

Provost Council
April 20, 2011
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
MB 3.106 Regents' Room

AGENDA

ON-LINE COURSE SURVEY

SANDY WELCH

Dr. Sandy Welch, Vice Provost for Accountability and Institutional Effectiveness reported on the recent on-line course evaluations that students complete on each of their courses taken in the Spring 2011 semester. Dr. Welch reported that overall 40% of the evaluations that were distributed to the students were completed and returned. The time period for the evaluations was over a course of two weeks which began on a Sunday and closed on a Friday. She suggested that in the future, we move the beginning and ending to Wednesdays as many students seem to get busier as the week moves along. Reminders were sent out to students through the fortnight.

Dr. Welch noted that depending on the amount of responses, students will be placed in a drawing for an I-Pad, maybe two. She also noted that some professors were uncomfortable with awarding students who completed the evaluation with extra credit. Dr. Welch noted that it was not mandatory for professors to award extra credit and that studies do not support that awarding extra credit skews the data (i.e., faculty receive more positive rankings/feedback when awarding extra credit).

SUPPLEMENTAL SALARY POLICY

JOHN FREDERICK

Dr. Frederick recently was apprised of the lack of clarity regarding salary supplements as they pertain to Fulbright awards. It seems that the Fulbright award only covers part of the faculty member's salary. Some departments/colleges have provided the difference to the faculty member, but then the department/college also has to hire an adjunct faculty member to teach the courses that have been vacated by the faculty member on the Fulbright. Terry Wilson, Asst. Vice Provost for Budgets and Dr. Dan Gelo, Dean of COLFA have been collaborating on creating a policy and guidelines which is modeled after the University of Kansas' policy and guidelines. As soon as the documents are refined, Dr. Frederick will

forward to all of the Deans for their review and input. It was also mentioned that there are other awards and consultant positions that faculty can apply and this policy should cover those as well.

RESEARCH UPDATES

BOB GRACY

Dr. Gracy, Vice President for Research provided the council members with a Research Expenditure Rate Report which lists all of the research accounts, their total funding as of March 31, 2011, the percent funding period elapsed and the percent expenditure rate. This report allows the Deans to keep track on those faculty who are not spending their funding and to ensure that there is an adequate reason for holding onto the funds.

Dr. Gracy also announced that there still seems to be confusion among faculty regarding cost sharing and institutional support. If the grant does not mandate cost sharing, then UTSA will not provide it. If the grant mandates cost sharing, the Research office encourages faculty to seek funding from a third party. The Research office also requires that a separate account is set up to hold the cost sharing funds so that they are not inadvertently used for another item.

As for institutional support Dr. Gracy stated that we always want to include that in the grant. However, if you get too specific then it appears to the reviewers as cost-sharing.

Dr. Gracy also mentioned that as UTSA moves into applying for grants from the Department of Energy, everyone should be aware that they require 30% cost-sharing.

Dr. Gracy announced that the Research Office was going to hold a Research Speed Dating event on Monday, April 25th (3:00 – 5:00 in the BSE 2.102) and Tuesday, April 26th (4:00 in the UC Bexar Room). Monday's event will concentrate on projects in the energy area and Tuesday's event will include members from the CTRC. Dr. Gracy asked the Deans to encourage their faculty to attend these sessions.

Dr. Gracy also announced that the Research Advisory Committee is continuing to find alternatives to decrease administrative costs. He stated that the RAC met with representatives from the Travel and Disbursement office and HR to fine tune current policies so that they aren't so burdensome, but keep us in compliance. Dr. Gracy further stated that the RAC will meet with the Graduate School and Dan Sibley regarding space assignments.

Dr. Gracy mentioned that faculty/departments/colleges should inform the Office of Research regarding research conferences/symposiums that are hosted by UTSA. VPR can provide

assistance in the form of support/ marketing efforts and placing the information on the VPR website.

Dr. Gracy mentioned that external reviews of some centers and institutes have been completed (VPR reviews 1/3 of the centers and institutes each year). He stated that meetings are being set up with him, the respective Directors and Deans. He also stated that there is a new procedure which involves the Deans early on in the review process. The Deans are being asked to meet with the review team the night before the review.

Dr. Gracy next discussed grants vs. gifts from foundations. Dr. Gracy stated that the key as to whether or not the funds are a gift or a grant is deliverables. For instance, a foundation may ask how the money was spent, which is okay and that can be classified as a gift. However, if the foundation specifies how the money is to be spent, then that is a grant. The Deans asked Dr. Gracy if he would assist them and their development officers when reviewing money from foundations.

Finally, Dr. Gracy noted that he was informed that the Faculty Senate wished to create a research advisory committee. Dr. Gracy stated that he did not believe this was necessary since the university already had a Research Advisory Committee comprised of representatives and alternates from each of the colleges. He did state that he would look at the list of members to see if they are also on the Faculty Senate. If so, that person could be the liaison between the RAC and the Faculty Senate.

VPAA ANNOUCEMENTS:

- **REGENTS' TASK FORCE ON EXCELLENCE & PRODUCTIVITY**

Dr. Frederick updated the Deans regarding the recent emergency data requests from UT System regarding the Regents' Task Force. He stated that besides reporting on the 17 recommendations from the Coordinating Board on cost efficiencies, the Regents' also wanted UTSA to name three areas that we could show productivity gains in the next 3 years.

Dr. Frederick did mention that in collecting the data, one item surface that does need attention—that is, posting mid-term grades. Dr. Frederick asked the Deans to emphasize to their faculty the importance of posting mid-term grades. If we notice a student struggling through this data then efforts can be made to assist the student.

- **COMPUTER SURPLUS**

Dr. Frederick stated that it had come to his attention that many departments were storing old computers with the hope that they would be replaced with newer models. Dr. Frederick informed the Deans that only computers that are actively being used would be up for replacement consideration. He asked the Deans to get word to the departments not to store unused computers, but to contact OIT to have them removed.

- **VOLUNTARY SEPARATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM (VSIP)**

Dr. Frederick mentioned that he had met with the committee charged with developing UTSA's VSIP. He also mentioned that he has a meeting with Dr. Dennis Haynes (Interim Dean of COPP) and Barbara Centeno (Associate VP-HR) to refine the draft policy. Dr. Frederick would then provide the draft to the Deans for their review and input. Right now the draft contains a Fall roll-out period with a 60 day window to apply for VSIP.

- **CYBERSECURITY FORUM—APRIL 29TH • 2:30 – 4:00 • BSE 2.102**

Dr. Frederick announced the Cyber Security Forum next week and encourage faculty to attend.

- **STUDENT COURSE COMMENTS**

Dr. Frederick advised the Deans that the reason student comments were removed from the on-line course survey this Spring was due to the concern that the comments would be accessible via Open Records. The concern is that someone could misuse or misinterpret the comments. Previous course evaluations contained hand-written comments by the students which were protected from Open Records under FERPA. Dr. Frederick stated that the Department of English has a good model to follow, but he would leave it up to the department/faculty member as to the process they want to use, be it at the end of the semester or while the on-line course survey is going on. Most Deans stated that their faculty and students would like to see the two run concurrently so that the students could remember why they gave their professor a certain rating.

Dr. de la Viña, Dean of the College of Business, also mentioned that her department chairs met with Barbara Miller, Director of the Teaching & Learning Center, to assist with teaching portfolios. Dr. de la Viña mentioned that for the short-term, the departments would not use class time for students to comment on their classes, but would provide a document which listed the course and section number to each student. Each department would then have a box where students could drop off their comments. The department chair would then sort all of the documents, keep them in a file for one year, while allowing the faculty member to review after grades had been posted, then turn the reviews over to the faculty member.

In the long run, Dr. de la Viña stated that Dr. Millis' suggestion was to hold focus groups for assistant professors in their 2nd and 4th year of teaching. Observation teams could be used in the 3rd year of service, since we already have a mandatory 3rd year review for assistant professors. This method could also be used when there are complaints by students. Dr. de la Viña mentioned they are in the early stages of developing this idea, as the above only refers to assistant professors, and they need a process for tenured and non-tenured faculty as well.