

TEXAS COUNCIL OF FACULTY SENATES

BUSINESS MEETING

MINUTES

October 24, 2009

Anjoo Sikka, President of Texas Council of Faculty Senates called the meeting to order at 10:15 A.M. Present were faculty senate members from twenty-six (26) colleges and universities and six (6) community colleges.

The minutes from the March 7, 2009 Business Meeting were read. Michelle Moosally, University of Houston Downtown motioned that they be accepted. Paul Loeffler called a question regarding the statement "After discussion, Paul Loeffler, Sam Houston State University, motioned that the original motion be withdrawn". He reminded members that he had called for a vote on the original motion. Paul Loeffler seconded the motion to approve the minutes, with corrections. There being no other amendments, the minutes were approved as amended.

President Sikka introduced the Texas Council of Faculty Senates officers and their roles in the organization. She solicited reports from the officers as follows.

David Weissenburger, Past President, discussed his efforts to learn of community college interest in attending TCFS meetings. The organization was approached in 2008 by senate leaders in San Antonio community colleges to attend our meeting as they did not have a forum such as this to attend. Past President Weissenburger sent an e-mail invitation to over 70 community college and six community college members did attend with another three expressing interest. Past President Weissenburger asked for input from the attendees as to how the meeting had fulfilled their expectations. Joan Kennedy of Collin College appreciated the excellent speakers. Christine Foley, Southwest Texas Junior College, was impressed with the entire caliber of the meeting and attendees. Karen Anglin, Blinn College, was grateful for the access to the Coordinating Board and learning how to set up a productive senate. Esther Rumsey, Sul Ross State University Alpine, suggested a joint and separate session and coming together for the major part of the meeting.

Murray Leaf, University of Texas Dallas, indicated that he would like more information on community college governance to learn how to be helpful and relate to their needs. After considerable discussion, the following motion was finalized, with Suzanne Crockett, Lamar State College, proposing the motion and Mark Clarke, University of Houston, seconding it.

“Faculty leadership representatives at the community colleges of Texas are invited to attend the Spring 2010 meeting of the council. Additionally, a panel comprised of community college faculty leaders from the different regions of the state will present a discussion of faculty governance structures at community colleges and the challenges faced by their faculty senates, assemblies and councils.”

Joe Kotarba, East Region Vice President and University of Houston, announced that the spring meeting is an election meeting where three positions will be filled, i.e. President Elect, Northeast Region Vice President and West Region Vice President. Nominations for these positions can be sent to Joe at jkotarba@uh.edu or made on the floor at the meeting. Each candidate for office will make a short presentation regarding their capabilities. They can have two people speak on their behalf in support of their candidacy. He explained that the new vice presidents would have a two-year commitment and the president elect would have a four-year commitment – one year as president elect, two years as president and one year as past president. The Executive Committee meets on the Thursday evening prior to the Friday/Saturday meetings and usually has two or three conference calls per year to discuss key issues and prepare for the bi-annual meetings

Peggy Landrum, Northeast Region Vice President, asked for all members at this meeting to complete the meeting evaluation form previously passed out. Peggy also asked for suggested meeting topics.

Alba Ortiz, South Central Region Vice President, reported that Texas Council of Faculty Senates recently changed banks to Bank of America. She also reviewed the treasurer’s report, copy of which had been given to all members, and advised that the organization is solvent. It was noted that due to the hotel change, we are spending more dollars for better accommodations. Joe Kotarba motioned to accept the treasurer’s report with a second by Peggy Landrum. The motion passed unanimously.

Sally (Sarah) Moreman, West Region Vice President and Web Page Editor, encouraged all to check out our much improved website to include the recent addition of Round Up Reports.

President Sikka reported that she attended the CB quarterly meeting in July 2009 and reported that the proposed rules for program approval and review would be discussed by Assistant Commissioner Stephenson during his banquet speech. In addition, she pointed out that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board heard from Dr. Patricia Gandara (Professor at UCLA) who presented strategies on access to higher education for Latino/a youth. President Sikka recognized Wesley Wynne, our webmaster, for his work on our website and the new addition of the Round Up Reports which can be accessed prior to our meetings.

President Sikka also recognized Sharon Grimm for her contributions to the organization, particularly in organizing the details for the meetings and coordinating the work of several members of the Executive Committee.

Past President David Weissenburger reported that there are three new campuses being added to our current 37 (2 for Sul Ross) which gives us the opportunity to reorganize the regions. They are Texas A&M University-Central Texas, University of North Texas-Dallas and Texas A&M University-San Antonio. He motioned that this reorganization of regions be accepted, second by Murray Leaf and the motion passed unanimously.

In other business, President Sikka called attention to the printout of HB 2504 which all members received in their packet. She summarized the intent of the bill, which included public access to information about courses syllabi and instructor vitae, and required a plan to make available student opinions of courses/instructors. Several members brought up concerns about displaying this information publicly, especially when course design and activities may well be a scholarly activity. One member questioned the assumption that courses follow a calendar, particularly since in some disciplines (like fine arts) may require flexibility of course topics/calendars. Another concern was the time/resources required to place this information on the web. It was suggested that course syllabi could possibly be made available through a Blackboard-Vista shell for syllabi and could be accessed by the public without having to be "enrolled" in BB-Vista.

President Sikka called attention to two resolutions passed by the faculty senate of Texas Woman's University for Texas Council of Faculty Senates as an information item (Attachments B & C).

President Sikka called attention to two documents authored by Murray Leaf found in the packet regarding communication between the Faculty Advisory Council and the Board of Regents. She invited Murray to address the membership. Professor Leaf reported on the status of the faculty regent bill, which was introduced, but with significant changes from the version that was endorsed by the UT-System Faculty. He reported that this bill did not go through and recommended that faculty work with their Boards of Regents to keep them better informed. He identified the types of questions that faculty would need to answer when addressed the BOR or other governing bodies (see attachment D)

President Sikka announced the date of the spring 2010 meeting which is February 26-27, 2010 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Austin. Joe Kotarba thanked President Sikka for a well-organized meeting. There being no further business, Joe Kotarba make the motion that the meeting be adjourned at 11:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Grimm
Executive Secretary