

be up to the individual instructor whether or not to allow texting in class. Several senate members explained that they included policies regarding cell phone use in their syllabi, which helped to control the problem in their courses. It was agreed that there was a definite need to have some rules in place. David Fennema asked if instructors were allowed to state in their syllabi that they could confiscate student cell phones until the end of class. However, it was thought that this action was most likely illegal. Syed Ahmed closed the discussion by stating that the faculty must be concerned with technological progress and that they need to stay on top of it.

VI. MOVE TO ADJOURN

Keith Vitense moved to adjourn the meeting. Sarah Janda seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

VII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be on Friday, January 14, 2011, at 3:00 p.m., in Burch Hall, Room 107.

Respectfully submitted,
Monika Linehan
Faculty Senate Secretary