

Meeting: Faculty Senate  
 Date: November 7, 2017  
 Time: 2:01 p.m.  
 Location: BA 290  
 Adjournment: 4:36 p.m.

# Minutes

Members present: Curtis Jones, Annette Taggart, Gerard Huber, Johanna Delgado-Acevedo, Stephen Starnes, Bilal Abu Bakr, Benton Pierce, Greg Lubiani, Sarah Mitchell, Charlotte Larkin, John Smith, Jason Davis, Sean Anderson, Susan Stewart, Yasemin Atinc, Brandon Randolph-Seng, Daniel Kelly, Debra Mahoney, Kurtis Williams, Chad King (President), Benjamin May, Jiaming Sun, Rebecca Worley  
 Members absent: Tim Wilson, Juan Araujo, Julia Ballenger, Yelin Ou,

Issue/Topic	Summary of Discussion	Decision/Action
<p>Invited Speakers:            Dr. Raymond Keck,            President, Texas            A&amp;M University            Commerce</p> <p>Ms. Heidi Bryan,            Compliance            Officer, Texas            A&amp;M University            Commerce</p>	<p>Dr. Keck discussed several topics as summarized below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TAMUC faculty is extraordinary and is honoring Professor Mayo legacy about faculty commitment with students. Dr. Keck had asked many East Texas State alumni and all of them pointed out good relationships between faculty and students.</li> <li>• Dr. Keck mentioned that our strongest strength is the relationship between faculty and students. Dr. Jones outstanding commitment with students allowed them to continue with their education and graduate under struggling circumstances.</li> <li>• There was no secret that many things had to be fixed from the previous administration (serious issues with administration, investigations, compliance). Dr. Keck and Dr. Humphreys have been working together and most of those issues are resolved. Nowadays they can concentrate on making substantial changes in our University.</li> <li>• One of the major weaknesses of our University is the teaching load. It is Dr. Keck's number one goal to resolve this problem but it will require millions of dollars.</li> <li>• Dr. Keck does not have a plan but is working on developing one and will present it at the Senate at the end of this year. It was mentioned that it is laudable the fact of how much the faculty publishes with the current teaching loads, it is surprising and speaks well about the faculty.</li> <li>• Dr. Keck wants to commit to a 3/3 load and 3/2 for tenure track faculty. He wants the input of the faculty and asked to not hesitate to ask him of any agreements and</li> </ul>	

	<p>disagreements with the future plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Keck asked for questions or comments.</li> <li>• Senator Kelly asked about the pressure to increase recruitment and increase graduation rates and to what point we are trading off quantity over quality and how we keep academic integrity. Dr. Keck asked senators to never send students forward for graduation if they do not complete the requirements of their courses. Dr. Keck appeals to faculty integrity to not pass students that are not ready and to not graduate who is not ready. What is needed is to recruit better-qualified students; in that way we will increase our graduation rate. It is needed to increase our efforts for recruitment. It is important to best fit our online classes for graduate students but not for undergraduates, especially those students that live on campus.</li> <li>• Dr. Keck asked senators if the increase of graduation rate would decrease the quality of classes. President King answered that is an unspoken question especially in core classes where sections are big and quality is a concern. Other aspect of it is the feedback received by The Office of Student Access and Success (Dr. Dobbs), the only communication is the final grades. Students in these core classes cannot write.</li> <li>• Dr. Keck asked how effective are the writing center and the tutoring centers. Senator Worley answered that she had send one of her students to the writing center 3 times and 3 times she was sent back. Dr. Keck asked if she reported it to which Senator Worley answered no. Senator Taggart added that is hard to find information about the writing center online. Dr. Keck asked if she reported it to what she answered no but she will. Dr. Keck mentioned that this cases need to be reported, if it is reported it need to be fix quickly. Dr. Keck mentioned the importance to make students succeed and attend class and alert the head of the department and the dean if services are nor working properly.</li> <li>• President King mentioned that there could be inconsistencies related to attendance among different colleges, this could create confusion among students.</li> <li>• Senator XXX stated that student evaluations are going to be online and asked Dr. Keck what will be done to increase student participation. Dr. Keck answered that it is very doable.</li> <li>• Senator Smith mentioned that we need a cultural change in our students regarding to attendance and how it is</li> </ul>	
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related other aspects of their academic life. Senator Smith gave the example that he passed roll at the beginning of his class and students leave afterwards. Dr. Keck said that it should not be tolerated

- Dr. Keck mentioned that professors make the culture and should engage students to stay in class. As president he cannot change the academic culture, faculty has to do it. He gave the example of how the most memorable professors are those that are strict and do not allow distractions.
- Senator Taggart mentioned that she has seen an improvement on academic culture with signature courses; in Dr. Hendricks and Dr. Humphreys courses, student attended class. She added that those courses set the tone for the rest. Dr. Keck added that all senators have the expertise and should consider teaching a signature course. Senator Randolph-Seng said that he is having a good experience and attendance in his signature course.
- Senator Abu Bakr mentioned that at the graduate level students tend to register in classes with less strict professors. He mentioned that 2 students did not approve his class, one of those students got violent and he had to call the police. He felt that everyone looked at him like he did something wrong. Dr. Keck answered that this was outrageous and needed attention. Dr. Keck asked senators to speak up. Senator Abu Bakr added that some professor give partial credit for multiple-choice questions. Dr. Keck emphasized the need to speak up when these things happen.
- Senator Taggart mentioned that attendance on Fridays is a big problem to what Dr. Keck answered to give tests on Fridays; Senator Taggart replied that all students would fail. Dr. Keck stated that Monday, Wednesday and Friday classes get the most work done, changing classes to Tuesdays and Thursdays should not be the answer. Dr. Keck emphasized the importance to design classes where attendance is compulsory, give exams on Fridays, and change institutional culture.
- President King raised the concern of the increase in the amount of adjunct the University is hiring; in general there is a poor oversight of adjuncts. Dr. Keck asked if adjuncts are supervised, if they teach core classes? Also Dr. Keck emphasized the importance to share the same syllabus when more than one professor teach the same course. Senator Smith added that that will be against

academic freedom. To what Dr. Keck responded that it was a bad example to apply academic freedom, faculty should act as a community and is very hard to establish controls and evaluations when you do not share the same syllabus for all sections of one class.

- Dr. Keck addressed passed resolution 17-18-2 on Campus Concealed Carry. He stated that the A&M System would not allow any exemptions to Campus Concealed Carry. He read an email from the University lawyer where it is stated that it cannot be an exemption unless there is a clear and present danger. Senator Smith said that faculty at the University of Texas-Austin are allowed to have signs on their doors. Dr. Keck mentioned that he did not think an exemption will be made by the A&M system, however he will ask and he encouraged senators to get active, vote and participate in this matter. He also stated that his vision is in agreement with the resolution but that he will follow the law.
- Dr. Keck addressed passed resolution 17-18-1 on One-time Merit Pay. Dr. Keck said that there was a misunderstanding and it was a matter of communication. He presented the one-time merit pay in the fall assembly and mentioned that the merit pay is based on enrollment and this year we are 3% below. He stated that that was the only option the administration had and they do not know what will happen next year. He mentioned that enrollment is crucial and our university does not have an enrollment plan. Other universities like Tarleton State are doing a better job recruiting new students than us. We need to work on a plan and recruit between 1800-1900 freshmen next year.
- President King said that there were two concerns about the one-time merit pay, first to clarify that it is just one time; to what Dr. Keck said that there was not a plot about it and they do not know if it will be only this year. The second concern mentioned by President King was that we call it merit raise but it is not merit because the head of the department decides it. Dr. Keck answered that he wants to know where problems are happening, if the head of the department decides that a professor does not deserve their raise it can be understandable but if you think you can object that please do it and challenge the decision.
- Dr. Keck addressed passed resolution 17-18-3 on Course Caps. Dr. Keck said that there are some classes that need to be small because the nature of the class for example

laboratories but there are increase caps because the amount of students register in July is not the same as those registered in September, the caps needed to be increased. Dr. Keck added that he cannot commit to 3/3 academic loads and merit rises if we put caps in our classes. Professors cannot decide what is the cap of their classes. President King mentioned that there could be quality and pedagogical issues increasing the caps, also that the design and syllabus of the class are created before the caps are increased to what Dr. Keck answered that those syllabus need to be adjusted to the new size of the class. He added that the only way to reduce course loads is to increase the caps. Senator Kelly said that in bigger classes evaluations are going to be compromised, instead of essay questions he will have to use multiple choice. Dr. Keck answered that it was difficult but it has to be done, if the faculty wants small classes cannot expect merit raises or 3/3 academic loads. Senator Taggart stated that she had to change departments because she was drowning with her class load, she sees some progress now and all her classes are online so there are no reasons for small caps.

- Dr. Keck summarized his arguments stating that we need to work on class management strategies, our students are drifting out, using cellphones in class, and professors are discussing personal issues in class and that needs to end. Our University needs a plan to increase recruitment, one of the strategies are the signature courses and he invited senators to develop a signature course. Other strategy is the School of Liberal Arts to prepare students for jobs that we cannot imagine yet. Dr. Keck wants to see a plan from the faculty Senate to change the academic culture in classrooms and student behavior. He added that he would look further into Campus Concealed Carry.
- Senator Anderson asked about the turnover in administrative positions to what Dr. Keck said that it was true and they are working on changing it.

Ms. Heidi Bryan discussed information about the email for university communication.

- Ms. Bryan stated that the university has a policy that established that all official communication has to be done using university email and that all communication with personal emails need to stop immediately. President King asked for a statement to include it on our syllabi, Ms. Bryan will send it to the senate.

	<p>October 3, 2017 Senate minutes were approved with minor modifications</p> <p>October 31, 2017 Senate minutes were approved with minor modifications</p>	<p>Motioned by Stewart, seconded by Smith</p> <p>Motioned by Smith, seconded by Stewart</p>
<b>Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President King indicated that Tim Murphy will attend December meeting</li> <li>• There is a concern about TRIO request to include students grades on Survey Monkey, there could be FERPA violations.</li> <li>• President King made an inquiry about paternal leave, there was a partial response and he will follow it with an email.</li> <li>• There a no final answer for e-portfolios for tenure applications, it is not implemented and it is not clear if it will be.</li> </ul>	
<b>Committee Reports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Life: Senator Larkin had nothing to report.</li> <li>• Academic Practice: Senator Ballanger was not present.</li> <li>• Admission and Retention: Senator Kelly had nothing to report.</li> <li>• Budget: Senator Stearns had nothing to report.</li> <li>• Organization of the Senate: Senator Anderson had nothing to report.</li> </ul>	
<b>Unfinished Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President King updated the senate on the proposal for the School of Liberal Arts, Dr. Menaldo and Dr. Atardo will visit on December meeting.</li> </ul>	
<b>New Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President King and Senator May distributed and discussed the faculty awards, including descriptions, rubrics, and deadlines.</li> <li>• Nominees will be submitted the second Tuesday of December.</li> <li>• The third Tuesday of December, Chair May will inform the nominees.</li> </ul>	

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