

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY
Faculty Senate Meeting
Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2015 – 3:10 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Hughes-Trigg Ballroom West

Present: Sabri Ates; Karen Baker-Fletcher; Neil Bhattacharya; Darryl Dickson-Carr; *Jennifer Dworak; Dennis Foster; Ed Fox; Betty Gilmore; *Robert “Buck” Hampson; Kevin Hanlon; *Robert Howell; LiGuo Huang; *Debora Hunter; Tom Knock; Elfi Kraka; John Lamoreaux; Choon Sae Lee; Matt Lockard; *Jody Magliolo; Luigi Manzetti; Cheryl Mendenhall; Brian Molanphy; Abigail Pruitt; Tim Rosendale; *Douglas Reinelt, presiding; Dan Reynolds; Susanne Scholz; *Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner; Heather Stobaugh; *Joshua Tate; Halit Uster; Pia Vogel; Jessica Dixon Weaver; Matthew Wilson
Absent: Alan Brown; Daniel Buraczeski; Rajat Deb; Usama El Shamy; Donna Gober; Michael Harris; Michael Hawn; Susanne Johnson; *Leanne Ketterlin-Geller; Bill Maxwell; Thomas Ritz; Meghan Ryan; Canan Savaskan-Ebert; Steve Weisenburger

Ex Officio:

Visitors: Linda Eads; Kathleen Tibbets; Peter Moore; Mark Chancey; Viki Hill; Paul Ward; Rick Shafer, Bekah Miles; Dayna Oscherwitz

1. The meeting was called to order by President Doug Reinelt at 3:10 PM.
2. The minutes of the Senate meeting on Oct. 7, 2015 were approved. Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting on Sept. 30, 2015 were presented.
3. Paul Ward, Vice President for Legal Affairs, and Richard Shafer, SMU Police Chief gave a presentation on the implementation of Texas Senate Bill 11 relating to concealed handguns on campus. Since 1994, SMU policy has prohibited the possession of weapons on campus. Senate Bill 11, which was signed into law on June 13, 2015, now authorizes a concealed handgun license holder to carry a concealed handgun on the campus of a public or private university. Open carry of any firearm on a college campus is still prohibited. Moreover, SB 11 permits a private university to prohibit license holders from carrying handguns on campus, after “consulting with students, staff, and faculty of the institution.” The new law will be effective on August 1, 2016. In addition to formal consultations, an email address will be set up to receive comments from Nov. 10-Dec. 15. It is President Turner’s intention to take the comments into consideration and make a decision by January 15 as to whether to opt out. Vice President Ward answered questions from members of the Senate regarding the process.

Asked about faculty access to the University Bylaws, Vice President Ward clarified that longstanding SMU policy is not to make the Bylaws available for public access, although they have been routinely produced as needed, such as for accreditation purposes. Some peer universities do grant broader access, but other peer universities follow the same policy as SMU. One faculty member recently requested access, and his request was granted. The question of whether broader access should be granted is now under consideration, and will also involve the Board of Trustees.

President Reinelt thanked Vice President Ward and Chief Shaffer for consulting the Senate on these issues.

4. Senior Associate Dean Peter Moore gave an update regarding the University Curriculum. There has been a lot of concern about the process by which decisions relating to the UC are made, including the question of whether the faculty should vote on changes. Dean Moore reviewed the history of the University Curriculum Council, going back to the Master Plan of 1963, which restructured SMU as an institution. The Master Plan is still a living document for SMU, notwithstanding changes in the administrative structure of the University. The UC Council has a history that can be traced back to 1963, and its authority rests on the Master Plan. The authority of the Master Plan has never been revoked, and it was reaffirmed in 2010. The subsequent general education curricula were approved by faculty votes. The strengths of the UC include its university-wide approach, the fact that it is a four-year curriculum and cannot be completed with only AP, and its emphasis on foreign language study.

It is clear that faculty care about general administration, although misconceptions are widespread and the complexity of the UC is poorly understood. Apart from process issues, faculty members have valid concerns relating to academic integrity and resources. Dean Moore has been working to address many of these concerns, and he wants to correct various specific problems in University Curriculum 2016. Dean Moore responded to questions from the Senate regarding the options for addressing specific problems that have come to light. Professor Dayna Oscherwitz offered additional perspective on the implementation of the UC within the Department of World Languages and Literatures. Professor Dennis Foster commented on the efforts of the Department of English and other departments within Dedman College.

President Reinelt thanked Dean Moore for his report, and Dean Moore offered to meet with any members who wish to discuss their concerns.

5. Professor Rebekah Miles, Chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on Research and Graduate Education, introduced a resolution regarding support for PhD students. Following a friendly amendment, the resolution was unanimously adopted by voice vote:

Faculty Senate Resolution to Increase Support for all PhD Students at SMU

Whereas, the OE2C project is based on the vision that “SMU has an unrivaled opportunity to continue its ascent as a leading institution for research and creative achievement” (OE2C Vision Statement) and the mission of the project is to “enable SMU to fulfill its Strategic Plan” (OE2C Mission Statement), and

Whereas, the primary goals of the Centennial Strategic Plan are to “enhance the academic quality and reputation of the university” (Goal 1) and to ensure that SMU should be a “a top 50 university,” and

Whereas, the Centennial Strategic Plan objectives include “expansion of funded research support,” “support of programs resulting in increases in research productivity and creative achievement,” “enhancement of undergraduate research,” and “recruitment and appointment of distinguished faculty in the senior ranks and gifted scholars/researchers/creative artists in the junior ranks,” and

Whereas the goals of the Strategic Plan include increasing “the average size of doctoral fellowships” and “the number of graduate students completing their doctoral degrees,” and

Whereas, placement, research work, and professional achievements of PhD students would help to build the global academic reputation of the university that determines its ranking, and

Whereas, a larger and better qualified pool of PhD students would play a crucial role in supporting high quality undergraduate education and undergraduate research, in providing assistance for faculty research, in attracting research grants, in recruiting and retaining high quality faculty, and in improving national rankings, and

Whereas, SMU has many strong PhD programs with tremendous potential for future growth in quality and national ranking that can only be realized through a major increase in resources available for funding PhD studies, and

Whereas many of SMU’s PhD programs provide stipends and benefits that are not competitive with peer and aspirational universities and are thereby hampered in attracting top students, admitting as many students as they need, and moving them through the program quickly, and

Whereas, attaining the goals of the Centennial Strategic Plan makes it incumbent upon the university to increase the quality of PhD students by offering competitive stipends, and to increase the number of PhD students with the goal of graduating 100 PhD s every year by 2022, and

Whereas the University, through OE2C, has shown its strong commitment to shift expenditures from administrative to academic purposes, and particularly to the support of PhD students, now therefore

Be it resolved, that the Faculty Senate requests the administration to

- (i) Ensure that as savings from the OE2C project are realized, a significant portion is dedicated to fellowships and assistantship stipends for PhD students so as to sustain an increase in the total funds available for this purpose by an amount of six million dollars per year.
 - (ii) Provide full waivers for all tuition and fees for all PhD students in the University.
 - (iii) Revise the health care benefit policies so that PhD students can purchase affordable and competitive health insurance.
- 6. The Faculty Senate went into executive session to discuss and vote on the recommendations of the Honorary Degrees Committee.
- 7. The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joshua Tate