

Minutes, Baylor University Faculty Senate

11 February 2014 • 3:30 • Cashion 111

Members Absent: Baldrige, Riemenshneider^{*}, Spies

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM by Senate Chair Patton.

Senator Coker offered an opening invocation.

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the January meeting, which was passed.

Chair Patton introduced President Ken Starr, who addressed the Senate regarding the process of naming an interim Provost and beginning the search for a permanent replacement.

- He invited the Senate's advice and counsel regarding the appointment of an interim Provost as well as on the makeup and procedures of the search committee for a permanent one.
 - Judge Starr expressed sadness at seeing Provost Davis depart, but looked forward to a new era ahead.

Chair Patton introduced Michael Matier, Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness.

- Dr. Matier addressed the Senate regarding the use of Academic Analytics (AA), which he clarified was a tool to help schools and departments better understand how their programs compare to other programs across the country.
 - AA doesn't rely on schools to self-report, but instead searches out and utilizes public information about publications, grants awarded, awards from scholarly societies, etc. to evaluate faculty
 - The focus of the AA database is admittedly focused on recent accomplishments of faculty, not an entire career (e. g. it only goes back about 5-6 years for articles and 10 years for books).
- Baylor has had access to AA for the past 5 years.

^{*} Steve Green attended in her place

- He gave a demonstration of the how the information accumulated by AA is displayed when looking at a certain department or program at Baylor.
 - Within each department, the faculty members are ranked into five quintiles.
- He affirmed AA as the best available means for getting an objective picture of our departments and an important tool for providing information when making strategic decisions.
 - Dr. Matier recognized some of the shortcomings of AA, such as the fact that the information is only updated once per year, that it obtains information only about grants from certain agencies and organizations, and that it only counts the first person listed on grants awarded to a team of researchers.
 - He also stated that the University is not going to mandate that AA be the only or even the main tool that a department should use in evaluating itself and its faculty.
- One senator pointed out that the recent *Pro Futuris* document from Arts & Sciences suggested it would be used as a summative tool, to which Dr. Matier responded that in other places the document used more restrained language and that the language would be made clearer in the final draft of the document.
- Clarification was sought regarding who has access to AA.
 - Dr. Matier explained that only graduate program directors and chairs of doctoral-granting departments had access.
- A senator pointed out that using AA seems diametrically opposed to President Starr's emphasis on the importance of faculty mentoring. AA values only publications and grants, not time allocated for students.

Reports were received from several committees:

- Chair Patton reported from the Council of Deans
 - Provost Davis announced her departure to the deans, and Dr. Matier gave his presentation on AA.
 - Matier made clear to the deans that AA was a useful tool for program evaluation, but not for making individual decisions about tenure, promotion, etc.
- Chair Patton also reported that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee had met with Richard Willis, Chair of the Board of Regents.

- Members of the Executive Committee reported highlights of the meeting, and all stated that they were encouraged by his support for faculty and by his awareness of the diversity of strengths aht faculty possess (e. g. classroom vs. research).
- Chair-Elect Baker reported on the Staff Council meeting.
 - They are participating in a charity drive to provide socks for the elderly.
- Senator Burleson reported on the Admissions Committee.
 - The committee handled five appeals this semester.
- Senator Beal reported from the Academic Citizenship Committee.
 - The committee is just getting started and is discussing whether service should be a part of one's recognized workload and annual evaluation.
 - Chair Patton added that Dean Nordt had taken notice of the Senate's new committee and has asked for a meeting regarding it.
- Senator Walter reported from the Registration Priority Committee.
 - There was a called meeting to discuss re-evaluation of registration priority.
 - She noted that there are only two priority grants that aren't potentially on the chopping block: active athletes and OALA students.
 - The guiding principle, per the Provost, should be moving students towards graduation, and creating priorities that allow freshmen to get classes that seniors need goes against that principle.

New Business

- Senator Jordan inquired as to whether a representative was sent to the COIA meeting in February, to which Chair Patton responded that the announcement of the Provost's departure had derailed plans to send someone.

A motion to adjourn was made by Senator Jordan. It was seconded by Senator Neubert and the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Joe Coker