

Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Meeting #416
October 9, 2013

I. Call to order

Dana Cooper called to order the regular meeting of the Stephen F. Austin State University Faculty Senate at 2:30 p.m. on October 9, 2013 at the Baker Pattillo Student Center, Tiered Classroom, 2.201.

II. Attendees

Deb Scott conducted attendance. The following persons were present: Norjuan Austin, Joey Bray, Leisha Bridwell, Leslie Cecil, Dana Cooper, Theresa Coble, Neal Cox, Ann Ellis, George Franks, Tammy Harris, Stacy Hendricks, Bob Henderson, Matthew Lindsey, David McKemy, Karen Migl, Jannah Nerren, Mary Olle, Cindy Pressley, Tammy Robinson, Violet Rogers, J.D. Salas, Deb Scott, Greg Smith, Jay Thornton, Gail Weatherly, Kimberly Welsh. The following persons were absent: Karen Embry Jenlink (out of town, a substitute college representative was present: Ali Hachem), Lora Jacobi (ill), Louise Stoehr (conference), and Matthew Kwiatkowski.

III. Special Guest(s)

- A. Dana Cooper introduced Dr. Stacey Silverman, Interim Assistant Commissioner; Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research Division; Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
 1. Because of the Coordinating Board's sunset review procedures, the 83rd Texas Legislative Session passed Senate Bill 215.
 2. You may know that the Texas Coordinating Board (CB) is appointed by the governor.
 3. Harold W. Hahn is the newly appointed chair.
 4. Rex Peebles will soon become the Interim Assistant Commissioner.
 5. The CB meets quarterly as does the committees. Right now the Planning and Accountability committee is deciding on its recommendations to the board on how much funding the universities should be getting. HB 1 shows what the state provides for SFA's funding. I can show you how to find the budget on-line if you contact me.
 6. Revised Rules for the CB include:
 - a. Our ability to shut down Low Producing Programs has been removed. We had asked that programs produce ten graduates in a five year period. Now, you as faculty, must consider this yourselves. If you have no graduates, do you have a program? Realize that your amount of funding will not increase just because you offer more programs/degrees. The CB will continue to

provide an annual report of recommended closure of degree programs to governing boards. It is possible that degree programs already phased out due to prior CB action may be reinstated by the associated governing boards. The legislative appropriation request will be linked for the board of regents. The legislature wants more knowledge and understanding of low producing programs for budget reasons.

- b. Mission statements no longer go to the CB for approval and now belong to the governing boards.
- c. Program approvals
 - i. New degree plans was a two-step process but was considered too long of a process. Now, let the CB know that you are planning it by a letter; this should streamline the process. Now, the CB only has five days to determine completeness of request and a one year time limit for review of new degree programs.
 - ii. The CB may no longer close doctoral programs but will recommend closure to governing boards. For mostly doctoral programs or engineering programs, the CB has a year to review it.
 - iii. New program approvals must notify all public institutions within a 50 mile radius 30 days before the request. Also, consider what is the justification for the new programs? What/who else is out there? Do they have the same pool of students or is it saturated? The CB will no longer use the undergraduate population for approval of new doctoral degrees. There is a helpful program inventory on-line.
- d. Administrative changes no longer require approval, just notification.
- e. Graduate program reviews: external review reports due in 180 days (rather than 90).
- f. Core Curriculum
 - i. The new core curriculum went from 45 to 42 hours. Statewide implementation will start the fall of 2014.
 - ii. Objectives include critical thinking skills, communication skills, empirical and quantitative skills, teamwork, personal responsibility and social responsibility

7. Questions via Faculty

- a. Is there any evidence that all this assessment stuff has actually improved the quality of education in Texas' universities? If so, where is it? If not - and it's my understanding there really isn't - then why are we doing it?
Answer: Some institutions in Texas are actively assessing. Don't know how well they are assessing. The faculty should be assessing and documenting whether or not their students are learning. It is not my personal opinion that standardized testing is the best assessment tool. Every classroom and teacher is different. Make sure you teach content. The essential components in the core should be transferable because of assessment.
- b. What is our responsibility in terms of content at this university compared to two-year colleges?
Answer: The community college is held to the same content of the core as the 4 year universities.
Follow up Question: We have had an issue with two-year colleges not teaching the same order of content in political science sequential course

numbers as many four-year colleges. Government/Poli Sci 141/142 has had to develop a one hour patch course to cover the content. Answer: So, all community colleges are covering government one way which is not jiving with all universities? Go back and look at the articulation agreements with the community colleges. Look at the ACGM. Rigor in the course is assessed the same way. The content and learning outcomes are the same for the state. I was not aware of this particular problem and will take back to the CB for investigation.

- c. Why the 50 mile radius in this day and time? Answer: I agree with you, but this mostly applies to large metropolitan areas.
- d. For the programs that were shut down from the low producing programs, what are the prospects of reinstatement? SFA's Masters in Computer Science for instance. Answer: This year we will no longer give temporary exemptions. The ones requested have two more years. For those shut down, we are returning all the files to the Board of Regents from that institution and asking their opinion about whether or not those should still be being phased out. The CB will allow time for low producing programs to ramp them back up before review. Keep in mind that each new program takes away from existing money.

IV. Presentations

A. Dr. Adam Peck, Dean of Student Affairs

- 1. Applications are now available for Residential Learning Communities.
 - a. An example is, we could create a learning space for modern languages to practice speaking French.
 - b. Applications due at the end of the semester.
 - c. Dr. Peck introduced Dr. Jenny Waters, Assistant Director of Residence Life, who continued with more information on Learning Communities
 - i. Sophomores and above
 - ii. Student run and driven
 - iii. Topic areas can be blocked off.
 - iv. On-line application needed about why it would be beneficial.
 - v. A faculty advisor should be appointed to manage the group.
 - vi. Next Tuesday, the expert in this will be speaking to faculty on campus. Please attend.
 - vii. Residential spaces/dorms will be held first for these learning groups.
 - viii. Retention and grades will be assessed for effectiveness.
- 2. Smoke free Campus Update
 - a. Change.org petition started this ball rolling.
 - b. Facebook groups, meetings, and articles are already happening.

- c. I sent a survey to the Faculty Senate to extend to colleagues for feedback about participating in this effort.
- d. Some things to consider are can this be enforced? Would an employee's supervisor enforce? Local businesses and residents by the campus complain because faculty/students walk off campus to smoke on their property.
- e. Please recommend if we should send this survey out.

B. Dr. Ric Berry, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

- 1. Two committees have been working on the core curriculum. The Core Curriculum Advisory Committee will remain a standing committee. It and the Assessment Committee have sent their reports. Faculty committees, faculty, the chair's forum, the dean's council and the two aforementioned committees have all made input to me. Input over the next few days will still be welcome. Please send it in writing. I plan to submit a final report to the board.
- 2. I am encouraged about the changes on the CB.
- 3. Question(s) via faculty:
 - a. What is the administration doing as far as plans regarding our health care plans over the next 5 years. May just say "whatever the State does". Okay, what are the State's plans for us for the next 5 years? The obvious concern is with the present implementation of The Affordable Care Act (aka Obamacare) as far as current employees and future retirees.
Answer: I do not know. Take to Mr. Gallant or Ms. Herrington.

C. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School

- 1. No Report

V. Officers' Reports

A. Chair

- 1. Upcoming TCFS meeting in Austin, 10/25-10/26. Chair-Elect Nerren and I will be going. We are not sure what to expect for this meeting; a larger group might go at the end of February.
- 2. Polo shirts are ready if you have not received yours.

B. Chair-Elect

- 1. No report.

C. Secretary

- 1. No report.

D. Treasurer

- 1. \$9591.33 balance -1300 outstanding purchases=\$8291.33.

VI. Approval of minutes from Meeting #415

Senator Rogers moved that the minutes from meeting 415 be approved. Senator Coble seconded the motion. Motion carried.

VII. Committee Reports

A. External (University) Committees

1. Academic Affairs, Chair Cooper

- a. There is a change to correct misprint in graduate student bullet of definition of full time graduate students.
 1. Bulletin is wrong due to a misprint/mistake. You may not even have noticed.
 2. Federal guidelines dictate that grad students must be enrolled in 6 semester credit hours to receive financial aid.
 3. At SFA, 9 semester credit hours is considered full-time for graduate student during the long semesters and 6 semester credit hours during the summer semesters.
 4. SFA defines full-time as 6 semester credit hours if you have a graduate assistantship during the fall & spring semesters and 3 semester credit hours during the summer semester.
 5. This is the common practice at peer institutions.
 6. For immigration purposes, graduate students must be enrolled in 9 semester credit hours with the limitation of 3 of those semester credit hours being online.
 7. Thus, 6 semester credit hours of those 9 semester credit hours must be in a traditional, face-to-face class.
 8. If these stipulations are important to your grad programs, please communicate this to your chairs, directors, and/or deans.

b. Assessment reports are due next Tuesday, 10/15

2. Core Curriculum Assessment, Senator Rogers

- a. Deadline for report is due 10/15.

3. Distance Education, Senators Coble, Cecil, and Weatherly

- a. Senator Coble reported that the ADA is requiring captions for any video use. They are studying this.

4. Graduate Council, Chair-elect Nerren

- a. No report

5. Policy, Senators Henderson and Coble

- a. 11 policies out of 22 have been reviewed. The changes are positive and less restrictive.
- b. Included are policies about performance reviews of officers reporting to the provost, faculty salaries, and video use (as mentioned in Distance Ed Committee)

B. Internal (FS) Committees

1. Academic Affairs, Chair-elect Nerren

- a. Handout: MOOCs investigation. Send thoughts or questions to committee.

2. Administration and Finance, Senator Jenlink

- a. Chair Cooper spoke for Senator Jenlink. McKibben 252, the new Faculty Senate space, is going to be redecorated.

- b. First coffee and donuts had a good turnout. Good communication and conversation. Will continue to be held first and third Fridays of the month. Sign up to attend so that a senate member is there.
- 3. Communications,
 - a. No report
- 4. Elections, Senator Olle
 - a. No report
- 5. Ethics, Senator Cecil
 - a. No report
- 6. Faculty Government and Involvement, Secretary Scott
 - a. No report
- 7. Professional Welfare, Senator Rogers
 - a. Putting SFA's budget on the Faculty Senate website will not happen according to Mr. Gallant because it is not required by the state. It is in the library as always for check-out.
 - b. Will be taking up the instrument of student evaluations. Recent accreditation committees will advise on this issue.
 - c. Senator Coble mentioned that Dr. Murphy and the policy committee did some research as to whether evaluations are required of every course every semester. The policy committee believes that the departments should make the decision instead of a university wide policy.
- 8. Strategic Planning, Chair-elect Cooper

VIII. Old Business

- A. Faculty Perceptions Survey Report
 - a. 198 surveys completed.
 - b. Currently tabulating results and analyzing open ended responses.
 - c. Following Senator Jacobi's return, we will complete cross-tabulations and categorization of responses for a full report.

IX. New Business

- A. Change.org—Smoke-Free Campus Petition
 - a. Pros: Healthy, environmental, progressive, clean campus, could be a factor in recruiting/retention.
 - b. Cons: people smoking and leaving cigarette butts in the lawns of homes and businesses that are just off campus. Additionally, enforcement is often a problem. Police won't enforce if it's not a law, and it leaves people to police themselves or leaves supervisors to do it. It could be a real headache.
 - c. Discussion ensued about whether or not to create a policy or a senate resolution.
 - d. Senator Franks moved that the issue be taken up by the Ethics Committee. Senator Pressley seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- B. Five-Year Program Review
 - a. Someone brought up the issue that some undergrad and particularly grad programs must have an outside reviewer (audit of) a department without a stipend. This is a real strain particularly for grad programs without such funds.

- b. The Senate will request Dr. Brunson speak to this issue.

X. Adjournment

Chair-elect Nerren moved that the meeting be adjourned at 4:33 pm. Senator Pressley seconded.