

Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2000 Meeting #295
(Subject to Approval at October Meeting)

I. CALLED TO ORDER by Chair Kandy Stahl at 2:30 PM

Absent:

S. Spall (excused; faculty obligation)

Colin Starr was elected secretary to the Faculty Senate.

II. General Announcements

Committee assignments for senators were listed in folders distributed to senators' seats prior to the meeting.

Kandy Stahl said that she would try to see that a faculty-wide e-mail list is prepared.

Showcase Saturday is to be Saturday, November 4 from 12:00 to 3:00 this year.

The Presidential Search Committee was to meet with the candidates September 10-12 in Houston and announce the up-to-five finalists for the position on Monday, September 18.

III. Approval/Correction of minutes of Meetings #293 & #294 (May 2000)

Senator Sullivan requested that the minutes of meeting #293 be amended to include a comment on raising faculty salaries to the level of the lowest paid coach. Motion carried, subject to that comment not appearing in the minutes of meeting #292.

IV. Officers' Reports

Chair:

Our developmental courses will need to be accredited through NADE by 2005. Our current courses are not "developmental", but "remedial". Academic Affairs is working on the specifics. Should we offer incentives for developmental courses? One proposal from the Academic Affairs council suggests that students receive letter grades for developmental coursework that figure into their GPA, but are not applied toward requirements on their degree plans. In this way, developmental courses would affect retention rates, but not graduation rates. The hours would not count toward graduation. Should we hire an administrator to coordinate our developmental efforts? Would we create a junior college within SFA? Where would the money come from? Would there be a uniform syllabus and textbook?

Since the distinction between developmental and remedial is important to NADE, perhaps we could include some of the developmental aspects in SFA 101 and require that of all developmental students.

Senator Sullivan: Why not raise the cost of developmental courses for students who repeat them?

Statistics from Fall 1999: in MTH 098, the D/F rate was 57%; in 099, 81%. The F rate in ENG 099 was 20%.

Can we farm these courses out to junior colleges? The administration does not want to lose the enrollment.

The questions posed were assigned to the Academic Affairs Committee.

How does our over 10% enrollment in developmental courses compare to other schools? (We received a handout comparing enrollments, but not detailing this comparison.)

The Academic Affairs Council will act soon on the proposal above for incentives; we will need a "virtual meeting" to get the senate's recommendation to them before that. Alternatively, we can just have our own Academic Affairs Committee draft a proposal.

Dean Atchison was against creating a Junior College within SFA.

There is a website with the NADE requirements, but a better choice might be to go to the Coordinating Board's website. There were two organizations; the coordinating board chose NADE.

We received a handout from Academic Affairs on compensation for distance and distributed education.

Senator Ballenger: If the tuition for these courses is the same, why are we not paid the same [as for our usual courses]? There is a \$2000 maximum compensation and no release time for developing the course. "This is a joke." "Why bother?"

Senator Sullivan said that she could photocopy an article she found on the future of higher education, including distance education.

What is the difference between distance and distributed education? (Not clear.)

Faculty compensation from FIGs and SIGs: faculty teaching such will be required to have interdisciplinary training (in the form of 4-day workshops), and receive \$250 compensation for their time. It will cost about \$10,000 to hire experts to run these workshops. Senator Howard: It's a "slap in the face for faculty" to hire outside experts rather than use our own experts.

Our population goals should mirror the Texas population and our region's demographics. That is, we should have about the same percentage in each ethnic category enrolled at SFA as have living in our region. (HB 1678 Uniform Retention and Recruitment)

Revert to FIG and SIG compensation with entrance of Bob Szafran (Interim Dean of Liberal Arts): Why do we need an outside expert? It helps us to find a way to compensate participants; other schools have more experience than we. Our FIGs are only 6 years old. Suggestion: Can we do a literature search before we hire outside experts at a high cost? Senator Ballenger: Sometimes we need outside people so as to avoid bias.

The earliest workshops may be in Spring of 2002.

Work from this summer: SACS handout; our Excet program is off review; web-for-faculty is up and running, although older computers may not be able to work with it.

At the Regents' meeting, the following policies were approved: Academic freedom and responsibility and probation/suspension/reinstatement (our former policy received the

comment. "Wow, we're awfully nice!"). Pulled from consideration: travel request policy. (Senators received a copy of this change request.)

Academic Advising is required for all students with fewer than 60 credit hours. It was requested that the advisors have the power to cancel holds on their students; it appears that this can be done. (Senators received a handout on this policy.)

Senators received a copy of the policy on attending commencement; faculty turnout at the August commencement was very low. This issue was assigned to Professional Welfare.

Chair-Elect: No report.

Treasurer: We have a budget (the same as last year's).

Secretary: No report.

V. Committee Reports

Academic Affairs: Please meet after this meeting.

Administration and Finance: No report.

Elections: No report.

Faculty Government and Involvement: future issues include empowerment of the Faculty Senate. We will look at our constitution and our 2-year rule (that says that senators cannot stand for reelection for 2 years after their prior term expires). This breaks up the "leadership culture" and promotes a lack of continuity, as well as making it difficult to develop an organizational history.

We have difficulty getting to the board since our proposals must go through other academic channels; we may be unique among Texas universities in this regard. The board of regents is discouraged "very strongly" from having contact with faculty, including attending senate meetings. Now may be the time for change in this since we have big changes in our faculty. New presidential candidates should be made aware of these issues.

Mike Wilhite will meet with the faculty senate after the candidates have been selected; we need to let the rest of the faculty know what is going on and to determine their feelings. Will finalists give a presentation to the whole faculty? We "need a coherent definition of what we want to be."

Professional Welfare: Evaluation of Deans and Department heads is coming up again. We need to move quickly to develop a policy on intellectual property rights. We also need to have clear guidelines for teaching excellence awards.

Strategic Planning: We may want another Faculty Forum this Fall to determine attitudes about the presidential search. The Sick/Emergency Leave policy will go to Academic affairs in October.

VI. Old Business

None.

VII. New Business

Senator Sullivan: Identity theft is on the rise; we need to have identification numbers different from our social security numbers on our library cards and Blue Cross cards. Referred to faculty government and involvement.

Senator Sementelli: Why and how are "obsolete texts" disposed of? Senator Oswald: the library is constantly being weeded. Books are not removed arbitrarily; rather, people in the appropriate disciplines are consulted. Chair Stahl will invite Al Cage to visit with the senate.

Senator King: TACT is sponsoring forums for political candidates to talk to faculty about issues. Joe Evans, Jim McReynolds, and Wayne Christian will be on campus (at different times); do we want to join TACT in sponsoring these forums? (The senate has done so in the past.) Debate: is it the senate's job to be involved state politics? Senator Horn: We need to be political to be taken seriously. Senator King: Some schools do have a political arm of their faculty senate. Senator Sementelli: Should we create such a committee? It is not part of our charge. Senator Pickard: Our charge involves anything dealing with the general welfare of the university.

Motion to co-sponsor carried with some dissent.

Senator Fleet: Our graduate program is one of our great strengths. The graduate students help us in many ways: they stretch us, teach courses, and so on. Yet our graduate student enrollment has dropped by about 120 students due to the "absurdly small amount of money devoted to stipends." In Senator Fleet's department, the stipends are 50% below the state average. That department lost 3 potential graduate students who said they could not afford to come here. We need to encourage the administration to put more money into graduate education. Referred to Academic Affairs.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM.