

**Stephen F. Austin State University  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
2007 Meeting #363  
December 5, 2007**

Subject to approval at the 364th meeting.

Senators present were: Senators present were: Neill Armstrong (1), Norjuan Austin (2), Joe Ballenger (3), Sara Bishop (4), Vikki Boatman (5), Dennis Bradford (6), Erin Brown (7), Parliamentarian, Ken Collier (8); Carolyn Conn (9), Randi Cox (10), Lani Draper (11), Deborah Dunn (12), Secretary, Jeanie Gresham (13); Al Greule, (14), Chair, Marc Guidry (15); Scott LaGraff (16), Kevin Langford (17), Tomy Matthys (18), Perry Moon, (20), Clint Richardson (21), Lee Stewart (23), Treasure, Elton Scifres (22); Chair-Elect, Sally Ann Swearingen (24); Ken Untiedt (26)

Excused absences: (19) Rose Powell

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Chair Guidry at the Tracy Pearman Alumni Center.

**GUESTS**

PRESIDENT DR. BAKER PATTILLO

Dr. Pattillo was absent – No president's report.

INTERIM PROVOST DR. RICK BERRY

Dr. Berry discussed the following:

- Dr. Pattillo is in Austin to talk about tuition revenue bonds.
- Concern about making it possible for all advisors to see the degree audit through MYSFA – Staff advisers do not have access, but we are working to allow access. Advisors need to see what students are seeing.
- Digital Measures issues – Dr. Berry asked Chair Guidry to appoint a small committee, a senator from each college, to consult with Sandy Turner on this issue.
- Movement on adopting a plan like Sam Houston's teaching load plan – This is something that we can look to in the future. It is not likely now.
- Will locks be put in classrooms so that faculty can lock classrooms from the inside? – We have looked at this. There are some issues with ADA compliance. The lock has to be one that anyone can open. The classroom also does not need to be some place where a predator can lock individuals inside. We are looking into this issue. The task force at Virginia Tech stated that locks on inside classrooms doors was one thing that would have helped.
- Legislative updates – The legislature is not in session. The interim committees are in place. Representative Branch is chair of a committee to study higher education funding. Several universities are raising designated tuition now. Dr. Berry reviewed the universities that are raising tuition. In the future, SFASU will be asked by the legislature what raised tuition is funding. Over the next couple of months, SFASU will be planning for this. There will be a plan for addressing the

salary issues. We can not raise fees that much to address the issue; increased enrollment will not take care of the issue, etc.

- Dr. Berry said that he has had about 85 responses to the Strategic Plan website. The response rate is low. Please encourage people to respond. The responses we have had are very good ideas.
- A group of us are leaving for the Southern Associations of College and Schools Conference. We have an accreditation office and establishing a website. In 2011, we are up for reaffirmation. You will begin to hear more about this issue.
- Joe Ballenger asked if Dr. Berry put in his application for provost. He said that he did.
- Senator Moon said that the advising ratio in some departments is heavy. It is hard to advise at the end of the semester when you are trying to finish other items. Dr. Berry said that the days of not need advising is over. Dr. Moon says that the students need to be concentrating on other things other than advising at the end of the semester. Dr. Berry said that he is working on a way to assist with this issue.
- Dr. Berry talked about the teaching load policy (3/3 research emphasis or 4/4 teaching emphasis loads). Dr. Berry said that until we get a faculty salary plan in place, we can not address the load policy. Then, we can address the teaching load issue.
- Dr. Berry again asked the senators to comment on the Strategic Plan website.

#### INTERIM ASSISTANT PROVOST DR. MARY NELLE BRUNSON

Dr. Brunson discussed the following:

- The college readiness standards comment forum is online now. You may give your public input. Don't forget about this. It is on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website.
- Swimming pool- The recommendation will come out before spring break. It is a budgeting issue.
- Summer school – Texas A&M has reduced their summer school tuition by half. The state is funding that. The summer two sessions will be where the reduction takes place. Our task force recommendation is a mini-semester in May and a four-day academic week for summer I and II. We looked at other possibilities. The summer budget is not allocated, yet is planned. The key thing that we want to do is package courses so that students can look at ways to finish early or in four years. Also, the package would be something that students could only receive by attending SFASU. Also, we recommended more online classes for summer.
- Comment, Senator Moon – Maybe not having students move from their dorms may help to keep them here for summer classes. Senator LaGraff echoed the issue.
- Are we looking to increase enrollment over the long-term? – The answer is yes. We welcome your ideas because you know what is going on.
- Senator Cox asked if the mini-semester and four-day classes would be offered in 2008. Dr. Brunson said it was not totally approved, but it would be the plan for 2008. Students will be able to take only one class in the mini-semester. Departments will determine what is appropriate to teach in that format. Usually, there are a limited number of courses that are offered in a mini-semester format. The four-day classes will be about two hours in length. The min-semester

classes will come out of the summer budget. Dr. Berry said that the summer budget is not set, but the mini-semesters will be connected to the summer. The mini-semester format intent is to add more options, not take away options.

- Dr. Ballenger asked if the school district calendars will cause problems in attending the summer options. Dr. Brunson said that this year it would be a problem, but in the future, it should work better. June 2 will be the first class day. Dr. Berry said that one idea he gained from a conference is to do summer I, summer II, and May semester, and a fourth offering. It gets complex. Dr. Berry discussed reporting issue concerns with summer school changes.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Senator Guidry announced that Clint Richardson will replace Dr. Pace as Senator from the Department of Science and Math. The involved members voted and elected Clint Richardson.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Deborah Dunn to approve the minutes from the #362<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The motion was seconded by Kevin Langford. Minutes were approved as written.

### **Chair's Report**

Chair Guidry discussed the following:

- Academic facility and space needs – Members of the theater department talked with him about needing a new theater. The present theater is too large and is not always available. They need a laboratory theater. They are on notice with their accreditation body. Dr. Berry has had this as his number one priority. Dr. Pattillo is concerned about chemistry needs. Coming to the senate with this need does not help. The legislature has to fund this need. Because of our nursing and education funding, it will be hard to be successful in the upcoming legislature. We are an advocate for them, but this is presently a recognized need by the SFASU administration. We are limited in helping with these kinds of issues.
- Ad-hoc committee testing the revised version of FAR – Chair Guidry stated that we need one senator from each college to review the changes. The committee is:
  - Vikki Boatman
  - Dan Unger
  - Sarah Bishop
  - Deborah Dunn
  - Carolyn Conn
  - Marc Guidry
  - Lani Draper
- Sandy is now working with Digital Measures to work out the issues with the FAR. The committee will test run the revised software and email Sandy.
- Senator Cox asked if the senate was advocating the 3/3 or 4/4 teaching load plan. She is opposed to it. She believes that faculty should be able to change their emphasis from semester to semester as the need arises. Senator Moon said that this was done in his department as long as the faculty member submitted a proposal. This option was later removed. It is doable in the short term. Senator Untiedt said that it is actually allowed now if you justify the work load.
- Chair Guidry asked the Professional Welfare Committee to study this question and make some recommendation to see if we should support the Sam Houston teaching load policy style or other options. The report is due in February. Discussion continued. Chair Guidry said if you have other issues related to this send them to Senator Langford.

Vice-Chair Swearingen – No report.

Treasurer Scrifres reports that we have \$3474.33 in our account.

Secretary—No report.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Academic Affairs: No report.

Administration and Finance: Senator Cox said that she had packets from the last meeting for those that needed the information. Also, the information is on the website.

Communications: No report.

Elections: No report.

Faculty Government and Involvement: No report.

Professional Welfare: No report.

Ethics: No report.

Strategic Planning: No report.

OLD BUSINESS: Chair Guidry stated that he has been working on an online evaluation survey with other Senate members. The survey would be one that students complete after they have finished their advising. It would be an optional evaluation. The data could be used by faculty members in their yearly reports. He passed out an example of an example advising evaluation. He has been talking with Dr. Berry. Dr. Berry wants to increase student retention. SFASU is at 64% and should be near 75%. One of the most effective strategies to improve retention is advising. Discussion continued. Concerns over the retention of students were discussed. Chair Guidry will try to present a proposed survey to the Senate in February. Ideas for including in the instrument were presented. Senator Richardson stated that this would provide documentation.

NEW BUSINESS: New faculty issues-Chair Guidry stated that we might address the moving expenses issue. He said that we should help new faculty get here. Chair Guidry asked if we should work on this issue in the spring. He wants to establish a minimum stipend. Senator Moon stated that it might be a funding issue for departments. Senator Collier said that there are reasons that colleges may need to decide this issue. Senator Bishop stated that we need to seek the assistance of deans and chairs. Chair Guidry stated that we would scratch this issue. Senator Dunn stated that the health issue was important to make people aware of the insurance laws in the state. Senator Moon stated that the Provost's office might take care of this issue. Discussion continued. Chair Guidry said that he would follow up with the Provost office to see how they inform faculty of the health insurance issue, etc.

A motion made to adjourn at 3:55 pm by Chair Guidry.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanie Gresham  
Secretary