Stephen F. Austin State University
College Council
Meeting Minutes
October 13, 2014

Opening:

College Council was called to order at 4:00 pm on October 13, 2014 in Ferguson room 377. Dr. Lee Payne presided as CLAA president.

Present:

Ann Wilder; Benjamin S. Dixon; Carrie D. Kennedy Lightsey; Elizabeth A Tasker; James Morris; Lauren E. Brewer; Louise I Stoehr; Thomas P. Madison; Sharon D Eaves; Steve R Taaffe; Troy D Davis; Wendi K. Pollock.; Marc Guidry.

1. University Strategic Planning - Sudeshna Roy and Shirley Luna from the University Strategic Planning committee came to ask for faculty input on the strengths and weaknesses of SFA, as well as desired improvements. Sudeshna and Shirley have been tasked to gather this feedback for a third party consulting firm. They distributed a handout of questions. It was decided that a CC member from each department would send answers to the questions to Sudeshna by the end of the week. We also noted that it was appropriate to list low salaries as a weakness.

2. Review minutes – Two minor corrections were made to last week’s minutes and they were accepted unanimously.

3. Chair/Director Evaluations deadline - Reminder that this is due on Oct 15th.

4. Course modifications
   - ENG 458 – discussion deferred; not yet signed by chair.
   - PSY 200 – after a discussion of the prerequisites, this was approved unanimously.
   - PSY 361 – we agreed with the change of the description to make it better reflect the real approach taken in the discipline; approved unanimously.

5. Course deletions – discussion on all deletions was deferred; not yet signed by chair.
   - ILA 215
   - SPA 435
6. Course adds
   - PSY 400 – Overall, the proposal of this variable credit internship course was well received. But it was noted that the WH policy needs to be added to the syllabus. It was also noted that 1 credit = 50 hours, so internships should consist of 50—150 hours. Approved unanimously.
   - SPA 436 - discussion deferred; not yet signed by chair.

7. Faculty Salaries – The Council was presented with an email excerpt from an LAA faculty member requesting that we discuss the problem of low salaries in the LAA college. The concern is that the SFA Faculty Senate will not pursue the issue of low salaries at SFA because, as shown in a 2013-2014 (this was done this past academic year) study done on salary inequities between SFA and our peer institutions in Texas, not all SFA departments and colleges were flagged as having low salaries. However, the departments in the LAA college have many of the lowest faculty salaries in comparison with similar departments at Texas peer institutions. Thus, there is a feeling among the LAA faculty that the LAA College Council should study the problem. During discussion the following points were made:
   - We need to review the 2013-2014 survey, which was done for SFA by Faculty Senators; Bob Henderson from Math/Science was our stats person and is available for review. (After the meeting, the president forwarded the survey to the Council).
   - It was noted that the survey recommends targeted equity increases by department and rank, rather than an across the board increases, in order to address those positions suffering from the greatest inequities--if funding is possible.
   - It was noted that the LAA college generates the greatest number of credit hours for the university; that some new employees feel that written statements in SFA hiring policies about SFA compensation being competitive are not accurate; that state-wide salary data is available on the THECB web site; that SFA administration might say that increased salaries would mean increased class size; that Lamar University joined a
state system; that this issue has a long history; that targeted adjustments were made in 2008; but that compression issues are hurting faculty moral and causing retention issues.

- We pondered what we can/should do. Some items that were discussed were sending a letter to the Board of Regents, the possibly of SFA joining one of the state university systems; the proper channels for handling grievances, such as the Texas Faculty Association and the Texas State Employees Union; the idea of bringing media attention to SFA salary issues.

- It was agreed among the Council that the university strategic plan should address salary problems and that our college should push for that.

- It was agreed that Council’s charge was to report to the Dean, and that other actions were beyond our charter. Thus, we agreed to draft a letter to the Dean. All members of the Council agreed that this was a good idea. This is being done.

8. New business – One additional item was a discussion of the Post Tenure Review policy, which is currently being evaluated. A council member asked that we all pay close attention to upcoming revisions. There is concern that, if a new six-year review is implemented, it should have plenty of faculty input to ensure that our tenure status is not diminished or rendered meaningless.

9. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 by Dr. Lee Payne.

Minutes submitted by: Elizabeth Tasker Davis