

Stephen F. Austin State University
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
Meeting No. 207
November 4, 1990

1. Chairperson K. Mace called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. in the Victory/Lumberjack Room of the University Center.
2. Approval of Minutes
 - * The minutes of Meeting No. 206 were approved with the following correction: DALLAS instead of AUSTIN (page 1).
3. Chairperson's Report
 - * Chairperson Mace reported on the Board of Regents meeting and his meeting with President Bowen. The meetings included the following items:
 - ~~Chairperson Mace~~ ^{President Bowen} requested that members of the Board of Regents be present at graduation, whenever possible.
 - Inauguration of President Bowen will be in April, 1991.
 - ~~Chairperson Mace~~ ^{President Bowen} explained the need for additional faculty development leaves and requested that the Board of Regents look into expanding the program.
 - President Bowen indicated that he views SFA as a viable alternative to universities in other areas; we should pursue means of presenting SFA as an alternative to universities in the Dallas and Houston areas.
 - Salaries at SFA are low compared with similar institutions.
 - A committee has been appointed to make recommendations for computer registration.
 - Areas of budgetary expenditure will be examined.
 - President Bowen recognizes the need to review curriculum and make necessary changes.
 - President Bowen will initiate a plan to investigate procedures for merit, promotion, and tenure; the Faculty Senate will have a role in the process.
 - President Bowen would like to see increased application of technology in the classroom.
 - * Chairperson Mace and Chair-Elect F. Smith invited President Bowen to attend Faculty Senate meetings. President Bowen expressed a desire to attend, if his schedule permits. He requested a copy of the Faculty Senate schedule of meetings for the Spring semester.
 - * Chairperson Mace presented a summary of the October CoFGO meeting.
 - The University of Houston Board of Regents have re-established salary for the Clear Lake faculty member who was dismissed.
 - All universities in the Houston area have supported the Clear Lake faculty.
 - The Clear Lake Faculty Senate reprimanded the President for failure to exercise appropriate oversight.
 - Sample forms used at various institutions for student evaluation of faculty were distributed at the CoFGO meeting. Chairperson Mace has copies of the forms; copies may be obtained from him.
 - CoFGO is interested in getting faculty to serve on Coordinating Board advisory committees; forms to volunteer are available from K. Mace.
 - Faculty committee reports for the TASP test were ignored. It appears that "token faculty" were used on some committees.

4. Responses to Remarks in Senate Meeting No. 206 Concerning the University Insurance Program

- * Letter from Dr. Patricia Russell, Member of the University Insurance Committee: Dr. Russell requested that her letter responding to Senator Arscott's remarks be included in the Senate record. [See Attachment I]
- * Summary of Dr. Russell's letter:
 - It was reported in the Faculty Senate minutes of Meeting No. 205 that Senator W. Arscott was unable to get "any answers from anyone who served on the Insurance Committee."
 - No Insurance Committee member was ever contacted by Mr. Arscott.
 - The members of the Insurance Committee do not wish to be seen as non-responsive. Members welcome questions from faculty; and the committee Chair, Dr. Lynn Solomon, has already addressed the Senate by invitation.
- * Remarks by Dr. Lynn Solomon, Chairman, University Insurance Committee: Dr. Solomon was invited by Chairperson Mace to address the Senate concerning the background of the insurance program and the basis for decisions that were made.
- * Summary of Dr. Solomon's presentation:
 - Last fall, we were going through the trauma of a huge increase in the premiums for health care coverage. SFA employees were unhappy, and many of our lower-paid people were forced to drop their family coverage because they could no longer afford the high premiums.
 - We are not alone in having to make difficult decisions in addressing the cost of health care.
 - The State Legislature mandates how much coverage we must offer; but it does not appropriate enough money to cover the costs, and holds us responsible. Because this is an impossible task, the University Insurance Committee asked for help from professional consultants. Coopers and Lybrand was selected through the bidding process.
 - Coopers and Lybrand representatives visited the campus a number of times to assist in setting up the insurance plan. Each time they came, they met with a representative of each of the local hospitals except for one time when no one was available from Medical Center Hospital.
 - Medical Center had the same opportunities and was given the same information as Memorial Hospital.
 - We sent both hospitals a comprehensive outline of our plan and two bid forms. Memorial Hospital accepted our schedule and Medical Center Hospital ignored all our efforts to set up a rate schedule. They bid Blue Cross rates plus the possibility of a 10 percent (10%) increase in November.
 - The members of the Insurance Committee had been unanimous in the goal of including both hospitals in the SFA plan. We had never considered establishing a preferred hospital until after these bids were received. Members of the committee were in a state of shock when they came to the meeting to consider the bids. Coopers and Lybrand used a computer program that would enable us to determine the effect of any option we suggested. The costs would have been prohibitive to employees for SFA to utilize both plans.
 - Your representatives on the committee covered the pros and cons of each alternative very effectively. We explored every option that we could in an effort to reach a viable solution. This was not a decision that was made lightly. After considering all the variables and the local political implications, the committee voted to accept both bids but to implement the limits in the SFA plan. This meant that Memorial would be the only participant in the SFA plan. We could not ask our colleagues to subsidize employees who chose Medical Center.
 - It is not unusual to have a preferred provider. However, the Insurance Committee would have been receptive if Medical Center had made even the slightest effort to cooperate.
 - You have information in your Faculty Senate minutes from the Coopers and Lybrand report. You chose to look at it from one perspective, but the committee used it and a volume of other

information which lends itself to a slightly different interpretation. The information in your minutes suggests that Medical Center is very efficient in providing medical care. We have additional information which helps one better understand those numbers. The question from the Insurance Committee is, if Medical Center has the ability to provide this care at competitive rates, why did they choose not to cooperate in developing our plan?

- Medical Center has built an excellent staff and provides very efficient care. It is an important part of our community. However, there is one item that I need to share with you concerning the use of Medical Center Hospital. One of our employees went in for an operation and was told that payment of the bill would have to be personally guaranteed. Medical Center and all other hospitals bill at retail rates, not at the Blue Cross insurance rate prices. That means that under any plan, the patient is going to get a bill for an amount far greater than the insurance rate. This practice will generate confusion concerning the letter which Medical Center sent to our employees.
- If we can develop a plan for the whole community that allows everyone to afford health care, we will all be better off and cost will not have to be borne just by those people who can now afford insurance. We have begun something in Nacogdoches that could be part of a health care revolution.
- I don't mind answering questions and letting people vent their frustrations, but I got upset when you printed an unfounded attack on my colleagues who serve on the University Insurance Committee. Not one member of the committee has been contacted by the complaining senator who is quoted as saying he could not get answers from anyone who served on the Insurance Committee. That statement is not true and reflects on seven people who do not deserve that type of criticism.

* Responses to Dr. Solomon's presentation:

- Senator W. Arscott: He was making a point about loyalty to administration in his statement. He did not ask the Insurance Committee for information, and he stands corrected. But the basic facts are correct. He is aware this was a gutsy decision. The point was that one-fourth to one-half of SFA employees use doctors who practice exclusively at Medical Center. We were told at an insurance meeting to "educate your doctors." He feels this places a terrible burden on the patient.
- Senator K. Price: He has not received much detailed information about how the insurance plan would work, especially if an employee were out of state. Dr. Solomon indicated that the Blue Cross procedures would be used. Very little has been changed.
- Chairperson K. Mace: Sen. Barrientos (Austin) indicated that the State Legislature will be taking up the issue. Proposals that may be considered include HMOs or placing all employees in an insurance pool.

5. Treasurer's Report

- * Treasurer C. Crocker distributed an itemized statement of Faculty Senate receipts and disbursements as of November 7, 1990.

Appropriations Total	\$4,359.00
Expenditures	
Bookstore	\$ 16.49
Speed Orders	\$ 3.94
Telephone	\$ 6.00
Steno	\$ 82.30
Postage	\$ 2.66
Box Rent	\$ 30.00
Payroll	\$ 114.00
Balance	\$4,103.61

6. Secretary's Report

- * Secretary M. Carns requested that Senators who submit reports for duplication include a written request indicating the number of copies needed.

7. Committee Reports

* Faculty Welfare Committee (J. Seaton, Chair)

- Senator Seaton reported on merit and promotion procedure. A letter will be sent to the faculty soon.
- Senator Seaton reported on four proposals that will be submitted for a vote of the Senate at the next meeting:
 - Resolution 1: It is moved that a campus-wide committee be established to develop a comprehensive smoking policy for the University.
 - Resolution 2: It is moved that student service, student center, and general fees be waived for faculty and staff members enrolled in courses at SFASU.
 - Resolution 3: It is moved that:
 1. The evaluation form used by the students include a page for written comments by the students.
 2. The faculty committee, which was to be appointed to evaluate the student evaluation forms, be appointed immediately in order to verify the reliability and validity of the instrument.
 3. Until such steps are taken, the evaluation forms should not be used in any manner that will have a bearing on the faculty member's merit evaluation.
 4. The university should publish its policy on the use of student evaluations in the Policy and Procedures Manual.
 - Resolution 4: It is moved that the calendar currently kept by the University News Service be entered into the campus computer so that it may be accessed at terminals in departmental and other offices. Also, provision could be made for input from the various offices via the computer.

* Election Committee (S. Weems, Chair)

- Senator Weems reported that the ballot for the Grievance Panel is in the mail. Election results will be reported at the next Senate meeting.
- A replacement must be selected for Senator Ruthstrom, who is no longer on the faculty. The Senate Constitution permits the Senate to elect replacements. The committee recommends that Dr. Libbyrose Clark, the runner-up for Dr. Ruthstrom's position in the last Senate election, be appointed. Action taken: Appointment approved.

8. New Business

- * Senator M. Carns moved that the Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate be amended to replace the word "chair" with "chairperson" in each of the following provisions:
 - Article 2, Paragraph [2]
 - Article 3, Section A
 - Article 3, Section B, Paragraphs [1], [2]
 - Article 3, Section C, Paragraph [1]
 - Article 3, Section E

Article 4, Paragraphs [1], [3], [4], [5], [6]

Article 5, Paragraphs [2], [3]

Explanation: The Faculty Senate Constitution refers to the "Chairperson" of the Faculty Senate. These changes would provide uniformity of language for the Standing Rules and the Constitution.

Seconded by Senator B. Johnson.

Motion passed.

- * Senator B. Johnson moved that the Faculty Senate tell the administration we do not want the use of student evaluation of faculty used for merit, promotion, and tenure.

Seconded by Senator J. Frye

General discussion: Following is a summary of statements/questions raised by various senators (all are individual comments and not group action):

- The proposal is in opposition to administrative use of evaluations and does not refer to voluntary use of student evaluations of faculty.
- The instrument currently in use is faulty; it does not make provision for written comments.
- Evaluations by first-year students are particularly questionable; they may not have the proper experience or frame of reference for evaluation of faculty.
- There is potential for misuse; teachers may sacrifice standards for popularity.
- It is demeaning to a professional to pander to students for merit, tenure, or promotion.
- The instrument lends itself to a numerical ranking of faculty. When used by (former Vice President) John T. Lewis, this system divided the faculty.
- The instrument would allow administrators to use the data as they wish.
- Evaluation is linked to the merit question, which the Senate has just decided it will study.
- Evaluation of faculty must be tied to evaluation of Deans and other administrators.

Vote was by Show of Hands:

17 For

0 Opposed

4 Abstentions

Motion passed.

- * Senator S. Weems, Chair of the Election Committee, was authorized to send ballots to the faculty to vote on the proposed amendments to the Faculty Senate Constitution that were approved by the Senate at Meeting No. 206.

9. New Business

- * Senator B. Johnson, Chair of the newly-created University Traffic Committee, reported that he has been in contact with President Bowen concerning functions and procedures. The committee has not yet met.

10. Comments from Ex Officio Members

- * Summary of Vice President Reese's Remarks:
 - The inauguration of President Bowen will be during the first or second weeks of April, 1991, and will probably be toward the end of the second week. It is tentatively planned as a two-day event.
 - Responses to the Southern Association were mailed more than a month ago. We had been assured we would receive a reply within two weeks if there were any major problems; no

correspondence has been received.

- Dr. Reese thinks the evaluation form passed by the Faculty Senate (referred to above) was not signed by President Johnson. President Johnson had decided not to do anything about the evaluations at that time because of the budget crunch.
- Some departments and faculty are using the evaluations. Validity cannot be measured for at least two or three semesters. Use of evaluations will be discussed at the next Dean's Meeting.

11. The meeting was adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

ABSENCES:

Fred Avant (excused)
Ernest B. Ledger

VISITORS:

James Reese (VPAA, Ex Officio)
Lisa DeSantis (Student Government)
Doug McMillan (History)
E. Deanne Malpass (History)
Jacquie Sundeen (Sentinel reporter)
Lynnette K. Solomon (Economics & Finance)


Mary L. Carns, Secretary 1990-91

ATTACHMENT I

Stephen F. Austin State University

P.O. Box 13007, SFA Station • (409) 568-2101
Nacogdoches, Texas 75962-3007

October 11, 1990



Department of
English and Philosophy

Dr. Kenneth Mace
President, Faculty Senate
Box 6176
Campus

Dear Dr. Mace:

I am instructed by the members of the University Insurance Committee to bring the following matter to the attention of the Faculty Senate.

In the minutes of Meeting No. 205, September 12, 1990, it was reported that Mr. William Arscott, of the Department of Art, was unable to get "any answers from anyone who served on the Insurance Committee." (6) For the record, no Insurance Committee member, including Dr. Solomon, the Chair, was ever contacted by Mr. Arscott. No messages were received that he was attempting to contact any one of us. It is certainly difficult to get answers from people if one never contacts them to ask the questions one wants answered.

The members of the University Insurance Committee certainly do not wish to be seen as non-responsive, especially in a document that has been circulated widely across campus. In fact, we have not been asked to be responsive by Mr. Arscott. Dr. Solomon has already addressed the Senate by invitation. She will do so again when asked. Other members welcome questions from faculty, and we have, indeed, answered many questions from both faculty and staff members about the recent changes. We would appreciate our response to Mr. Arscott's comments being recorded in the next set of Faculty Senate minutes.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours respectfully,

Patricia R. Russell
Acting Secretary
University Insurance Committee