

**Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Meeting #374
March 11, 2009**

Subject to approval at the 375th meeting.

Senators present were: Neill Armstrong (1), Norjuan Austin(2), Joe Ballenger (3), Kathleen Belanger (4), Vikki Boatman (6), Dennis Bradford (7), Leland Thompson for Erin Brown(8), 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), 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: Susan Clarke (9)

Agenda

I. Call to order.

- The meeting was called to order by Chair Swearingen at 2:40 pm.

II. Presentations:

- A. Dr. Rick Berry – Provost
 - He had no report but attended the meeting to hear the committee reports.
- B. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson – Assistant Provost
 - She discussed a compliance issue concerning Program Learning and Student Learning Outcomes. SFASU must show a paper trail. She stated that we will use course syllabi as documentation. She passed out syllabi guidelines; but reiterated that the guidelines were not a syllabi template. She also asked the Senators to read over the document and send her an email if clarification is needed before it is sent to the Deans. The target date for distribution of the document is the week after spring break.
 - She discussed assessment. There is another issue for program coordinators. The data has to be reviewed and input by July 17. SFASU has to have at least two cycles of data that has been reviewed. To meet the requirement it is an absolute necessity to abide by the date. A question was asked if the training dates could be moved up. She stated that coordinators could attend the earlier training scheduled if desired. Dr. King is the Assessment Coordinator, and Dr. Brunson asked for these kinds of questions to be sent to him. Discussion continued.

III. Announcements:

April Presentations: 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. Dr. Rick Berry has graciously blocked off time to attend the meeting.

IV. Committee Presentation Reports:

A. Administration and Finance – Chair Lee Stewart, Elton Scifres, Randi Cox, and Carl Pfaffenberg

- Senator Lee Stewart presented the Finance Committee Report. He stated that they look at faculty salaries.
 - i. He reviewed the current salaries by position at SFASU.
 - ii. He reviewed current undergraduate enrollment. He said that we have about 12,000 currently.
 - iii. The committee looked at schools similar to SFASU. SFASU is second to the lowest in average professor salaries. At associate professor, we are fourth from the bottom. At assistant professor, we are third from the bottom.
 - iv. They looked at salary increases. The average for the state is 3.90% and ours is 3.05%. We fall in the average to below average range in the state.
 - v. They looked at possible reasons for why salaries at SFASU are lower.
 1. SFASU is smaller in population (enrollment).
 2. SFASU has smaller class size.
 - vi. The economy will affect increases in pay.
 - vii. The stimulus package could help us.
 - viii. The Texas budget is tight.
 - ix. There are hiring freezes in the state.
 - x. There are layoffs at universities in the state.
 - xi. Positives at SFASU were considered by the committee.
 1. SFASU's location is a consideration. We do not have heavy traffic; the cost of living is lower. The crime rate is low.
 2. The environment and working environment are a plus.
 3. The campus is beautifully landscaped.
 4. The administration seems to appreciate everyone.
 5. Students have strong core values.
 6. There are positive relationships with colleagues.
 7. SFASU has a solid reputation for teaching all students.
 - xii. The committee reviewed non-financial compensation that could be implemented at SFASU:
 1. Complimentary admission to events.
 2. Free/reduced fees to the campus recreation center.
 3. Complimentary parking permits.

xiii. The committee noted that many of the universities that had moved up the salary scale had new administration. The committee showed how our administration has helped:

1. \$250,000 faculty development funds were budgeted.
2. The Teaching Excellence Center was funded.
3. Discounts are offered at local eating and shopping establishments.
4. Faculty has first priority in our Early Childhood Lab.
5. \$500,000 in additional pay was budgeted on top of the 3% raise for the equalization of pay.
6. A hiring freeze has not been enacted.
7. Faculty travel is supported.

- Chair-Elect Langford stated that we need to be a part of the solution not just always bringing our concerns to the administration. Discussion continued.

B. Academic Affairs Committee – Chair Scott LaGraff, Erin Brown, Norjuan Austin, Cynthia McCarley

- Senator Scott LaGraff presented the Academic Affairs Committee Report – Overcoming Obstacles to Faculty Recruiting Students.
- He discussed why faculty should recruit students. The Strategic Plan has recruitment as an issue to address. Recruitment helps to increase enrollment and thus, salary. We gain higher students quality, and we have better retention.
- Obstacles to Recruiting:
 - i. Faculty overload
 - ii. No financial incentive
 - iii. Why recruit since it is the job of Admissions.
- Potential Directions:
 - i. Structural changes in departments could be implemented – recruitment coordinators that have slightly higher salaries and different course load assignments. Also, add advising centers that recruit as part of their responsibility.
 - ii. Financial incentives such as adding recruiting to merit consideration and faculty development funding.
 - iii. Opening new markets as in the College of Education. They are taking the courses to the teachers in their location. Build online programs. Offer dual credit courses at high schools.
- Other ideas:
 - i. The Ambassador's Club where students take over recruiting.
 - ii. A Counselor Day – We invite high school counselors to SFASU for a showcase day.
- Ways to help admissions:
 - i. A new form is available on the SFASU website to collect all of the faculty activities.

(<https://forms.sfasu.edu/notables/>). The intent is to help develop talking points to use when recruiting students.

- ii. Call area high schools and offer guest lectures. Admissions will provide you with props to showcase SFASU.
- Dialogue continued.

V. Discussions

A. Elections / Constitution Committee – Senator Boatman reported on elections. She reviewed who is rotating off and that we would be voting for seven positions. An email will be sent tomorrow announcing the election. The nominations will occur the week after spring break. She said that the Senators' job is to encourage individuals to run.

Senator Collier reviewed the constitution changes that are proposed. He said that there were minor changes, but it was reorganized and a few items were changed. The item that is really different is the representation of adjuncts from one to two. He encouraged the Senators to look at the draft and make recommendations. He learned at the Senate Conference that most universities have individuals serving longer by the ability to repeat. Most had term lengths that were about the same length as the SFASU Faculty Senate. Chair Swearingen is proposing that more training be provided to new Senators.

B. Repeat Grade Policy - Chair Swearingen asked Dr. Berry how the repeat policy will be put into place. He said that Banner does not force us to do anything. He said it affords us the opportunity to examine what we are doing. It is an opportunity to change some things. The issue of repeated grades is that Banner "out of the box" will not do what our policy says. Now, we count the higher grade. The third time, we count all three grades. Presently, Banner will average or replace with the higher grade. The other option is to have them do custom code; it costs us more money now and each time Banner is upgraded. He said that we would modify the software as needed to implement our policies. If we change, it will be because we want to change.

Dr. Berry stated that he appreciated the committee reports. He talked about faculty salaries and that it is good to work at SFASU. He said that no matter how good it is to work at SFASU, we are going to do something about faculty salaries. Raising salaries will be addressed! He said that the next two years will be challenging due to the economy. He also said we do not know how the stimulus package will help and how our Regent's will respond. He said that he did not know if the \$500,000 for faculty equity will be available, but the administration will make every effort to do so.

Dr. Berry discussed recruiting. He said that in music, recruiting is a way of life. Some departments are not used to recruiting. It is a learning curve; it is a culture change. He said that recruiting helps bring in quality students.

C. Chair Swearingen discussed the gun policy proposed by the state legislature. Chair Swearingen said that we may want to write a resolution to present to the legislature either for or against it. Senator Collier said that he drafted a resolution because he was asked to by Chair Swearingen. Discussion continued. Chair

Swearingen stated that we could agree to write a resolution. Keith Hubert made a motion that we not write a corporate resolution. Kathleen Belanger seconded the motion. The motion carried. Chair Swearingen encouraged the Senators to contact their legislatures and voice their opinion.

VI. Guest Presentation

A. Melinda Colby / Banner

- She reviewed the Axxess Project. She said that faculty voice is important to her. She said that they have a website that explains issues about Banner. Axxess@sfasu.edu is the email address. She discussed the following:
 - i. Technical work has been going on (validation tables).
 - ii. The Data Standards Document was reviewed. A team compiled the document. It provides the operational guidelines for Banner.
 - iii. Term identification was discussed. It is a six digit number. Now we have a three digit system. An example is fall 2008 is 200910. 10 is fall, 20 is spring, 30 is summer I, and 40 is summer II. We will follow the academic year.
 - iv. She said that some processes are pending such as the course numbering system, course repeats, etc.
 - v. She stated that academic changes be suspended for the time being.
 - vi. There are some issues with first and second majors. Right now, Banner only recognizes first majors. This may be a policy that needs revision. It will have to be addressed.
 - vii. Graduate paper applications are also a concern. The recommendation is to have an online system for graduate applications like what happens now with undergraduate applications.
 - viii. Summer terms and how they are handled is a concern.
 - ix. Determinations have been made for academic standing, grading for spring/summer 2010, offering of 400 level courses as graduate credit, and maximum transfer hours towards a degree.
 - x. She said that they would like to recruit someone who could work as a faculty liaison. There is no compensation for the position. She also announced some brown bag lunches that they will hold to get the word out about what is going on with Banner.

VII. Approval of minutes from Meeting #373 –A motion was made by Senator Collier and seconded by Senator Hubbard. The minutes were approved as written.

VIII. Officers' / Other Committee reports:

- A. Chair – Sally Ann Swearingen: No additional information.
- B. Chair-elect – Kevin Langford: No report.
- C. Treasurer – Elton Scifres: No change.
- D. Secretary – Jeanie Gresham: No report.

- E. Faculty Government and Involvement – David Howard reviewed a sustainability survey that was sent. It is on MYSFA. He encouraged the members to complete it.
- E. Professional Welfare Committee – Sara Bishop: She stated that they have a draft of a resolution. It is on adjunct compensation and responsibility. She will present to the Vice President.
- F. Communication Committee – Susan Clarke: They will report next month.

IX. Old Business:

- None

X. New Business:

- None

XI. Adjournment.

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm by Chair Swearingen.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanie Gresham
Secretary