

## From the Faculty Senate



Report by  
**WANEEN SPIRDUSSO,**  
chair

**THE LAST MEETING** of the 1984-1985 Faculty Senate, in a style faithful to the image of Senates in general, included a flurry of activity in which several projects were concluded. President Flawn had requested the Senate to study and respond to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Teacher Preparation, and the response to this report from the College of Education. Both of these reports had been requested by him. The Senate's response to these two reports was to urge the College of Education to take prompt action on those recommendations with which the College of Education agreed and supported in its written response. In addition, the Senate will indicate to the president that those recommendations on which differences exist (between the Ad Hoc Committee's Report and the College of Education's Response), should be referred to the proposed Standing Committee on Teacher Education, and that the committee be asked to particularly address those discrepancies in its annual report to the president.

The *Committee on Academic Honesty* worked closely this year with the University Disciplinary Policies Committee. The Committee on Academic Honesty concerned itself with ways in which the faculty could reduce cheating, ways in which the faculty might be educated in the control of cheating and methods by which faculty could be apprised of responses to incidents of cheating or suspected cheating. A recommendation was passed and will be presented to the University Council that a University Council committee be constituted to examine and provide strong guidelines for improving communication between the faculty and personnel in the Dean of Students Office. Additionally, the Senate recommended that the committee explore ways to improve faculty confidence in the disciplinary procedures currently in place and the manner in which they are implemented in the Dean of Students Office. The Senate also will appoint in 1985-86 a committee to conduct a survey of informal procedures currently being used to serve as a basis for providing specific recommendations for faculty desiring to handle academic dishonesty problems on an individual basis. This report was compiled by Claire Weinstein (Chair), Lear Ashmore, Randal Charbeneau, Kathleen Conlin and George Kitto.

The report from the *Committee on the Use of University Facilities* (David Rabban, Chair; M.B. Baker, J. D. Gavenda and E.F. Sherman) proposed several recommendations, all of which will be submitted to the University Council for discussion. The first two recommendations involved modifying or eliminating some sections of the Regents' Rules that treat the issue of (1) restrictions on the content of speech on University property and (2) restrictions on meetings of organizations to which faculty belong. The third recommendation was to develop a policy regarding restrictions on access to University property by members of the general public. These recommendations will be discussed in full at the next University Council meeting.

The *Committee on the E346K Issue* (W.W. Spirduso, Chair; S. Bernau, R. McDaniel, S. Leslie, D. Rabban) received information relevant to the E346K waiver from the Department of English administration, several members of the English Department, and the vice president for academic affairs. The committee also studied the minutes of meetings on the topic held by several previous governing bodies. Based upon this information, four position statements were proposed by the committee and were approved by the Senate with minor changes. The first statement was a position on the process by which the decision to waive E346K was made. The Faculty Senate holds dear its major role in the governance of the institution in the area of general academic policy and welfare. The Senate's position was that even in emergency situations, the administration should consult with the faculty prior to making major academic decisions. The second statement encouraged the English Department to provide a solution to the problems raised by the waiver of E346K as expeditiously as possible. The third state-

ment encouraged the English Department to facilitate faculty involvement, not only within the department but also from faculty of other colleges in the solution to the curricular problems imposed by the temporary waiving of E346K. The fourth position statement passed by the Senate addressed issues that might be considered appropriate for discussion in the Faculty Senate. The complete text of these statements will be provided by the Senate in the near future.

The *Committee on the Use of the Course-Instructor Survey* (R. Shorey, Chair; G. Behague and E. Lundelius) presented an extremely comprehensive report in which they studied issues related to the Course-Instructor Survey. This report included a tabular summary of 48 departments' administrative uses of the course-instructor survey, including whether (a) participation by faculty was mandatory, (b) specific modes of implementation or encouragement were provided and (c) peer evaluations and/or class visitations occurred. The report also contained comments by the departments on other policies or practices relating to the survey. The report compiled by Dr. Behague included a record of participation by college: the number of instructors invited, the number surveyed, and the per cent of the total instructors represented by each of these. A study of the usage of the surveys since 1967 revealed increases or decreases of use of the survey from 1967 to 1984. The average per cent of answer sheets returned per class, by course level, and by class size is also available in the report. The report concluded with five findings/recommendations, as follows:

(1) There is no consistency in the way administrators at college and departmental levels either require or utilize the results of the CIS. Administrators should remain aware of the limited usefulness of a single method of evaluation and should expand their evaluative efforts.

(2) The CIS as currently administered by faculty is accomplishing its purpose in providing feedback to help instructors improve their teaching. The process and the instrument will

always need up-dating and fine-tuning, of course, but procedures for implementing change appear to be adequate.

(3) Participation rates in the CIS average 50-80 per cent of students within participating classes. Differences between colleges and departments reflect the variations in emphasis and use.

(4) Faculty members should be aware of administrative efforts to establish an outside-of-class procedure for obtaining student evaluations of all courses. Among the issues related to such a procedure are the following:

a) The information would be available to administrators, students, media and anyone requesting it.

b) The procedure would not require the permission of the faculty member.

(5) Faculty members should be made more aware that the Texas Open Records Act applies only to the computer-printed summaries of the CIS responses and not to the written comments made by individual students.

I conclude my tenure as chair of the Faculty Senate in the traditional way by expressing my gratitude to all of those on the Senate who invested that which is most precious to all of us — our time — in the generally thankless work of the Senate. Especially I wish to thank Simon Bernau, secretary of the Senate, for keeping all of us from straying too far from the path toward progress, and Reuben McDaniel, vice chair, who insisted that we keep our eyes focussed upward while keeping our feet planted sturdily in reality. The Faculty Senate accomplished several projects this year, but the greatest hope that we had is that it was seen by both the administration and the faculty as a viable bi-directional channel through which communication between these two groups may readily occur. The 1985-1986 Senate has placed its confidence in Reuben McDaniel as the chair, David Bourell as the vice chair, and RoseAnn Shorey as the secretary. I'm certain that they will find, as did I, their professional lives enriched by the experience.