Final Report, May 11, 2006

Faculty Senate Student Relations Committee

Members: David Bedford, Joni Aker, Chuck LaMendola, Becky Taylor, Steve Levering, Carol Thompson, Jack Jones, John Lovett (FSEC liaison) and Keith Whitworth (chair)

Specific Committee Charges AY 2005-2006

1. Continue work with the Student Government Association on the issues of the student honor code and academic integrity.

The SRC met with TCU students Ambika Sharma and Richard Ritby regarding the issues of the student honor code and academic integrity. The intent of the students was to meet to discuss the issues and to determine the proper procedures for bringing the issue to the Faculty Senate. The students stated that Trevor Heaney, the new Student Government Association president, had agreed to issue a task force concentrating on writing a TCU-specific Honor Code, and getting it approved by the students and the faculty.

2. Continue discussion with Student Government Association regarding advising.

The SRC did not address this issue due to a lack of focus by the SGA on this issue.

3. Continue to monitor proposed changes to TCU’s academic calendar.

The SRC monitored the proposed changes to the academic calendar and there were no updates to the proposed changes.

4. Seek ways to further integrate the TCU academic mission into the First-Year Experience.

The SRC spent the majority of our resources addressing this charge. The committee met with Carrie Zimmerman, Director of TCU First-Year Experience, and she provided a written analysis (see attachment) of the academic emphasis of orientation. She stated she is extremely open to more faculty involvement in the first-year experience of TCU students. She recognized two specific hindrances to faculty involvement; 1) the current tenure system does not reward faculty involvement and 2) the majority of orientation occurs in the summer or the weekend prior to the first week of classes. Ms. Zimmerman stated that there is a perception that orientation is all “play time” and does not focus enough on academics. We discussed potential means to involve more faculty by providing additional incentives. Additional discussions will be held in the Fall of 2006 to explore further means to integrate the TCU academic missions into the First-Year Experience.
A specific idea of how to transform the Chancellor’s Assembly emerged from the discussion. The Assembly occurs the Sunday night prior to the first week of classes. Ideas were discussed as to how to incorporate ritual, tradition, and ceremony with faculty involvement. A follow-up meeting was held with Sherri Reynolds, Director of School of Education Graduate Studies to discuss how she incorporates ritual, tradition, and ceremony within their graduate program opening ceremony. The meeting spurred a variety of new ideas and Ms. Zimmerman followed up with a meeting with Provost Donovan. In addition, the Chancellor was informed of the new ideas to transform the Chancellor’s Assembly into a more meaningful event and he expressed support of the new ideas. The culmination of the discussions was that a decision was made to transform the Assembly for the Fall of 2006. For the record, additional ideas about the proposed changes to the Chancellor’s Assembly came from discussions with Blaise Ferrandino (FSEC).

5. **SRC member to attend Student Government Association weekly meetings.**

Committee members from SRC attended the Student Government Association meetings on a weekly basis in order to serve as a Faculty Senate liaison.

6. **Develop and co-host TCU Joint Assembly.**

The TCU Joint Assembly was held on October 11th, 2005 and was titled, *Successful Graduation: Code Word – “Retention”*. Normally, the Joint Assembly is held in the Spring semester but due to the numerous discussions on the topic of retention being held across the TCU campus, the SRC decided to have it earlier to further the campus-wide discussions. The goals of the Joint Assembly were to: 1) determine perceptions of why students return or do not return to TCU 2) inform audience of research related to student retention 3) ask for suggestions on what faculty, staff, and students can do to improve “successful graduation” Dr. Cathy Coghlan presented results of research pertaining to student retention. (See attachments)

7. **SRC to address miscellaneous issues pertaining to student relations as needed.**

SRC met with TCU SGA members Brian Andrew and Torri Hutchens to discuss their exploratory research and the potential implementation of a January term. The students will continue researching the concept and request to present another report to the SRC in the Fall of 2006. (See attachment).

8. **Explore honoring one or more high school teachers during graduation ceremony.**

The SRC did not focus on this charge and recommends addressing the issue during the Fall of 2006.