

# CAMERON UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE APPROVED MINUTES

November 12, 2010

## I. CALL TO ORDER

The Cameron University Faculty Senate met on Friday, November 12, 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, Michael Dunn, Syed Ahmed, Ali Soylu, Marie-Ginette Baillargeon, William Carney, Phil Adrian, Terry Shannon, Edris Montalvo (for Sarah Janda), Jeffrey Metzger, Mandi Smith, Irene Corriette, Gregory Herring, Jerry Williams, Jan Logan, Joanni Sailor, David Fennema

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

**Absent:** Stacey Treadway, Andrew Baker, Paul Crandon, Chris Keller, Mike Estep, Sheri Jenkins-Cruz, Tanisha Billingslea, Lynda Robinson, Sarah Janda, Linda Smith, Roy Couch, Keith Vitense

## III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Faculty Senate reviewed the minutes from the October 8, 2010, Faculty Senate meeting. Jan Logan moved to approve the minutes without amendment. Michael Dunn 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 three faculty members currently meet weekly to review the changes made to the Faculty Handbook. He explained that the majority of the focus is on Chapter 4 due to the extensive changes made. The process is challenging and involves comparing three versions of the Handbook and putting the revisions into a format specified by the Board of Regents. The revisions need to be sorted out and checked to make sure they are legal and comply with Board policy and that they indeed are allowable revisions. The Handbook is also being checked for errors of fact (e.g., language pertaining to the graduate school). Once the revised Faculty Handbook has been thoroughly reviewed, it will be resubmitted to the Faculty Committee and then to the Faculty Senate for a vote. The entire process will need to be completed by May 2011, at which time the revised Handbook will be submitted to the Board of Regents for approval.

### **Report from Ad Hoc Committee on Post-Tenure Policy Review**

Chair-elect Abbas Johari reported on the findings of the Ad Hoc Committee on Post-Tenure Policy Review, which was charged with the responsibility of examining the post-tenure review process and policies. He provided the Senate with copies of the minutes from the committee's meetings as well as a summary of its findings.

Chair-elect Johari summarized the three main issues concerning the post-tenure review policy which the committee addressed and their subsequent findings.

- 1. Do we need to clarify post-tenure review for administrative faculty or faculty holding administrative positions?** The Board of Regents mandates post-tenure review for all tenured faculty, and the Faculty Handbook clearly states in Sections 2.3 and 2.5 that post-tenure reviews of the VPAA and deans shall be administered by the appropriate academic department in compliance with Section 4.6 of the Faculty Handbook. Therefore, administrative faculty are required to be reviewed on their performance in the areas of teaching, research, service and public outreach, and administrative duties in the same manner as regular faculty.

2. **Who is responsible for choosing the members of a post-tenure review committee, and who and how many members are eligible to serve?** The Faculty Handbook clearly states the composition of a post-tenure review committee in Section 4.6.3.
3. **Is the lack of evaluation of teaching in the post-tenure review appropriate?** It is a misconception that teaching is not equally addressed and/or valued in the post-tenure review process. Section 4.6.1 of the Faculty Handbook clearly states that the post-tenure review is an extension of the annual academic performance review, and as such, evaluates teaching accordingly.

### **Report from Going Green Committee on Excessive Paperwork Study**

The Going Green Committee held its initial organization meeting, and Sheri Jenkins-Cruz will serve as the Chair. They will discuss the issue of excessive university paperwork at their next meeting. Currently, the committee has nine members, and they are trying to find additional volunteers.

### **Faculty Opinion Survey Results**

Chair Jenkins distributed the results of the Faculty Opinion Survey, which the Faculty Senate members completed at the October 8, 2010, meeting. Mary Penick, who is Cameron's representative to the Faculty Advisory Council to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, converted the raw survey data into a collective opinion. Chair Jenkins also distributed a statement from Mary Penick explaining that the Faculty Advisory Council is an elected committee of faculty whose purpose it is to communicate to the chancellor and the State Regents the views and interests of all Oklahoma higher education faculty on issues that relate to the constitutional and statutory responsibilities of the State Regents. As Cameron's representative, Mary, in her written statement, welcomed anyone with questions or concerns to contact her.

VPAA McArthur informed the Senate the Mary Penick's term on the Faculty Advisory Council and her role as Cameron's representative would end this year. He explained that a replacement is normally selected from the Faculty Senate leadership. As Chair Jenkins was unable to assume this role, Dr. McArthur asked Abbas Johari and Monika Linehan if they would be interested in the position. Chair-elect Johari volunteered to become Mary Penick's replacement.

### **Report on North Central Association – Higher Learning Commission (NCA-HLC) Visit**

Chair Jenkins explained that he participated in the exit meeting with the Higher Learning Commission Accreditation Team and provided a summary of what was said. He proudly reported that the HLC team was extremely impressed with Cameron and that Cameron surpassed all expectations. They will be recommending a 10-year reaffirmation of Cameron's accreditation with no reports or focus visits required during the interim. The team even referred to Cameron as "a jewel in the plains."

Chair Jenkins noted some of the university's many strengths on which the HLC team commented. They found that Cameron is a future-oriented and learning-focused institution with a strong mission and strategic plan and a diverse student body. They also found that Cameron makes decisions for its students' benefit and that it is extraordinarily responsive to community needs and a resource in the area.

Along with the strengths, however, the HLC team also found areas for additional growth and improvement. Chair Jenkins stated that one such area was assessment. While the HLC team approved of the work on PQIR, they found that there was a definite need for improvement in general education assessment. They also determined that new aspects of teaching, such as online courses, needed to be addressed in more depth. The HLC team made suggestions that the PQIR include a summary document and look for patterns and that Cameron use PQIR results to allocate university resources. Another area of concern for the HLC was the amount of faculty overload, which they suggested decreasing by either adding additional faculty or reducing curriculum. The graduate program was found to have uneven admissions, with too many provisional enrollments. The HLC also recommended that Cameron increase its number of counselors. A final area for improvement is student retention and graduation.

VPAA McArthur thanked the leadership of the Faculty Senate, both past and present, for their role in the HLC accreditation process, specifically mentioning John Morris, Margery Kingsley,

Jim Lambert, and David Fennema. He acknowledged the importance of the honest input and candid comments made by faculty, staff, students, and community members during meetings with the HLC team. Dr. McArthur also thanked Mandi Smith for her help with the Resource Room during the HLC visit.

VPAA McArthur addressed some of the HLC's recommendations for improvement. He affirmed that Cameron has made progress on assessment; however, general education assessment still poses particular challenges because there is no departmental ownership. He stated that general education, along with remedial education and an advisement center, will be areas of focus over the next 10 years. VPAA McArthur reiterated the HLC's concern that while Cameron does more with fewer people, it may be doing too much. The curriculum is too big for the size of the faculty. He explained that the issue is how to make the best use of faculty time in the current budget climate. Marie-Ginette Baillargeon asked whether the HLC was recommending the removal of programs. Dr. McArthur answered that the HLC did not make this recommendation. Instead, they stated that Cameron's planning was good, and their finding was not a mandate to cut programs, reduce curriculum, or increase faculty. He went on to say that Cameron would receive a formal report listing areas for improvement from the HLC. However, Cameron has been cleared to continue to give federal financial aid, and the university will not be subject to monitoring reports prior to the next 10-year accreditation visit.

On another note, VPAA McArthur informed the Faculty Senate that Research Day was a phenomenal success. It was the largest research day in the State of Oklahoma, with 660 participants.

## **V. NEW BUSINESS**

### **Senate Open Floor Discussion**

Chair Jenkins opened the floor to discussion of additional topics.

#### **Absence Policy**

Terry Shannon inquired why there was no policy in the Faculty Handbook regarding procedures for assigning make-up work for students with excused absences such as participation in university programs or mandatory military events. He gave examples of students who were not allowed to make up course work after an excused absence such as participation on a university athletic team, thereby, jeopardizing their course grade. Much discussion of this topic ensued. A majority of Senate representatives concurred with the opinion that it is the right of each individual professor to set their attendance policy and that a "one size fits all" policy would not work for all courses (e.g., science courses using live specimens in labs). It was noted that the majority of professors on campus are willing to work with students who have excused absences; therefore, it is unnecessary to create a new rule because of one or two professors with unusually harsh attendance policies. David Fennema emphasized that the easiest way to handle absences is to have a clear attendance policy in the course syllabus, informing the student of course expectations from the start. It is then the student's responsibility to determine how they will use their allowed absences. If there is no attendance policy stated, the student can appeal if not allowed to make up work. On the other hand, it was argued that students who represent the university by participating in various university activities should not be penalized. A policy could be created to protect the interest of the student on those rare occasions when a professor refuses to allow make-up work. This policy could be in addition to the attendance policy. Chair Jenkins suggested this issue should be turned over to another committee.

Terry Shannon moved to study the absence policies of other universities. William Carney augmented the motion that the Academic Standards and Policies Committee should conduct the study. Irene Corriette seconded the motion. The motion passed with one opposed and two abstentions.

#### **Faculty Parking**

David Fennema voiced concern that students are habitually parking in the blue parking spaces designated for faculty and not receiving tickets or experiencing any other repercussions. There was a general consensus among Senate members that this is a growing problem. VPAA McArthur

suggested that this was a Public Safety issue. However, several representatives declared that the campus police have stated they have no authority to ticket students parking in faculty spaces. Syed Ahmed questioned how students perceive the parking situation and whether they are provided with adequate parking. Others stated that there is plenty of student parking available, but it goes unused because students consider the distance from the lot to the classroom too great. One suggested solution to the faculty parking problem is the construction of gated faculty parking accessible only with an electronic card.

David Fennema moved to have the Fringe Benefits Committee explore if there is such a thing as faculty parking and why there is no designated faculty parking by North and South Shepler. Frank White seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**VI. MOVE TO ADJOURN**

David Fennema moved to adjourn the meeting. Abbas Johari seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

**VII. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be on Friday, December 10, 2010, at 3:00 p.m., in Burch Hall, Room 107.

Respectfully submitted,  
Monika Linehan  
Faculty Senate Secretary