APPROVED AND CORRECTED MINUTES

These minutes are disseminated to provide timely information to the Academic Senate. They have been approved by the body in question, and, therefore, they are the official minutes.

ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING
March 27, 2019


Absent: Mohammad Akbar, Dinesh Bhatia, Judd Bradbury, Monica Brussolo, Jonas Bunte, Pankaj Choudhary, Nadine Connell, Andrea Fumagalli, Gopal Gupta, Michele Hanlon, M. Ali Hooshyar, Paul Lester, Meenakshi Maitra, Syam Menon, Mehrdad Nourani, Nicole Piquero, Shalini Prasad, Suresh Radhakrishna, Viswanath Ramakrishna, Tres Thompson,

Visitors: Melinda Colby, Naomi Emmett, Gene Fitch, Serenity King, Abby Kratz, Jennifer McDowell, Clint Peinhardt,

1. Call to Order for the Academic Senate Meeting and Announcements – President Benson
President Benson called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. President Benson noted that he was happy to be returning to the Academic Senate meetings. He spent two to three days a week, the past 7 weeks is in Austin speaking with various committees, representatives, and senators about the needs of our University.

The House is supportive of the university, especially through Texas Research Incentive Program. There is currently a backlog of 182 million, of which 50 million is earmarked for our university. A Tuition Revenue Bond is on the table for the creation of a shared building for bio-engineering with UT-Southwester, and a new Student Success building. The creation of new building on our campus is critical as UTD is a fast growing public institution in Texas.

The first of three finalists for the ECS Dean position was on campus on March 27, 2019. The other two candidates will be on campus April 1-5, 2019. President Benson opened the floor to questions.

Joe Izen was curious if the performance-based merit awards would take into account performance over the past two years, as discussed previously. President Benson noted there is a raise pool, and the intent is that it should cover performance for the two years, so that there should not be a gap year.

2. Approval of the Agenda
Richard Scotch moved to approve the agenda. Murray Leaf seconded the motion. The motion carried.
3. **Approval of the Minutes**

Murray Leaf moved to approve the minutes as circulated. Joe Izen seconded the motion. The motion carried.

4. **Speaker’s Report – Ravi Prakash**

- The FY20 Senate elections were going on. Speaker Prakash encouraged senators to vote.
- Speaker Prakash and Joe Izen will be attending the Affordable Learning Accelerator (ALA) Taskforce Meeting at the UT System building in Austin on April 1, 2019. If anyone has questions regarding this meeting please contact Speaker Prakash and Joe Izen.
- On April 16, 2019, a group of faculty will meet with Terry Pankratz to discuss the recent procurement issues. Following the meeting Pankratz will be invited to give a presentation on these issues and possible solutions to the Academic Senate.
- Speaker Prakash and Denise Boots met with students regarding the Chartwells issue. Speaker Prakash stressed to the students that faculty are concerned about the safety and welfare of students and students should not hesitate to contact members of the faculty if they feel they are being harassed or intimidated.
- The UT System Faculty Advisory Council meeting is April 11-12, 2019. Vice-Speaker Murray Leaf and Speaker Ravi Prakash will attend as UTD representatives.
- Speaker Prakash encouraged the faculty to attend the various commencement ceremonies.
- Joe Izen, Bill Hefley, and Richard Scotch had a productive meeting discussing the “Risk Assessment Form.” It was noted that the revised form will be brought to the Academic Senate to be discussed.
- All other items that I have been working on are on the agenda.

5. **SACSCOC/ The Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Updates – Serenity King**

All programs must have Marketable Skills included in degree plans by Fall semester 2020. Richard Scotch suggested that program heads coordinate with Serenity King’s office on this item.

At the February 20, 2019, Graduate Education Advisory Council (GGEAC) Meeting, they discussed their draft of the statewide strategic plans for graduate education. It is to come out for public comment during the month of April. The university will have 30-days to comment. They will then take it to the July 2019 THECB meeting. The committee also discussed Academic program reviews. They are moving from a seven-year cycle to a ten-year cycle. The next cycle will be Spring semester 2020.

Field of Study (FOS) approval is continuing. At the committee meetings during the week of March 18-22, 2019, the History FOS, even with many objections from different institutions, was moved forward. It passed without any conversation. Communication Disorders FOS is just now forming, and our university has put forth a nominee for membership of the committee.

In the Texas legislature, a number of the bills that have been filed contain provisions for ‘punitive action’ against institutions. One of those bills had a hearing on March 27, 2019, and is still pending. Essentially that bill states that if institutions do not honor other courses that transfer in and instead only give elective credit, then the institution has to give that number of semester credit hours to those students for free. If the institution is going to require transfer student to take additional
courses, they cannot charge them for those courses. That was one example of ‘punitive actions’ but there are many others. There were 8 bills filed on March 27, 2019, two of which are in competition with each other: SB25 – The institution bill which our university and others sponsored, and SB 1923 which is sponsored by the THECB. There will be a working group that will come together and reconcile the bills.

The Committee on Academic and Workforce Success, a sub-committee of the THECB, discussed their annual low-producing programs list. Our university has only one program on the list. If we want to continue to offer that program, a cost-benefit rationalization must be submitted to the committee for review. The PhD in Software Engineering and PhD in Communication Sciences came off the list, but the PhD in Telecommunication Engineering received a warning on the list. This means that the program did not meet the criteria this year, but it has to not meet the criteria for three consecutive cycles before we are required to take action. Ms. King opened the floor to questions.

6. FAC/TXCFS Report – Ravi Prakash and Bill Hefley
This item was discussed during the speaker’s report.

7. Student Government Report – Eric Chen
Student Government President Eric Chen gave the Academic Senate updates on the ongoing Student Government projects. The Hack-a-thon hosted by SG went really well, and several great products were created to help students on campus. The SG elections are ongoing and will close at 5 PM on March 29, 2019. On April 2, 2019, there will be a Comets-remembered ceremony that will include not only recent fallen comets but also comets from before 2012.

8. Staff Council Report – Naomi Emmett
Staff Council President Naomi Emmett attended the UT System Staff Advisory Council meeting in Austin. The meeting was very encouraging. Staff Council is currently working on their by-laws. They are currently being reviewed by the executive committee. They plan to have them ready for the May 2019 Handbook of Operating procedures meeting. The deadline for submissions to the care awards is March 29, 2019. Staff Council hosted their first professional development conference, and over 200 people attended. Ms. Emmett opened the floor to questions, there were none.

9. CEP Recommendations – Clint Peinhardt
   A. FY20 Undergraduate Course Changes and Additions
      Clint Peinhardt moved on the behalf of CEP to approve the new Undergraduate Courses. The motion carried.
   B. FY20 Graduate Course Changes and Additions
      Clint Peinhardt moved on the behalf of CEP to approve the new Graduate Courses. The motion carried.
   C. New A&H Concentration in Photo-Visual digital and Interdisciplinary Arts
      Clint Peinhardt moved on the behalf of CEP to approve the new concentrations. The motion carried.
   D. Minor in Supply Chain Management
      Clint Peinhardt moved on the behalf of CEP to approve the new Minor in Supply Chain Management. The motion carried.
   E. Catalog Updates
Clint Peinhardt moved on the behalf of CEP to approve the changes to the catalog. The motion carried.

10. **Informational: Update on OSA Accommodations for Testing Issue – Bill Hefley**
   The University Accessibility Committee was bypassed when the announced procedures for test taking for students with disabilities was created and announced to campus by the Office of Student Accessibility, but since then they have become very involved. A new process has been created, however, it will not be ready in time for midterms. In the new process, it is proposed that the Testing Center needs to be informed five days in advance to schedule a test for a student who needs special accommodation, and the examination has to be sent to them by the faculty member two days in advance.

11. **Informational: Amazon and Procurement Issues – Ravi Prakash**
   This item was discussed during the speaker’s report.

12. **Changing Date of May Academic Senate meeting – Bill Hefley**
   Per the normal schedule of the Academic Senate, the May meeting would take place on May 15, 2019; however commencement ceremonies are scheduled during the regularly scheduled meeting. It was proposed that the May meeting be moved to May 8, 2019. But, final exams will be going on at that time, and would not work for most of the senate members. Murray Leaf motioned to move the May 2019 Academic Senate meeting to May 22nd. Andy Blanchard seconded. The motion carried with one nay vote, and 1 abstain.

13. **Adjournment**
   There being no further business, President Benson adjourned the meeting 2:14 PM.

APPROVED: ___________________________  DATE:  _____________

Ravi Prakash
Speaker of the Faculty

DATE:  6/7/2019