Faculty senate minutes – January 14, 2013

The annual joint faculty senate meeting with UT will be February 25, 2013 in Austin this year.

Chancellor John Sharp was the guest speaker – he addressed several topics

1. The system is addressing how IT can become more efficient/cost effective/better across the system institutions. An assessment process is just beginning with an outside company.
2. The Presidents (CEOs) of the 11 system institutions are discussing online teaching/distance education – the presidents of West Texas and Commerce are spearheading this effort. Consultants will be involved in the future – most likely – but are not involved yet.
3. The Research initiatives are moving forward (this is the $100 million over three years to bring in big name people). $100 million in one time money to recruit and build labs. There is $6 million in recurring dollars (saved by outsourcing) that will be used for the recurring costs such as salary. The ISL building has been identified as possibly having 6 or 7 areas for these new high-level researchers that will be brought in.
4. The merger with the HSC is progressing – one major point still to be worked through is how to reconcile faculty titles at the HSC with TAMU faculty titles – a joint subcommittee is looking into this.
5. The outsourcing that took place here at TAMU is being expanded to the other system institutions. Any oversight committee to examine what is being done by the outsourcing companies will be (have been?) appointed by President Loftin. It is not clear if these committees have been established or not. If you want to talk to someone on Sharp’s staff about outsourcing here is the number to call: 832-725-6169
6. The current legislative session looks pretty good for the system and for TAMU in particular but you never know………
7. Future area of investigation will be at administrative costs – can cuts be made? No auditing company has been identified for this task yet.
8. The faculty senate asked Chancellor Sharp to look into the increasing cost for textbooks and he said he would.

Rest of the faculty senate meeting

December 10, 2012 minutes were approved

The consent agenda was approved (minus one item that was later approved separately)

The following items were approved from the vet school:

New graduate course – VIBS 627 – Optical Microscopy and Live Cell Imaging

Course change – VIBS 613 – Evolutionary Bioinformatics

New undergraduate course – VTPP 452 – Fetal and Embryo Physiology

Change in Curriculum – CVM, D.V.M. program – a 4th year rotation change. The large animal emergency rotation was dropped and the Alliance for Houston SPCA Animal Welfare and Shelter Medicine was added

Faculty senate voted to approve changes proposed in math course requirements for the college of liberal arts – also voted to approve the changes in the TAMU student rules, sections 14 & 15 – these were outlined in last month’s minutes.

The proposed rule change for retention of college deans was discussed and will be voted on next month. The proposed rule change is more in line for what was approved previously for Department heads. A dean gets a 4-year term that can be renewed once. A third term can be granted if 2/3 of the faculty who vote approve, and the provost and president approve. Additional terms for a dean are possible, with the same approval process (and they are still alive!).

The new core curriculum was discussed (again). Many departments want the core curriculum to have some upper division classes in the core curriculum. The current proposal does not allow upper division courses as core. A new proposal that will allow some upper division courses as core curriculum will be sent out to ALL faculty, well before the next faculty senate meeting and the senate will vote on that issue. So stay tuned….

Respectfully submitted by Louise Abbott