

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

Following are the minutes of the regular Faculty Council meeting of November 17, 2003.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR FACULTY COUNCIL MEETING OF
NOVEMBER 17, 2003**

The third regular meeting of the Faculty Council for the academic year 2003-2004 was held in the Main Building, Room 212, Monday, November 17, 2003, at 2:15 P.M.

ATTENDANCE.

Present: Lawrence D. Abraham, Urton L. Anderson, Jacqueline L. Angel, Marian J. Barber, Daniela Bini, Hans C. Boas, David G. Bogard, Teresa Graham Brett, Neal M. Burns, Alan K. Cline, Janet M. Davis, Donald William Drumtra, John R. Durbin, Sheldon Ekland-Olson, Wolfgang Frey, Alan W. Friedman, Charles N. Friedman, Michael H. Granof, Sue A. Greninger, Marvin L. Hackert, Susanne Hafner, Brian J. Haley, John J. Hasenbein, James L. Hill, Neville Hoad, Archie L. Holmes, Raymond Bert "Rusty" Ince III, Judith A. Jellison, Martin W. Kevorkian, William S. Livingston, Slyman M. Majid, Melvin E. L. Oakes, Edward W. (Ted) Odell, Patricia C. Ohlendorf, Anthony J. Petrosino, Theodore E. Pfeifer, Linda E. Reichl, Eric A. Renner, David J. Saltman, Diane L. Schallert, Mark C. Smith, Janet Staiger, Sharon L. Strover, John M. Weinstock, Darlene C. Wiley, Paul B. Woodruff, James R. Yates.

Absent: Kamran S. Aghaie, Ricardo C. Ainslie, Dean J. Almy, Daniel A. Bonevac, Jennifer S. Brodbelt, Johnny S. Butler, Joshua S. Campbell (excused), Maggie Chiang, Michael J. Churgin (excused), Patricia L. Clubb, Melba M. Crawford, Andrew P. Dillon, Edwin Dorn, Phillip L. Dubov, Larry R. Faulkner (excused), Kenneth Flamm (excused), Robert Freeman, James D. Garrison (excused), George W. Gau, Peter F. Green, Lita A. Guerra (excused), Carl T. Haas, Donald A. Hale, Julie Hallmark, Michael P. Harney, Thomas M. Hatfield, Fred M. Heath, Kevin P. Hegarty, Kurt O. Heinzelman, Susan S. Heinzelman, Sharon D. Horner (excused), Manuel J. Justiz (excused), Robert D. King, Richard W. Lariviere, Steven W. Leslie, Amarante L. Lucero, Arthur B. Markman (excused), Dean P. Neikirk (excused), Thomas G. Palaima (excused), Marcus G. Pandey, William C. Powers, Mary Ann R. Rankin, Johnnie D. Ray, Victoria Rodriguez, Charles R. Rossman (excused), Juan M. Sanchez, Dolores Sands, M. Michael Sharlot, David B. Spence (excused), David W. Springer, Salomon A. Stavchansky, Frederick R. Steiner, Ben G. Streetman, Daniel A. Updegrove, James W. Vick, N. Bruce Walker, Ellen A. Wartella, Gwendolyn Webb-Johnson, Barbara W. White, Lynn R. Wilkinson, Glen M. Worley.

Voting Members:	41 present,	33 absent,	74 total.
Non-Voting Members:	7 present,	27 absent,	34 total.
Total Members:	48 present,	60 absent,	108 total.

I. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY.

The written report appears in D 2761-2765. There were no questions or comments.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

The minutes of the Faculty Council Meeting of October 29, 2003 (D 2766-2768) were approved by voice vote.

III. COMMUNICATION WITH THE PRESIDENT

A. Comments by the President.

The president was away on University business.

B. Questions to the President.

Question 1. From Professor Alan Cline (computer sciences): On September 10, 2003, a memo to the faculty from the provost discussed measures to be taken by faculty to preserve confidentiality of student grades. This policy was promulgated without consultation with the very faculty body that should have had the greatest participation - the Educational Policy Committee. Perhaps it was believed that the policy was forced by legal requirements - yet, it seems annually that that excuse is used and then found to be a misrepresentation of the law. (Most recently, both the local "compliance policy" and a policy controlling student/faculty discussions of sexual harassment were originally claimed to be legal requirements and then proved to be otherwise.) Why was this student grade policy not taken to the Educational Policy Committee?

Response: Executive Vice President and Provost Ekland-Olson said the policy had been implemented because of concerns about identity theft, confidentiality, federal laws, and objections raised by students and parents. Professor Cline said he did not think faculty members would understand what was meant by "in addition it is very important when returning physical copies of student work to do so in a monitored way." The provost said he thought faculty would probably use their common sense. Professor Cline thought it was obvious that the issue should have been referred to the Educational Policy Committee. The provost said he would have no objection to that.

Question 2. From Professor Tom Palaima (classics): In recent memory, the Faculty Council debated whether to insert a break in the fall semester for students to study, think, write and recharge (as is done, for example, at Oxford University). It is my recollection that the main argument that led to turning down this proposal was the objection of departments with Friday and Monday science labs. Specifically it was argued that because so many students lost OU weekend labs, they could not afford to lose another for study purposes. There were also scheduling concerns. Would you be in favor of reopening this question and concentrating specifically on making the break coincide with OU weekend, which generally falls on Columbus Day weekend? This might satisfy both sports and knowledge enthusiasts.

Response: Provost Ekland-Olson said he believed it would be appropriate for the Council to refer this question to the Calendar Committee and the Educational Policy Committee. Chair Marvin Hackert (chemistry and biochemistry) said he would do that. He also reminded members that when this issue was introduced several years ago, some of the objections had to do with the scheduling of laboratory classes. The secretary, speaking as a voting member, said he thought it would be a questionable use of time by the Calendar Committee to reconsider an idea that had so recently been rejected by the Council. (See the minutes of the meeting of February 19, 2001, D 1192-1196, and the meeting of March 19, 2001, D 1227-1232.)

Question 3. From Professor Palaima: When one gets on the UT home page, it stresses that we all belong to an institution known as The University of Texas and that we are an educational institution, to wit: www.utexas.edu.

Athletics is correctly listed on the left-hand menu as a vital component of our educational mission.

When one clicks on Longhorns Sports, however, we are suddenly transported to a commercial enterprise that does not even recognize a connection to the University: www.texassports.com. Worse still and unique among all the major athletics programs at the University, Intercollegiate Football is accessed as: www.mackbrown-texasfootball.com, that is, a single individual is given priority over his team and his institution.

Is this appropriate? And if so, should academic programs and administrative units consider having their URL's changed to give publicity to their prominent faculty?

I can guess that the answer is money, that Coach Brown's visibility generates funds for the quasi-commercial operation he directs. But the same argument can be made for academic and administrative units, even if they are not virtually independent commercial enterprises.

Put another way, would you countenance URL's like www.LarryFaulkner-texasadmin.com or www.TomStaley-HRC.com? If so, why? If not, why not?

Response: Vice President for Institutional Relations and Legal Affairs Patricia Ohlendorf said that Web sites for the athletics departments at most major universities are dot com sites, partly because the athletics departments depend heavily on sponsors. As examples, she mentioned gobears.com for U.C. Berkeley, gostanford.ocsn.com for Stanford, goprincetontigers.com for Princeton, gocrimson.com for Harvard, bceagles.com for Boston College (Professor Palaima's alma mater), and uwbadgers.com for Wisconsin (where Professor Palaima received his doctorate). She said UT Austin, as many other universities, contracts with an external organization to set up the site and acquire sponsors. She also said commercial transactions are handled through the sites; in the case of UT Austin, this included ticket sales for the Erwin Center and the Performing Arts Center, done as a service by the athletics department.

Regarding MacBrown-utsports.com, she said he had nothing to do with the naming of that site; his contract allows the University to use his name, and many people, including high school students, associate his name with the University. She said there are over five million hits per month on the two sites he had asked about. She said the president said he did not want a site using his name; she had not asked Tom Staley, but she suspected his response would be the same as the president's.

IV. REPORT OF THE CHAIR.

Chair Hackert had begun the meeting with several comments about the University's proposal for tuition increases, and the response it had brought from an elected state official. He said that, when the expected student course load was taken into account, the proposed tuition increase did not exceed what elected officials had considered appropriate. He added that, contrary to claims reported in the media, students without adequate family resources would not be prohibited from attending the University if they were otherwise qualified, because of the amount that would be set aside for those in financial need. Finally, he said that the process of arriving at the proposed increases had been very open, and everyone had been given a chance to raise objections.

V. REPORT OF THE CHAIR ELECT.

Chair elect Linda Reichl (physics) reported on fall meeting of the Texas Council of Faculty Senates, held in Austin on October 24-25. She said the council had chosen Representative Fred Brown and Senator Florence Shapiro as state legislators of the year. They had also been given a report by Katherine Parsinot from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, who talked, among other things, about their efforts to standardize the core curriculum in the lower division courses throughout

the state; in particular, they sought a common numbering system for these courses. Professor Reichl said they had also heard about funding problems at many of the institutions.

She said the annual meeting with the Faculty Senate of Texas A&M would be held in College Station on Monday, February 23, and she urged members to plan to attend.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS — None.

VII. REPORTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY, COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS, AND COMMITTEES — None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS.

A. Report from the Intercollegiate Athletics Councils for Men and for Women.

Professor Shelley Payne (molecular genetics and microbiology), chair of the Women's Athletics Council, began by saying that the Council was hoping for a ruling that the council's meetings would not be subject to the Texas Open Records Act. She said the council was an advisory, not a policy-making committee.

She said the committee had been considering the appropriateness of complimentary items (such as tickets to athletics events) for members of the council. It was also attempting to bring about a restructuring of the athletics councils, in line with recommendations from the University's Wright Committee. Another item being considered was the status of the separation between men's and women's athletics departments. Professor Payne then called on Professor Linda Ferreira-Buckley, who gave an extensive report on the academic achievements of women athletes, which continue to be above the average for University undergraduates.

Christine Plonsky, director of women's athletics, said that intercollegiate athletics gives young people a chance to attend a world class institution and pursue a degree and also an extra-curricular activity in which they have a gift, which is athleticism. She talked at some length about their commitment, the challenges they face, and the lessons they learn which carry over into their lives after their time at the University.

Michael Granof (accounting), represented the Men's Athletics Council, which was currently without a chair. He said that men's athletes on scholarship have a GRA of 2.75, compared with an average for all UT male undergraduates of 2.97. He expressed that, all things considered, that was quite reasonable. He went over the reasons that some published reports on graduate rates were misleading. He said he had been on the Men's Athletics Council for three years, and thought the department was exceedingly well run. However, he went through a list of things he thought could be improved, including more faculty oversight of academic achievement and programs of male athletes, and more faculty contact with athletes.

DeLoss Dodds, director of men's athletics, talked about the success of the University's athletics teams relative to those of other institutions in the country, in the past few years. He also talked about the sound financial status of the departments, and the participation of athletics in community projects.

The representatives of the athletics departments then addressed several specific questions from members of the Council (Professors Janet Staiger, Linda Reichl, and Sue Greninger), regarding the success of athletes, outside athletics, after they leave the University, and the academic demands made on them while at the University, including the type of courses they are required to take and complete.

B. Report of Coalition On Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) Resolution (D 2753-2760).

Professor Michael Granof talked at length about the report, which had been made available to members and which will be considered by the Council at a future meeting.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS.

A. The next meeting of the Faculty Council was scheduled for Monday, December 8, 2003.

X. QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIR — None.

XI. ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 P.M.