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Faculty Senate Newsletter

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Message from the Chair

The semester is just about over and I know that all of you are busy grading and doing all the other things that come up at the end of the year. However, we want to keep you apprised of what is going on in the Faculty Senate. Please read about the recent issues that we have been discussing and working on with the

administration in order to enhance the quality of education at the University. We are always interested in hearing from individual faculty members about the issues we are working on. If you have a particular view, suggestion, or criticism, do not hesitate to contact me or a senator from your college. Good



Ron Beal

luck with the grading! Take care and be well.

“Academic Citizenship” (update)

Interim Provost Todd Still, Jim Bennighof, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Policy, and Tiffany Hogue, Chief of Staff to the Provost, attended the April Senate meeting to talk more about adding “academic citizenship” as a signifi-

cant category to a new faculty annual evaluation form. Provost Still brought a prototype of the new form to the Senate for feedback. The new form eliminates percentages, relying instead on faculty being able to access their own

workload documents in order to facilitate better discussions with their chairs. In addition, a section of the form will allow faculty to outline plans for the year ahead.

Continued on page 2 . . .

“Academic Citizenship” cont. . . .

If you have an issue you think should be brought to the Faculty Senate, please contact any of the Senators on page one.

Several Senate members put questions to Provost Still about the new prototype form. Here are some of the answers we received:

- Any form that is decided upon will not be used until January 2018.
- The planning document will be introduced in Spring 2017.
- Training will be given to Chairs in order to facilitate enhanced evaluations.
- Administration will look into the “morale problem” caused by the guideline in the current document that stipulates that only 25% of faculty can be “noteworthy” at any one time.
- Implied in this new document will be that a faculty member cannot receive the two highest ratings without any service on his or her form. The amount and form of service is negotiable with the Chair.
- Conversation about this prototype will continue into May and through the Summer.
- The Deans agree about the importance of service to the running of the university.



New Transfer Credit Policy

The Baylor Faculty Senate voiced concerns at the April meeting about the implementation of a new transfer credit policy in Arts and Sciences. Under this policy, Baylor will determine course equivalency for all 1000-2000 level transfer courses based on the Texas Common Course Numbering System, in use at all Texas state universities and community colleges, as well as certain private universities such as SMU. Departments will now only determine equivalency for transfer courses from outside of Texas or from other private universities that do not use the TCCNS. In

addition, the GPA for allowing a student to transfer into Arts and Sciences at Baylor will be raised incrementally beginning August 2016.

The concerns voiced in the Senate had mainly to do with the speed of implementation (this August) and a perceived lack of faculty input beyond the department chairs. The Senate passed a motion asking for more time to be granted in order for the faculty as a whole to evaluate the changes that such a policy will implement (available on the Senate web page after the approval of the April minutes at the May meeting).

Several administrators, including Provost Still and Dean Nordt, will make themselves

available to answer questions at the May Faculty Senate meeting. We thank them for their willingness to take seriously the concerns over timeline and faculty input into the decision. We are sure that the conversation will be a productive one.

In the meantime, if you have questions about how the TCCNS might affect your department's curriculum, please ask your department chair for more information.

