

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

February 6, 2013

Toni Sol, Faculty Senate Chair
Tom Ingram, Past Chair
Joe Kongevick, Secretary
Douglas Klahr, Parliamentarian
Julie Alexander
Cheryl Anderson—Nursing
Ivonne Audirac---SUPA
Robert Bing---CRCJ
Miriam Byrd--Philosophy & Humanities
Dan Cavanagh--Music
Thomas Chrzanowski—Biology
Mark Cichock--Political Science
Stephanie Cole -- History
Reni Courtney--Nursing
Jennifer Fox--Student Congress
Sarah Frisof -- Music
George Gintole--Architecture

Desiree Henderson—English
Brian Horton—Communication
Brian Huff---Industrial Engineering
Andrew Hunt--EES
Seiji Ikeda--Art
Aimee Israel-Pelletier -- MODL
Alir Koymew---Physics
Judy LeFlore--Nursing
Carl Lovely—Chem/Biochem
Kytai Nguyen--BE
Yuan Peng---Psychology
Stefan Romanoschi--CE
Jodi Tommerdahi—C&I
Mike Ward---Economics
Lewis Wasserman--ELPS
Robert Young--Sociology Anthropology

Call to Order:

Toni Sol, Chair

Members of the press were recognized.

Remarks by the President:

Unable to attend.

Remarks by the Provost:

Provost reserved his remarks and questions until after our two guest presenters.

First presentation: Dr. Steven Mintz, Executive Director – Institute for Transformational Learning.

Dr. Mintz started out by reminding us that higher education faces severe challenges that are not going away on their own. He invited UTA faculty to be his partner in his mission to attempt to reinvent the university for the twenty-first century. He stressed that we need to be in front of the educational wave and the problems that we face are financial and ideological. He explained that tuition increased 7% every year, a rate higher than the inflation rate and this is not sustainable. Per student state support in public education declined precipitously between 2000 and 2010 and public financing of education, after inflation, has declined 20%. A number of years ago, a college education cost 4 % of median income , it is now at 25%. Education funding by Pell Grants went from 70% to less than 30% of tuition. In addition, the

democratization of education means that 3/4 of all students in higher education are now non-traditional students. They are full time or part time students with dependents, working, often transfers from two year institutions and maybe taking courses concurrently at both a four year institution, on line courses and at two year institutions or a combination of those all at the same time. Dr. Mintz pointed out that UT enrolls the top 7% of graduating high school seniors in the state and 20-25% fail out first year. In STEM 50% of these top students are failing at least one course.

According to Dr. Mintz, "The real challenge is ideological; 80% of adults believe higher education is not a good value for the money even when we tell them that a college graduate will make a million dollars more than a high school graduate." Public Education is no longer seen as a good value for the money. He stated that new circumstances call for new thinking. Dr Mintz pointed out that institutions of Higher Education are not known for their rapid response. This inertia allowed private entities move in to the education sector and we need to reinvent how we deliver knowledge. We reinvent ourselves or we atrophy. He argued that the industrial model of education has to give way to an information age model : personalized and adaptive. Student success and accountability are important and our answers to these new conditions include a reinvention of pedagogy. This includes active learning models, students as creators of knowledge not just consumers and accelerated, hybrid, flipped and other types of ways to deliver knowledge. We need to reevaluate the curriculum in order to trim wasted credit hours. He pointed out that 120 hours are the norm to graduation in other successful universities while the average in Texas is around 160 hours. Included in this is a reevaluation of assessments (high stakes vs. low stakes assessment. the latter is more successful). We need to look at certificates and badges, sharing and linked classrooms and advising- online, 24/7 or holistic advising. Distance education, learning dashboards and professional development are all part of the new model of education.

Dr. Mintz stated that there are two roads into the future, one pessimistic bifurcated model in which the poor are left behind and the classic classroom is in opposition to a computer screen. The more optimistic road includes the invention of a technology enhanced education model and fosters collaboration between different specialists to create or devise new methods of knowledge creation and delivery. Dr. Mintz set out the institute's plans to aid in this new education model through Venture capitalist programs to help leverage good ideas and creativity. He sees the institute as a catalyst for creativity and innovation. He would see brown bag series on new methods and the creation of a Boot camp on innovation. He challenged the senators to look at these changes as an opportunity for a new type of scholarship. New types of analytic data will be one of the outcomes of the educational innovations. Dr. Mintz informed the senate that seven letters of intent had been received from UTA and that we already have a strong base in innovation and new methods of education and delivery to build upon given Dr. Pete Smith's and his team's efforts in Distance Learning.

A discussion was then held on Dr. Mintz's presentation. One senator from Nursing inquired in the sort of Institutional Design centers made available at other institutions for innovative teaching would come under the institute's mission. Dr. Mintz replied that such an enterprise is each particular Institution's responsibility. He said that he had experience in creating such a resource at one of his previous institutions and recommended that any effort in that direction should include cognitive specialists among others.

Second presentation: Faculty Satisfaction Survey by Richard Boyer from Modern Think

Jean Hood introduced Mr. Boyer to the senate.

Mr. Boyer explained the process and the benchmarks used for interpretation of survey results. The survey was administered in 2010 and had a 56% response rate from faculty. The faculty then discussed the results with Mr. Boyer. One of the comments from a senator was about the categories chosen for evaluation. The senior leadership category was too broad including upper administration as well as the deans. There was not enough differentiation and “the problem is you can show our deans what we think of senior leadership but we cannot show what we think about them.” Mr Boyer responded that it was a deliberate and “In this survey we chose not to get more detailed.” However, if another survey were to be administered, this is certainly something to take into consideration. When asked if there would be a follow up survey, Mr. Boyer responded that he knew of no plan yet but that it has been three years since this survey and in a normal cycle, one would be in the works. When asked what is the take away from the exercise, the provost answered that communication needed to be worked on at all levels. Mr Boyer welcomes e-mail questions at rboyer@modernthinking.com

The Provost informed us that efforts to better our space utilization was going very well and UTA’s scores have improved greatly. His office is working closely with the people in charge of scheduling to help reduce the number of problems involved with centralized scheduling and that this second time around, even though there were still some issues, there were fewer. He is confident that we will soon have the bugs worked out. Dr. Elsenbaumer thanked faculty for their patience in this matter. He also informed the senate that there should be an announcement next week about the president search.

Quorum called

No quorum present.

Approval of minutes

Tabled until next meeting.

Reports

Tabled until next meeting.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:32pm