University Faculty Senate Minutes
November 21, 2002

Members present: Bill Abbott, Terry Bilhartz, Joanne Ardovini-Brooker, Ted Creighton, Mary Lynn DeShazo, Marsha Harman, Jeff Harwell, David Henderson, Joan Hudson, Joe Kirk, Gerald Kohers, Paul Loeffler, Valerie Muehsam, Kandi Tayebi, Tamara Waggener, Gene Young

Member absent: Leonard Breen, Mary Gutermuth (professional conflict), Penny Hasekoester (professional conflict), Deborah Hatton (professional conflict), Ann Jerabek (professional conflict), Holly Miller (class conflict), Debra Price (professional conflict), Sam Sullivan, Victoria Titterington (class conflict)

Approval of Minutes
The minutes for November 7 were not approved. They will be considered at the next meeting.

Chair's Report
Chair Muehsam reported that the APC did not meet; therefore, there was no report. Chair Muehsam informed the Senate that Dr. David Payne, Vice President for Academic Affairs, will meet with the Senate on January 16.

President Gaertner will have a reception for the Senate on December 5 from 4:30-5:30.

Construction of New Visitor's Center
Several faculty have expressed concerns regarding the construction of the new Visitor's Center. One of the three proposed locations includes the only green space on Sam Houston Blvd. Thus, the construction at this site would cause the removal of several large trees and the destruction of greenery which enhances the beauty of the campus. Chair Muehsam stated that those interested in the issue could contact Dr. Edwin Davis or Dr. Jimmy Carter.

Additional Research Fund Guidelines
At the Senate meeting on November 7, the Senate voted to keep the old guidelines for the summer grants and change the deadline for submissions to Feb. 1. Dr. Gordon Plishker sent new guidelines for the Senate to consider and expressed a concern that the Research Council would be unable to consider all of the proposals. He suggested that the summer grant funds be referred to as "Faculty Support Funds." He also suggested numerous changes, including that the Senate notify recipients of the awards and that a separate "Faculty Support Committee" decide the awards. After discussing the issue, the Senate proposed that we again request that the old guidelines be used with a Feb. 1 deadline. The funds should also include the word "research" in the title and be administered and awarded as an equivalent program to the other two grant programs.

Human Subjects Guidelines for Grant Proposals
Currently, professors working with human subjects must go to the Health and Human Services Web site, work through a tutorial, and print out a certificate. Faculty expressed frustration with the process, stating that it treats professionals as if they are graduate students. Concerns were also expressed about the lecture on human subjects at the grant writing workshop. Once again, faculty felt that they do not need a lecture on the issues surrounding the use of human subjects and that they are more informed than people who might provide them with information. The Senate agreed to discuss the issue further and investigate the purpose of the procedure.

Committee Reports
The Committee Preference Form was unanimously accepted with emendations. Discussions about the Black History Month Committee and the Hispanic Heritage Committee ensued regarding why the Senate was no longer nominating faculty to serve on these committees. Senators agreed that faculty need input on minority issues. Several Senators asked that the Senate research why the Women's Advisory Committee was no longer active. The Senate will look into reviving the Women's Advisory Committee.

Committee on Committees recommended faculty to fill vacancies on the following committee: The Achievement Awards Committee. The nominations were unanimously accepted.

The Academic Affairs Committee reported that they are researching the issue of online evaluations and have asked for a copy of Dr. Tom Kordinak's report.

Role of the Senate Leadership
The Senate discussed the role of the Executive Committee of the Senate and the procedures for deciding issues before the Senate. The following points were considered:
1. Should e-mail be used as a means of gathering votes on an issue to be decided or should issues only be voted on at a Senate meeting?
2. Should Senate leadership negotiate with administration and bring back to the Senate information regarding the negotiations or should the leadership only report to the administration the decisions of the Senate?

The issues will be revisited at another time. Currently, e-mail voting will only be used when timelines are short and a quorum of votes is received. All Senate decisions are currently expressed to the administration and input from the administration that affects these decisions is brought back to the entire Senate before any alternative is decided.

Respectfully submitted,

Kandi Tayebi, Chair-Elect