

**Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Meeting #371
November 12, 2008**

Subject to approval at the 372nd meeting.

Senators present were: Norjuan Austin(2), Joe Ballenger (3), Sara Bishop (5), Vikki Boatman (6), Dennis Bradford (7), Erin Brown(8), Susan Clarke (9), Parliamentarian, Ken Collier (10); Randi Cox represented by John Dahmus (12), Secretary, Jeanie Gresham(13); Carol Harrison (14), David Howard (15), Scott LaGraff (17), Perry Moon (20), Carl Pfaffenberg (21), Treasurer, Elton Scifres(22); Daniel Scognamillo (23), Lee Stewart (24), Chair, Sally Ann Swearingen(25); Ken Untiedt (26).

Excused: Kathleen Belanger (4), Cynthia McCarley (19)

I. Call to Order

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

II. Presentations

PRESIDENT DR. BAKER PATTILLO

Dr. Pattillo:

- He did not attend; he is in Austin.

PROVOST DR. RICK BERRY

Dr. Berry discussed the following:

- He has returned from Austin and relayed that he is less optimistic each time he goes concerning funding. He reviewed that university budgets all across the nation are being cut. The fear in Austin is that Texas may have to cut university budgets; it is not happening yet. Although, the governor sent a letter asking us to reduce professional development budgets. He said some senators have proposed a bill to freeze tuition. The Coordinating Board has a new chair, Mr. Ryder; he is from Tyler. He has close ties to our Regent Bob Garret.
- The date of deposit of salary payments was a question that he wanted to address. He discovered that state government code sets the pay dates for state agencies. He reviewed the code. The pay date is the first working day of the month. There is not flexibility in changing these dates.
- He addressed that the health insurance coverage at SFASU is not changed.
- He stated that the university budget could be posted online, but that is not his responsibility. He will pass that suggestion on to the person responsible. Deans have copies of the budget. Chair Swearingen stated that other universities like Sam Houston do have their budgets posted online.
- The repeated courses policy changes are not addressed in Banner as we have previously handled this issue. Now, the second time the course is taken, the grade replaces the previous grade, and the third time the grades are averaged.

- Banner's implementation allows us engage in dialogue to determine if this policy needs changing. He reviewed several options. The policy committee is reviewing this policy. The campus community will be asked for their input.
- The posting of jobs presently may be a slow process. Dr. Berry said that they are in the process of implementing an online approval process. This should speed up the posting of jobs.
 - He discussed implementing a fall break to assist with freshmen retention. He said that we could not just take a day off due to state attendance requirements. It is a possibility that a break could be considered.
 - He talked about four- day weeks during long semesters. He said that the campus houses a number of students. He does not want us to encourage a three-day weekend. The four-day week schedule would encourage students to leave town. The four-day week schedule would not be a money saver for SFASU.
 - He was surprised to learn that the requirement of standard office hours was an issue with instructors/professors who teach online courses. He thought that most departments were being favorable to amending office hours. Chair Swearingen stated that not all departments are being successful in modifying this requirement. He said that the total workload of faculty is not only teaching. He does not see a reason why we can not be flexible with office hours if expectations are met. He said that the instructors affected should talk with their chair and then their deans. Dr. Berry said that he will talk with the deans at the next meeting.
 - He discussed the staffing needs for the next five to ten years. He said that a large number of our faculty joined the staff in the 60s. He said that the administration looks at this issue all of the time. He said it is factored in continually.

ASSISTANT PROVOST DR. MARY NELL BRUNSON

Dr. Brunson discussed the following:

- She said that we have an opportunity to participate in an online seminar, What Faculty Members Need to Know about Retention. The seminar is on November 20, 2009, from 12:00 to 1:30 p.m. She asked who would be interested in participating. Senator Perry said that at this time of the year he does not think that many faculty will be interested. Dr. Brunson said that a DVD could be purchased. Then, the training could be delivered in this way. Chair Swearingen said that maybe at the beginning of a term would be a good time to deliver this professional development. Discussion continued.
- Senator Perry asked if departments could track where job announcements were in the new system. Dr. Berry said that yes this could be completed, and the system will pinpoint the office or offices where delays occur.

SACS

Dean Stanley discussed the following:

- He said that some things have changed in this process since he met with the Senate previously. He introduced the webmaster for the SACS process. He reviewed what SACS is and its purpose. He said that it is one of the toughest reviewing systems in the nation. SACS is overseen by college presidents so it is run by our colleagues.

- He said that SACS has gone to a principles process. This new process can become anything that we want it to; we just have to prove it. The Strategic Plan developed what it was that SFASU wants to become. In SACS, we will have to prove that we are what we say we are. The SACS affirmation visit will be in 2011. There will be a strong assessment component to this SACS. We have to demonstrate that we are moving to be what we outlined. Another big part of SACS is faculty credentials. All faculty files are being reviewed and completed. For the most part, we are in good shape. He said that the next big initiative is the compliance audit. Dr. Violet Rodgers will head up this effort. The 82 principles will be examined by members of the faculty. A narrative will be written to support these principles. This is due in 2010. Another part to be completed is a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). A group from the university will help to identify what the topic will be. A staff will have to operate the plan. It will go on for ten years and is focused on student learning. It will involve every part of the university. You have to budget for the QEP, staff it, and measure the outcomes. The QEP is the last item submitted to SACS. He said that SACS has a useful website where you can read about the expectations we must meet. Also, he said that in the past, we spent about a year and a half getting ready, the team came, and it was over. Now, there is ongoing reporting that is required. It is all about student learning and excellence. Dr. Stanley believes that we have a lot of good news to tell.
- Senator LaGraff asked when the QEP would begin. Dr. Stanley said that it would be ready the January before it was due. Dr. Stanley said that he would recommend to Dr. Berry that we implement a process similar to the Strategic Plan. Then a call for papers would be released. You invite people to submit proposals. The committee picks several of these proposals. The people are paid to complete the proposals. Next, the proposals are submitted to the community. There is a vote, and the proposal is selected for the QEP.
- Chair Moon asked if QEPs are focused on the undergraduate. Dr. Stanley said that most were.
- Chair Swearingen said that the questions answered by Dr. Berry in the meeting were submitted to Dr. Berry and Dr. Pattillo. She had not been able to meet with them. The questions were emailed to Dr. Berry. Since they are in Austin a lot now, the face to face dialogues have not been possible.

III. Announcements

1. Representing the faculty:
 - a. Distance Education
 - i. Dr. Jeanie Gresham greshamglori@sfasu.edu
 - b. Policy Committee
 - i. Julia Ballenger jnballenger@sfasu.edu
 - c. Graduate Curriculum Chair
 - i. Kathleen Belanger kbelanger@sfasu.edu
 - d. Graduations Marshalls for the December graduation are Jeanie Gresham and Lee Stewart.

IV. Approval of minutes

A motion was made by Vikki Boatman to approve the minutes from meeting #370. The motion was seconded by Ken Collier. The minutes were approved as written.

V. Officers' Reports

Chair Swearingen discussed the following:

- She said that Dr. Pattillo was optimistic concerning gaining funding. He would be pushing to gain funding to address the facility needs of the chemistry department.

Chair-Elect Langford:

- No report.

Treasurer Dalton discussed the following:

- He said that the computer came out of this year's funds instead of last year's. Chair Swearingen said that we receive \$4000.00 year. The money can not be used for food, etc. It can be used for travel, equipment, etc. Chair Swearingen said that we need to research to see if we can spend the money to support grants, etc.

Secretary Gresham: No report.

VI. Committee Reports

Academic Affairs: Senator LaGraff said they would be looking into online classes and issues surrounding that. He said that there are a lot of questions. He said they were looking at recruitment practices, enrollment in remedial math, etc. He said that the numbers were down for math, but many students are taking the courses six to eight times.

Administration and Finance: Senator Stewart said that his committee is looking at the universities across the state and nation. They have collected information and will report soon. He said that they have found that SFASU is at 29 percent of the average in faculty salaries. Senator Untiedt said that this issue is coming up over and over that we are at the bottom in salaries and the middle in enrollment. Senator Stewart said that they were trying to compare SFASU to like universities. Also, the committee will look at how SFASU compares with benefits and perks of other universities. Chair Swearingen asked Chair Stewart to work with the Communications committee because they are working on the benefits issue. Discussion continued.

Communications: Senator Clarke said they are almost finished gathering information concerning faculty perks. They are working on the distribution of the perks that faculty receive. They will place this information in a central place on the website. Susan Clarke said that the Wellness Center could be used during certain hours.

Elections: Senator Boatman and Senator Ballenger are reviewing the election policy and procedures. They will be streamlining the process.

Faculty Government and Involvement: Senator Howard said they are looking at recycling and renewable resources and what faculty would support. They are gathering information concerning other university energy policies.

Professional Welfare: Senator Bishop said that they are gathering survey information concerning using adjuncts.

Ethics: No report.

Strategic Planning: Chair Swearingen stated that Chair-Elect Langford was gathering information, but there was no report at this time.

VI. Old Business

No old business was addressed.

VII. New Business

- The next meeting is Dec.10, 2008. Chair Swearingen said that she would like the Academic Affairs Committee, the Professional Welfare Committee, the Administrative and Finance Committee to brainstorm with the entire Senate. This will be a working session.
- There will be no Faculty Senate meeting in January, 2009.
- The Board of Regents will meet on January 26th and 27th. Chair Swearingen invited all to attend. It begins at 8:30 am to about 4:00 pm. On the second day it begins at 8:00 am and ends around noon. It is conducted on the 3rd floor in the administrative building.
- The Access Presentation will occur on February 11th, 2009.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanie Gresham
Secretary