

**Stephen F. Austin State University  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
2005 Meeting #341**

Subject to approval at the 342<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Senators present were: Julie Ballenger (1), Parker Ballinger (2), Vice-President, Chris Barker (3), Linda Bobo (4), John Boyd (5), Mary Nelle Brunson (6), Debbie Bush (7), Warren Conway (8), Treasurer, Deborah Dalton (9), Deborah Dunn (11), Mark Guidry (12), Greta Haidinyak (13), Secretary, Kayce Halstead (14), Lu Yu (15), Wanda Mouton (16), President, Brian Oswald (17), Debbie Pace (18), Jeana Paul-Urena (19), Amy George (20), Kelly Salsbery (21), Elton Scifres (22), Dan Unger (23), Brian Utley (24), Michael Walke r(25), Elizabeth Witherspoon (26).

Excused absences: Leisha Bridwell (27) Troy Davis (10)

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Dr. Brian Oswald at the Tracy Pearman Alumni Center. He then introduced Mr. Fred Wulf, Chairman of the Board of Regents.

**GUESTS**

**Chairman Wulf** began his remarks by saying that the Board has been focused on enrollment and retention. The Board hopes the new construction on campus may help solve some of the problems associated with those concerns. The construction is being done in stages. Phase one should be completed in Spring 2006; phase two has a completion target of Fall 2006, and consists of nine hundred apartment style rooms.

Questions were invited.

**Senator Oswald** asked if phases one and two are part of a larger master plan?

**Mr. Wulf:** Yes, phase three is undecided—but it will involve increased fees. If things fall into place, the university would implement the next phase, which could possibly be building a new dorm complex at the current location of the New Raguet apts. Concerning Halls 14 and 16, there is currently no concrete decision as to whether to tear them down or remodel them; the same goes for Gibbs Hall (housing) or Todd Hall. There are plans for as many as five phases. In April 2006, we will gauge whether or not students would tolerate higher fees.

**Senator Oswald** asked if everything planned is residential, or if academic buildings were being considered.

**Mr. Wulf** indicated that there are different funds used for each type of building. One of the long term goals is moving UPD, the physical plant, the housing dept, and any other nonacademic buildings off campus, so the core of the campus

would be used for academic facilities. Another initiative is a capital campaign. Mr. Wulf thinks the university should shoot for 100 million—there is @60 million voted on for a capital campaign to use for scholarships; faculty salaries, etc.

**Senator Dalton** asked about HEAF funds—can they be used for building renovations? For example, the Recital Hall seats are 40 years old. When the Music Building was renovated, the old seats were re-installed because there weren't funds for new seats. It was Dr. Dalton's understanding that no department had received any HEAF funds for the past two years for the purpose of renovations.

**Dr Guerrero** explained that the last legislature reduced our HEAF funds by two million—and it will be the same next year too—then we should go back up to six million.

**Senator Scifres** asked Mr. Wulf about the status of the proposed baseball complex.

**Mr. Wulf** stated that 2.6 acres are wetlands area which is an issue that must be mitigated by the Corp of Engineers--in order to be allowed to finish the 20-acre complex. Funding is yet undetermined. The Board is looking for private donors. If they get 2.5 mil (of 10 mil proposed), they could issue a bond for the balance. He mentioned that the new Student Activity Center and the new Recreation Center have a target date of 2007.

**Senator Barker** asked whether the faculty salary concerns brought before the Board by past Senate Chair Wurtz are being addressed?

**Mr. Wulf** responded that he has asked two people to do a study and report to the Board in Jan. He cautioned that enrollment also plays a role in raising salaries.

### **PRESIDENT DR. TITO GUERRERO**

**Dr. Guerrero** began by saying he had just been to the job fair and many of the company reps were former SFA students. He was cautiously optimistic about discussing enrollment, but as of the official 12<sup>th</sup> class day, things looked better. He thinks there may be around 350 new students. While numbers are down at the senior and graduate levels, the undergraduate classes look good. Approximately 4.4% of the entering freshmen are athletes.

He also feels that Monique Cossich, Director of Enrollment Management, as well as retired faculty, and current faculty, have all had a role in bringing up enrollment numbers (which may be up by 1.3%), through their recruitment efforts. Improvement can affect salaries.

He is aware that there are salary compression issues that need to be addressed, and that will be done in consultation with campus groups.

**Senator Guidry** pointed out that we lost some good graduate students because assistantships are poor on this campus.

**Dr. Guerrero** addressed the problem off the record. It has to do with the FTE cap.

**Senator Salsbery** asked about the PR firm(StaMats) the university has hired—what is the status of that project?

**Dr. Cullinan** offered that they have improved communication flow.

**Senator George** wondered if the hurricane affected our enrollment?

**Dr. Guerrero** thinks we might have gained around 15 students because of hurricane Katrina; however, most students have gone back home and enrolled in LA universities because they will get a better financial package in their home state.

**Senator Walker** mentioned a list of universities that offered to omit out-of-state fees.

**Dr. Guerrero** said we give a break to LA students too. We can waive out-of-state tuition for any students impacted by the hurricane.

A question was raised about extending a tuition stipend to university employees based on the survey done last spring. **Dr. Guerrero** said there was some negative feedback, but mostly overwhelming support for the idea. He brought up another challenge. Dr. Larry King and Dr. Guerrero serve on state advisory committees related to academic programs, and having to do with formula funding. SFA would have been a winner if a change in formula had been made, except that nothing was done with it in the legislature this session. They may have a chance to impact the formula in the future during the next legislative session.

## **PROVOST MARY CULLINAN**

**The Provost** brought up a number of topics. She was asked to talk about the merger between the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Applied Arts and Sciences. She stated that Dr. Stanley is working on a plan.

**Senator Oswald** asked what the restrictions or opportunities are for departments or programs to move in or out of the newly merged College.

**Dr. Cullinan** said that requests will be considered. If a department thinks there is an academic reason not to be part of the merger—that reason can be considered out in the open. She thinks the 10 departments affected are well suited to be together; but it is an opportunity to make changes as long as they are in the open.

**Senator Paul-Urena** asked if the merger will affect courses that students need to take?

**Dr. Cullinan** thinks that the Colleges should identify those issues and work them out.

**Senator Salsbery** inquired what option there would be if a department doesn't feel it fits within the new program?

**Dr. Cullinan** responded that the best situation would be for the department to find a better fit elsewhere, and a change would be considered.

Dr. Jeffrey will be retiring and a search will be done for his replacement. Last year, issues were raised about the nature of the position. Dr. Cullinan is following up on that, and has had discussions with many groups. She feels the title should stay the same. There is a need to work on the way graduate programs are functioning within various schools and departments—more consistency is needed. She has asked a group of graduate faculty to consider this issue. She hopes the outcome could affect how the job position is worded and how it will be advertised.

One new initiative, the freshman 1<sup>st</sup> year experience, is a major commitment for the provost. All depts. that touch a freshman—academic or nonacademic, are important. She is putting together a group that will reach out and work on problem areas, and set SFA apart from other schools. Also, there is a need to look at advising, and make improvements in consistency and accuracy.

She also wants to work on faculty development opportunities--working with others to put together workshops for new and ongoing faculty.

She wants to create a job description and work on coordinating an effort for someone to do faculty development--maybe part time.

She plans to host some breakfasts in the fall, for faculty to come and discuss any issues or concerns.

**Senator Bobo** said her dept. received an email dealing with tenure policy (e-50A). She wondered why non-tenured faculty can't vote for representation on a tenure committee?

**Dr. King** thinks it is left to colleges and departments to decide. He would need to see the policy to determine how wording is stated. Revisions may be done later on policy for promotion and tenure. It is not set in stone.

As far as what to do for this year--for promotion use old policy—for tenure use new policy.

**Debbie Dalton** asked if there is a certain allocation to departments for graduate teachers and adjuncts. Music will be having so many more students and there is only so much money for hiring extra teachers. So if some depts. are falling in enrollment and some are growing, can't money be allocated to reflect this?

**Dr. Cullinan** says operating money is allocated to Deans, and she is recognizing the changes in depts. with regard to decreases or increases in enrollment.

**Dr. Guerrero** says that Board wants us to reward programs that are growing. Make sure Administration is aware when new programs or courses are added so that they can make adjustments.

**Dr. Cullinan** is working for a much more transparent budget process so people can see how things are allocated. She hopes we are improving.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Meetings #339 minutes from May were approved, with a motion by Senator Boyd, seconded by Senator Witherspoon. Revised minutes of meeting #340 were also approved with a motion by Senator Boyd, and seconded by Senator Witherspoon.

## **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Oswald had several items to discuss:

- The posting of minutes. He mentioned that all but 5 sets of Faculty Senate minutes are available on the Senate web site and in the ETRC.
- He stated that the Senate office space in the library is not being used. The library and the Provost both have designs on the office. He would entertain a motion to do something with it, preferably, give it up.
- Piper award—not well known—the Provost would like to see someone nominated for it. Guidelines are available. Senator Salsbery suggested that it could be charged to someone's committee. Chair Oswald will get some more information and decide who should get the charge.
- Budget process—The President hopes to have a process ready for the next biennium. A draft of the new process should be out for campus review and comment this Spring.
- According to the state legislature, all undergraduate degree plans are to consist of 120 credit hours—with some exceptions. A plan is to be in place for each university by April 2006—no one had input into the proposal with the legislature.
- Space allocation—the state is looking at how institutions use their classroom space, etc. The outcome may that departments require offering classes in buildings not affiliated with said department or school.
- VP search for Business—Senator Oswald is on search committee.
- Technology—a group from SFA went to Orlando FL for a conference on technology. SFA is far behind—as are others. We have no overall

technology plan for the entire university.

- Chair Oswald appreciated Mr. Wulf coming and listening to Senate concerns. We have extended an open invitation to any of the Regents to attend our meetings.

### **CHAIR ELECT'S REPORT**

Senator Barker reported that he is accompanying Senator Oswald to various meetings in order to observe how things work. He belongs to the group of graduate faculty Dr. Cullinan pulled together to study Dr. Jeffrey's current position as VP of Graduate Studies. He welcomes ideas to take to the committee, and mentioned that Dr. Cullinan wants to consolidate more authority in the VP position, and less in individual departments. Senator Ballenger stated that Dr. Jeffrey has done a very good job with such a small staff. Senator Walker mentioned that the senate had discussed wanting that position to function more like a Dean.

### **TREASURER**

Senator Oswald (reporting for Deborah Dalton) said that the only expenditure incurred had been for refreshments.

He reminded members that money is available to anyone willing to go to the Texas Council of Faculty Senates fall meeting. Senators Barker, Walker, and Davis have expressed interest in attending.

### **SECRETARY**

No report.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Elections**

Senator Bobo posed a question about who gets to vote—Univ. policy lists 11 ranks—and it is unclear what the term means in some instances.

She is trying to understand who is eligible to vote—cases in point, Military Science and Nursing. It was recommended that she check with various offices and try to figure it out.

#### **Administration and Finance**

No report

#### **Faculty Governance and Involvement**

Committee should meet to consider conducting a survey to ascertain faculty interest/opinion in joining a university system; a second charge is considering a term limit restriction to allow two consecutive 3-year terms for faculty senators.

**Ethics Committee**

No report

**Academic Affairs**

No report

**Strategic Planning Committee**

No report

**Professional Welfare**

No report

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was an expressed concern last year by the Provost about the faculty handbook. The policy is online; the handbook should follow the policies, not the other way around. The role of the handbook has changed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chapel on campus—at least one board member is pushing for private funding to build an interdenominational chapel on campus. Does the Senate want to make a statement concerning the issue?

Concerns included:

- Has enough consideration been given about it serving all religions?
- What about maintenance and upkeep?
- Would it be in the free speech area?

It was recommended that we all think about it and discuss it with constituents.

**Senator Barker** commented that Dr. Guerrero hasn't seen much movement by the board. Faculty Senate should maybe go on record as to how we feel about it—and issue an opinion if we have a consensus.

Motion was made to give the office space back to the library by Senators Utleby and Ballenger (2<sup>nd</sup>) by the end of the semester. Discussion ensued. Motion passed.

**Senator Salsbery** asked that we invite Monique Cossich, and the Director of International Studies to come visit the Senate.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business to conduct, a motion for adjournment was made by Senator Boyd and seconded by Senator Witherspoon, The Senate stood adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kayce Halstead  
Secretary