

Stephen F. Austin State University

**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
February 12, 1997 Meeting #263**

Faculty Senate meeting #263 was called to order by John Dahmus, Chair. The following senators were absent: Carbajal (excused), Crouch (excused), Gotti, Human, Kronrad (excused), McCune, and McDonald (excused).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dahmus, as requested by Angel, prepared responses for the defense of tenure and mailed the letter to Angel in mid-December. In addition, Dahmus mailed a letter defending tenure and expressing concerns about the post-tenure review to Senator Bivins and forwarded a copy of the letter to Ron Adkinson, Chairman of the SFA Board of Regents.

The Faculty Senate Resolution in Support of Recommendations by the Texas State House Higher Education Committee Regarding Student Fees and Athletic Expenditures was mailed to members of the Board of Regents and Dr. Angel before Christmas. No formal response was received. Also, copies of the above resolution were mailed to Senator Steve Ogden, Representative Irma Rangel, Senator Drew Nixon, Representative Wayne Christian, and Representative James McReynolds.

Dr. Angel approved the constitutional amendment clarifying "voting member" and the approved amendment will be written into the Faculty Senate Constitution.

Dahmus attended the mid-January meeting of the SFA Board of Regents held in Austin, Texas, and he gave a brief report.

Dahmus corresponded with Yvette Clark, SFA General Counsel, expressing concern that evaluations of administrators were not anonymous. Clark responded that state law requires all evaluations of everyone be open, and therefore, are non-confidential. However, lack of anonymity is a matter of SFA policy.

Dr. John Goodall, School of Fine Arts, has resigned from the Faculty Senate. The Chairs in the School of Fine Arts were requested to submit names of volunteers to serve out his unexpired term.

Dr. Ashley is sending a copy of the Core Curriculum Committee recommendations, along with information on SB 148, to all faculty members. Ashley's approach is to wait until the legislature completes its work before continuing to work locally. The SB 148 proposes that, "institutions of higher education adopt a core curriculum of no less than 42 semester hours." Dr. Ashley said that any comments or suggestions concerning the core curriculum should appropriately be sent through his/her dean. Ashley expects to take recommendations to the President and Board of Regents perhaps at the July meeting with projected implementation in the 1998-1999 school year.

The Doctorate in Educational Leadership was approved contingent on special item funding. The program is expected to be in place by Fall 1997.

The following items had been approved by the Academic Affairs Council:

- a. Master of Music Degree Programs in Performance and Conducting
- b. Degree requirements - College of Business
- c. Departmental name change - College of Business
- d. Revision of Accounting Degree

Chair-elect McDonald attended the Graduate Council meeting. Reported were two items of interest:

- a. No changes in how members will be elected to the Graduate Council
- b. Dr. Clark, Math, developed a release form for graduating seniors to sign which allows departments to exchange potential student lists with other campuses. This form was approved by SFA legal counsel.

Marianne May, Faculty Senate student worker, reported on the progress of establishing a Faculty Senate web page. The web page will include meeting dates, lists of committees, Faculty Senate Constitution, standing rules and directory of Senators. The format is still evolving and suggestions are welcomed.

Treasurer Rushing reported a balance of \$1,874.61 in the Faculty Senate account. Rushing is investigating the purchase of a new tape recorder for Senate use.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic Affairs Committee:

The Academic Affairs Committee continues to address issues that would help raise academic standards. An issue brought to the attention of the committee is the high number of absentee students in class and how it impacts the performance and grades of those students. Some students attend class only on test days while others miss as much as 20-40 percent of the class time. If students are not present in class, the end result is poor performance or even failure. In 1994, the Faculty Senate voted not to recommend removal of students from the roll after three weeks of absences. However, the Academic Affairs Committee would like to examine the issue again. Any comments or concerns about a mandatory attendance policy should be forwarded to Senator Shows or any member of the Academic Affairs Committee.

Administration and Finance Committee:

The Administration and Finance Committee had no official report. Senator Rushing announced that Higher Education & National Affairs, a newsletter of the American Council of Education, is available in the Steen Library.

Election Committee:

The Election Committee will be able to obtain a list of qualified voting faculty members from the Office of Institutional Research subsequent to the election process. Ballots will be addressed and mailed to eligible voters.

Faculty Government and Involvement Committee:

Senator Codispoti will represent the Faculty Senate at the Western Faculty Governance Alliance in Houston, Texas.

Professional Welfare I Committee:

The Professional Welfare I Committee had informal reports on two issues: academic freedom policy and the study of call (adjunct) faculty/faculty hiring policies.

Current statements on academic freedom and academic responsibility as stated in the Faculty Handbook (VI - 1) were reviewed and studied. In addition, similar policies at other universities were studied. The committee members concluded that the current statement is a strong and appropriate statement; therefore, no change in the academic freedom and academic responsibility is recommended.

In the issue of call (adjunct) faculty and faculty hiring procedures (Index E - 24A), the committee found that the situation is very different depending on the college. All of the issues could be dealt with by having well thought out procedures and strong faculty involvement in determining the department's faculty resources and its actual instructional needs. The committee suggested that their recommendations be integrated into the forthcoming recommendations from the Faculty Government & Involvement Committee rather than in the form of a resolution. Discussion followed.

Dahmus distributed a report on post-tenure review. In the one-page report, two alternatives including brief explanations were presented for consideration. Dahmus encouraged the Senators to share the information and solicit input from the faculty. Dahmus felt that the issue is too big for the Faculty Senate; the entire faculty should be involved. Results from the state legislature may determine the direction or reaction to post-tenure review, but that faculty should be in the design process. Discussion ensued.

Dahmus pointed out that, for the third time in two years, some faculty and teaching assistants were paid late. Dr. Ashley was not aware of the incident and, when provided with specific names and details, will look into the problem.

OLD BUSINESS

The Faculty Government and Involvement Committee had asked for feedback concerning the Faculty Search Policy (Index E-24A), Departmental Administration (Index E-10A), and the procedure for Academic Complaints by Students. No comments or information was received; however, several Senators had brought faculty suggestions and information to the meeting. The new information will be reviewed by the committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Ashley encouraged all faculty to attend the ACE Project Team Forum scheduled for Tuesday, February 18, 1997. The forum will meet in Regent's Suite B and will provide an opportunity for informal interchange in a roundtable format. Issues and ways that higher education and SFA are being impacted by the external environment and the need for changes will be the focus of the forum..

ADJOURNMENT

Choate moved that the meeting be adjourned; Moore seconded the motion. The motion carried; the meeting was adjourned.

Janie Kenner, *Secretary*