

**Stephen F. Austin State University  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
Meeting #373  
February 11, 2009**

Subject to approval at the 374<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Senators present were: Norjuan Austin(2), Joe Ballenger (3), Kathleen Belanger (4), Vikki Boatman (6), Dennis Bradford (7), Leland Thompson for Erin Brown(8), Susan Clarke (9), Parliamentarian, Ken Collier (10); Carolyn Conn (11), Randi Cox (12), Secretary, Jeanie Gresham(13); Carol Harrison (14), David Howard (15), Keith Hubbard (16), Scott LaGraff (17), Chair-Elect, Kevin Langford(18); Cynthia McCarley (19), Carl Pfaffenberg (21), Treasurer, Elton Scifres(22); Lee Stewart (24), Chair, Sally Ann Swearingen(25); Ken Untiedt (26).

Excused: Sara Bishop (5), Perry Moon (20), Daniel Scognamillo (23)

### **Agenda**

I. Call to order. The meeting was called to order by Chair Swearingen at 2:35 pm.

II. Presentations:

- A. Dr. Baker Pattillo – President
  - a. Enrollment – The enrollment is up at SFASU, especially this spring. He congratulated all for helping to increase enrollment.
  - b. Three New Regents – They are not officially Regents until they are confirmed by the Senate. He does not know when the confirmation will be completed. Right now, the current Regents are still serving.
  - c. The new Director of Marketing and Public Affairs is Bob Wright. He has a great deal of experience.
  - d. Austin Update– There has been a bitter fight for the leadership of the House. New committee assignments are being formed. The power has changed completely. The big issue is tuition. They want tuition lowered, frozen, etc. There is no common agreement on how to solve this issue. Dr. Pattillo presented his Tuition Revenue Bill to the appropriate committee. SFASU is at a disadvantage because we are about even with the square foot recommendations. He does not believe that SFASU has much of a chance to receive the requested Tuition Revenue Bill presented. The economy is negatively affecting the Texas state budget.
  - e. Questions: 1. Do we know what will happen to the present Early Childhood building? He said the decision has not been determined. Money needs to be spent on the current Chemistry building. Chemistry and Human Sciences departments need space. The academic people will make this decision. There will be money needed to renovate the old buildings. Dr. Berry and Dr. Brunson are looking at how to reorganize. 2. Do the legislatures realize why we are raising tuitions? Dr. Pattillo said it was because the state is not sufficiently funding higher education. He said that another issue in the legislature

is how they will fund universities. The state wants to fund on completion rates. It will cost universities money because students drop out during semesters. The Texas Grant Program now is based on need.

- B. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson—Assistant Provost's / Administration Report
- a. Strategic Plan – She said that the initiatives are moving forward.
  - b. SFASU has begun to raise admission requirements.
  - c. The SFA Purple Promise – Full tuition and fees will be paid for families that make \$25,000 or less. It is renewable for four years if they meet admission requirements, etc.
  - d. Textbook requirements are also being discussed in the legislature. They are aware of the expense of the cost of textbooks. They are trying to assist with the cost of textbooks.
  - e. Revision of the Early Childhood admission requirements. The first criteria is if the sibling is in the program or if you have a parent that is a full-time employee. So SFASU faculty is given a preference if there is an available spot. This does not pertain to the Charter school; these admission guidelines are given by the state. Applications are taken during the month of March for the Childhood Lab. Admission to the Charter school is not automatically given to Childhood Lab students.
  - f. SACS and the Strategic Plan – The Strategic Plan is guiding us. Recruiting and retention efforts are moving forward; departments/colleges, etc. are being asked to develop specific recruitment/retention goals. The First Year Experience Committee has been reorganized. They will look at the data and coordinate efforts into a cohesive experience. One of the first items to be completed is to develop a website that tells about the First Year Experience offerings at SFASU. The retention rate is to be increased to 70%. It now is at 62.9%. Strategy 4 is being addressed. The big piece is increasing distance education by 500%. It means that we will need 50,000 online enrollments by 2013. We have averaged 32% per year; we would have to average 40% per year. Offering programs is a better way to package distance education. Faculty is the guiding force in this initiative. We need help in gaining faculty support. Discussion continued concerning the mathematic reality of this model and how to have the resources to achieve this initiative.

The Learning Centered Environment Strategy – We are in the midst of a huge paradigm shift concerning data. We must be accountable and look at this issue in a different way. The faculty drives this process. We need help from the Senators to be leaders in this paradigm shift. The Compliance Report will involve many people across the campus. Faculty and their importance are appreciated.

### III. Announcements:

In March the Administration and Finance Committee chaired by Lee Stewart, and the Academic Affairs Committee chaired by Scott LaGraff will present at the faculty meeting. Also, there will be a presentation to consider changes to the Senate Constitution. Dr. Rick Berry has blocked off two hours to attend the meeting. In addition to the March meeting, Melinda Colby will give a brief update on Axxess. Chair

Swearingen asked all Senators to be present from 2:30 to 5:00 pm and not leave early in March and April.

In April the Faculty Government and Involvement Committee chaired by David Howard, The Professional Welfare Committee chaired by Sara Bishop, and the Communication Committee co-chaired by Kathleen Belanger and Susan Clark will present. Again, Dr. Rick Berry has blocked off two hours to attend the meeting.

Chair Swearingen invited Senators to attend the Texas Council of Faculty Senators in March. She will be attending.

IV. Approval of minutes from Meeting #372 – The minutes were approved as written with corrections being made to Senator Untiedt's name.

V. Officers' reports:

A. Chair

- Chair Swearingen presented at the Regent's meeting. She said that her goal is to educate the Regents on what faculty actually does. Technology is very time consuming, and she presented how this impacts faculty time. Randy McDonald helped her to show the technology issues that faculty face in distance education.
- Also, when she met with the administration, they asked for the help of the Senators concerning assessment. We have to make assessment workable and doable.

B. Chair-elect

- Chair-elect Langford reviewed an article concerning the down-turn of faculty input in running universities. There are tense relationships between faculty and Boards across the nation. Our administration needs to understand that we (faculty) want to be a part of initiatives, and that faculty salaries is still an important issue. He reviewed the text of the article. He said that we need to be seen as a relevant body that is a part of the solution. Faculty must lead the charge in achieving the initiatives of the Strategic Plan. Discussion continued concerning supporting and appreciating the administration for including faculty issues in the Strategic Plan.

C. Treasurer

- \$3309 is in our account. There have been no expenditures since the last meeting. Senator Langford is to make the appropriate people aware that he did not attend the meeting that he requested funds to attend.

D. Secretary

- No report.

VI. Committees Reports:

A. Academic Affairs Committee – Recruitment is the major issue being addressed by this committee. Also, they are working with admissions to coordinate efforts and collaborate better.

B. Administration and Finance – Chair Stewart stated that they are looking at the statistics concerning faculty salaries they showed in December. Also they will concentrate on perks for faculty.

C. Elections / Constitution Committee – They are working on Constitution drafts. Senator Boatman said that an email would be coming soon detailing how to begin the Senate elections process.

D. Faculty Government and Involvement – Senator Howard said that his committee is looking at sustainability for the university. Energy policies etc. are being considered. They will survey faculty concerning what they will support. Senator Harrison asked them to include a question concerning leaving lights on at night that are not being used. This will be included.

E. Professional Welfare Committee – No report.

F. Communication Committee – No report. Senator Ballenger discussed course approval work that she is completing as the Chair of the Graduate Curriculum Committee. She said that you want to send a distinct course to the committee that is well-defined and clarifies how graduate and undergraduate courses are different.

#### VII. Old Business:

- Chair Swearingen again asked for volunteers to attend the Texas Council of Faculty Senators on March 6.

#### VIII. New Business:

- No new business.

#### IX. Adjournment.

- The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 pm by Chair Swearingen.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanie Gresham  
Secretary