

Stephen F. Austin State University

**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
November 13, 1996 Meeting #261**

The meeting was called to order by John Dahmus, Chair. The following senators were absent: Blalock (excused), Crouch (excused), Gotti, Kronrad (excused), and Stewart.

The minutes from meeting #260 were approved as written.

REMARKS FROM PRESIDENT ANGEL:

President Angel reminded the senators that Robert Atwell, former President of the American Council on Education in America, would be the third celebrity speaker. The event will take place on November 20, 1996 and he encouraged all faculty to attend.

Angel stated that after the dialogue at the state level regarding university athletics, institutions were taking various approaches. He shared that he has two specific plans for SFA. The plans are to engage in active fund-raising efforts to support athletics and to embark on a phase-in project to increase gate receipts beginning in the fall of 1998. The average gate receipt (ticket price) at SFA is between \$6-\$7 while the average in our conference is \$9-\$12. The gate receipts will be increased over the next several years for both football and basketball funds for athletics.

Celebrity speaker Zemsky mentioned a medallion university and the need to have a sense of being distinctive by offering a very excellent academic package. Angel believes that now is the right time to increase the academic reputation of SFA. A number of factors are converging to make it a possibility. SFA 98 will be celebrated in the Fall of 1998. In the spring, SFA should begin developing the next long range plan which should include goals relating to academic reputation. Research conducted shows that students will choose school for their academic reputation. SFA has difficulty competing with Texas University and A & M University, but SFA has the third highest graduation rate in the state. A telephone follow-up study of student admitted to SFA, but who did not elect to attend the university, found that two-thirds of the students went to other four-year universities rather than community colleges. To accomplish the goal of increasing the academic reputation, a well thought out plan will have to be developed to move to a different plateau over the next several years.

Angel is ready to initiate efforts to explore moving the academic reputation forward. During the next five-year planning cycle, goals and aspirations will be identified and in place by Fall 1998-99 and the entire process should be accomplished by the year 2003. Angel invited the Faculty Senate to take initiative and begin dialogue to aggressively pursue the challenge. He expects that a large contingency of the campus including students, faculty, and administration will want to buy into the plan.

Angel was asked if there were any steps being taken to control athletic costs. He replied that the costs are not going up except in relation to rising tuition and fees, which have an impact on every scholarship. He stated that the university now spends a smaller portion of the overall budget on athletics than when he came to SFA in 1992. Athletic costs have been cut by having only one athletic director and cutting men's baseball when women's soccer was added.

During the same time, the university moved to increase academic scholarships. In 1992, SFA had approximately a dozen Presidential Academic Scholarships funded by the university. Today, 350 students receive university academic scholarships and Angel anticipates that over the next few years this number could reach 500-600 students.

Chair Dahmus asked if there was a possibility of using auxiliary funds for faculty salaries. Angel replied that the typical pattern was to spend as one has been spending. If the auxiliary funds are

to be spent on something different, the auxiliary funds would have to be increased and the Board of Regents would have to make those decisions. He stated that the issue is raising faculty salaries and, as long as they are being raised, it doesn't matter about the source of the funds.

Senator Rushing stated that parents are concerned about the cost of fees and want clarification about what the fees cover. Angel believes that both students and parents are really concerned about the bottom-line costs. Some institutions, such as the University of Texas, Texas A & M, and Texas Tech, have raised their fees to the maximum allowed by the legislature, but they will be full regardless of price. The push to remove the cap on tuition is coming from these larger institutions that have reached their maximum and have no where to go to increase revenue. Sam Houston is charging \$80 a semester less than SFA, but most institutions charge more; therefore, SFA is still competitive in cost.

McCune asked about using adjunct faculty rather than full-time tenured/tenure-track faculty to teach during the summer as a cost-saving measure. Angel responded that those decisions are made by the Deans and Chairs and he has not encouraged or seen a massive move in that direction. To support his view, he noted that SFA has the sixth highest portion of tenured/tenure-track faculty in the state. Further, Angel stated that if the new performance measures concerning tenured/tenure-track faculty in the classroom passes, SFA would stand to gain revenue.

McDonald asked Angel to comment on the recent elections. Angel stated that he is prepared to work with whomever is elected. He has been in contact with Drew Nixon and Wayne Christian, both SFA graduates, and they care about the university. Angel has had lunch with Representative Jim McReynolds, a former teacher at SFA, and McReynolds is aware of the issues facing SFA.

OFFICERS' REPORTS:

Chair Dahmus made two new committee assignments. They are:

Professional Welfare I -- Stipends for Summer School
Elections Committee -- Possible Amendment to the Standing Rules

Dahmus and McDonald met with President Angel and Vice President Ashley. The academic tenure question came up and Dr. Angel would like to go to the legislature and defend tenure. Angel feels that the most understandable argument would be examples where the loss/absence of tenure would hurt or have an adverse affect on citizens of Texas. Any examples should be e-mailed to Dahmus who will compile them for Dr. Angel.

Expenditures of auxiliary funds on athletics was brought up and clarification was sought. Angel referred Dahmus to Rowland Smith and Danny Gallant for specific details.

At the CoFGO meeting, the biggest issue was post-tenure review. Faculty of the University of Texas and the Texas A&M systems presented position papers on acceptable post-tenure review proposals. One of the proposals was to have a post-tenure review every five years similar to the tenure application, but many felt that this was a waste of time. Dahmus hopes that SFA can avoid this type of process if individual universities are allowed to have their own policy with approval of the Board of Regents.

An opportunity exists for a faculty member to be a Coordinating Board Fellow and spend two weeks in Austin, Texas. Any interested faculty should contact Dr. Dahmus for additional details and an application form. CoFGO has a \$500 scholarship to assist with expenses.

Dahmus reported that the Academic Affairs Council recommended that the application fees for international students be raised from \$25 to \$50 due to the cost of processing the application. He reported that an academic program review policy and a proposal to have reduced time for faculty

who teach honor contract courses (similar to independent studies) were referred to a committee. Progress is being made on the campus directory.

The campus wide information system is being transferred from the Office of Instructional Technology to the Steen Library effective January 1, 1997. The library, in the business of management and organization of information, will have the authority to coordinate the development of the campus wide information system and formulate policy for the entire university. The library director will develop a program statement for dissemination. In the future, policies and procedures may be ultimately found on electronic media rather than in a paper version. Vice President Ashley expressed concern about developing a schedule for reviewing policies at least every five years.

Dual faculty lines will return at the December graduation ceremony; Senator Kay Bailey Hutcheson will be the speaker.

At the CoFGO meeting, Dr. Jeff Pearly, President of AAUP, pointed out that four states, Arizona, Florida, Minnesota, and Texas, are leading the way in post-tenure re-evaluation. Since twenty-six states are involved in some form of post-tenure review, this will be an issue in the university communities and legislatures. The most consistent appeal by faculty and experts brought into campus to explore post-tenure review has been that post-tenure review be allowed to reside in the university itself.

McDonald reported on the October 24th meeting of the Graduate Council. Dr. Jeffery has been recruiting on at least 11 campuses, developing a Web Site, and finalizing the Graduate Handbook.

Treasurer Rushing reported that \$1,277 of the current budget was encumbered primarily for student wages; \$557.12 was disbursed for expenses, leaving a balance of \$2,631.87.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Academic Affairs Committee:

Senator Shows summarized information printed in the September 15, 1996 issue of U.S. News and World Report which had picked up data from western colleges and universities (Texas to the Pacific), second tier, of which SFA is one of 27 universities compared. The following facts were reported for SFA:

- 42% graduation rate
- 40% of entering freshmen graduate
- 38% of the students came from the top 25% of their graduating class
- 13% of the students came from the top 10% of their graduating class
- 26% of the students came from 11-25% of their graduating class

In quality of students attracted, SFA had the lowest rating of the 27 universities and colleges compared in the study. However, SFA had a 62% freshmen retention rate which was the mean score for the group. The Academic Affairs Committee feels that academic standards are a vital issue and need to be raised.

Results from the faculty survey indicated that 90.6% of the faculty were concerned about academic scholarships. The Academic Affairs Committee found significant changes in the number of academic scholarships in the last three years. A new program allows a student graduating in the top 10% of their graduating class to apply for a renewable scholarship. The committee found it difficult to get an accurate count because scholarships are classified differently - band corporate, departmental, alumni, state money, etc. However in the last three years, at least 350 academic scholarships have been added.

Telephone registration and advising concerns had been addressed. Beginning Spring '97, students on probation must be advised and given a pin number before they can register. A department, working with Dennis Jones, can have the option of requiring all students to be advised prior to registration.

Administrative & Finance:

The committee submitted a draft resolution in support of recommendations by the Texas State House Higher Education Committee regarding student fees and athletic expenditures for consideration by the Faculty Senate. After studying the SFA budget, a spread-sheet was developed by the committee to show a comparison of expenses; a copy was attached to the draft resolution for review.

Elections:

The Elections Committee submitted a proposed amendment regarding the definition of voting members. The proposed amendment would change Article 1 Section 3 of the Faculty Senate Constitution to define "voting members of the faculty" as tenured or tenure-track faculty and professional librarians employed full time by the University excluding administrators above the departmental level. Senator Dumesnil moved that the amendment be approved; Senator McDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The amendment will be voted on by the faculty, and if approved by the faculty, the amendment will be sent to President Angel for his approval.

Faculty Government and Involvement:

The committee is reviewing the grievance and appeals policy and studying the search policies and procedures for deans, chairs, and other positions. The committee solicited comments, questions, and concerns relating to either issue.

Professional Welfare I:

The Professional Welfare I Committee presented a progress report on monitoring administrative response to the Faculty Senate resolution of April 10, 1996, about developing a four-year plan to increase faculty salaries. As of October 14, 1996, Dr. Angel's response to the resolution was that there will be no four-year plan formulated as requested in the resolution. Dr. Angel explained that the university has no way to know ahead of time what resources will be given to the university; there is no guaranteed revenue; therefore, no plan could be formulated. Angel did discuss the matter with the Board of Regents before making his decision. President Angel's response was via a quote printed in The Pine Log, which read: "No response was sent because the board and administration have no way to guarantee such a plan because of the 'volatile' state funding situation."

It was suggested that it was appropriate for the Faculty Senate to continue to annually update the salary comparison chart that was attached to the resolution on faculty salaries. The chart would allow the tracking of improvement or lack of progress in raising faculty salaries. Chair Dahmus assigned the responsibility of updating the salary spreadsheet to the Administration and Finance Committee.

Simmons moved that the meeting be adjourned; Dumesnil seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Janie Kenner, Secretary