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Faculty Senate

To: Members of the Faculty Senate
From: Jere Jackson, Secretary
Date Submitted: November 10, 1993
Subject: Minutes for Meeting No. 233
October 13, 1993 - 2:30 PM
Mildred Wyatt Room, Steen Library

MINUTES

I Call to order

Chairperson Suzy Weems called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM, in the Wyatt Room of Steen Library. After reminding the Senators of the importance of items of old business left from the last meeting, in particular the questions of merit and the Discussion Draft of SFA '98, Ms. Weems asked that the order of business of the meeting reflect these needs and that members abide by the time guidelines for speaking outlined in the memorandum from the Executive Committee. After a quick review of the meeting of the Academic Advisory Council Meeting and of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Faculty Senate, the Chairperson immediately introduced Dr. Dan Angel, President of the University.

Senator McCune objected to the questions and the tone of the questions submitted to Dr. Angel and insisted that the minutes reflect that the questions did not represent the opinions of all of the Faculty Senators.

II. Remarks by Dr. Dan Angel

Dr. Angel first addressed the question of the Proposition 13 and the 16 different amendments to the Texas Constitution on the ballot for November 2. In particular, Dr. Angel outlined the advantages and disadvantages of Amendment #4 on an income tax and the restrictions placed on it. If there is to be an income tax in the future, it will have to be passed by the people and its proceeds earmarked for education. 2/3s of the money would replace the property tax and 1/3 would be for higher education. While the Higher Education Assistance Fund will be raised from 100 to 175 million and SFA will get about 3 million dollars a year plus greater flexibility in the spending of money, the changes in the language would actually cost SFA money because more institutions would be included under the new language. We will not get, however, any money that could be placed into faculty salaries. Dr. Angel declared the item to be unlucky for us; we would lose approximately 200,000 a year under the new distribution arrangements.

Re: SFA '98

Dr. Angel then responded to the Senate's questions concerning SFA '98 (see Appendix A):

- 1 He stated that he did not intend to change the nature of education by shifting SFA towards more training as seemed to be implied in the question. He did not think the questions was relevant.
2. Concerning the purpose of the document:
 - He said he intended the document for a very wide audience; it was not an academic document. Most of the comments he had heard are looking from the "inside out" whereas the document was written from the viewpoint of the "outside in," looking at the problems of universities across the nation, not just SFA.
 - Dr. Angel said the uses of the document would be many: a document for student recruitment, fundraising, for use on campus and for setting a general direction for the university.
 - It is not intended as a strategic plan, but for public consumption; it is not a five year plan except in its general direction. There were approximately eleven people who sifted through the boxes of material submitted by various sections of the university: the Vice Presidents, Lucy Stringer, Yvette Clark, Judd Staples, Ken Kennamer, Jim Hardy. After agreeing on the themes, everyone wrote one chapter. Dr. Angel said that he consolidated the work, writing the final draft as it was printed. Until it is finished, however, it does not represent anyone.
 - As to whether it represented the faculty as well as the administration, he say that remained to be seen. If it does not at present represent the faculty, then discussions should seek to determine what has been left out. The draft is neither etched in stone nor in sand.
 - If the academic program is not adequately addressed, this can be added.
- 3 As to what use was made of the materials assembled over the last few years of evaluation, Dr. Angel said he did read all the things people suggested in the recent year; he doubted that there was much they had not seen, but he indicated his willingness to do more research if necessary.
- 4 Re the academic concerns of the faculty, he said the references to the 'student as customer' referred to services, not the classrooms; there is nothing in that chapter that refers to classrooms. The process of learning includes the student; it is not limited to the instructors. How this chapter should refer to the learning process, Dr. Angel said he did not know what should be said at this moment.
- 5 Dr. Angel questioned that there were inconsistencies in the document.
 - He denied that there was anything in the document which moved to open the admissions policy; we have the same entrance requirements now as when the document was written. We still accept only the top 50% of the graduating class and still have the same SAT and ACT scores.
 - He admitted that SFA did not overemphasize graduate education.
 - He denied that the absence of a separate graduate dean meant that there was no interest in graduate education or that this would have any bearing on the expansion into a doctoral program.
 - He dismissed the question of education as a right or a privilege as beyond the scope of the document. He did state that the university does not owe degree to all students who enroll.
 - It is up to us to determine how standards can be reconciled with point-to point assessments. The document calls for assessments, and this issue should be addressed.
 - He denied that there was anything in the document implying abandonment of the lecture system, just an exploration of alternatives. He recommended an article in the current Change magazine entitled "New Students, New Learning Style." Students are different and the faculty need to respond to these differences, such as teaching in an active mode, small group discussions, experimental learning, field experience, group projects, debates, peer critiques, team projects, simulations, and using case methods. He did suggest that the lecture method was not appropriate for all of our students. Must explore what we are now doing.
 - He said he did not suggest the elimination of graduate students in classrooms; the public, on the contrary, wanted to see more tenured and tenure-track people teaching

undergraduates. He praised SFA's record in this regard. In addition, he does not anticipate the reduction of class sizes just because computers are introduced into classrooms. We must maintain the ratio we now have in class sizes. Readers must not fear the worst when they read the document.

6. The 'student as customer' chapter does not deal with academic matters. If thought necessary, chapters discussing the 'student as student' and the 'teacher as teacher' can be discussed.

In summation, Dr. Angel expressed his hope that the Senate would look at SFA '98 as a "document in process." He wanted the university to have a clear sense of direction, to not only improve its services, but to improve its academic program as well. As he stated, "it takes a lot of guts as a president to write a document like this and to lay it out there." While it might seem that the document was criticizing what has been done at SFA, it was not intended that way. He wrote the document as a bold plan for the future; he wants it shaped and molded into the plan we want it to be. He is willing to work to make that happen.

III. Old Business: Discussion Draft of SFA '98

Dr. Weems reminded the Senate of the suggested ground rules for discussion: time limits for each member and suggestions in the two categories of things to omit and things to add.

Senator Mace expressed faculty concerns that there was not enough focus on academic affairs *per se* and that this purpose - the main reason for our existence - was not stated clearly at the beginning of the document. She felt most of her colleagues were somewhat taken aback by the casual references and comparisons to Jiffy-Lube and Wal-Mart.

Senator Wright also commented on the informality of the tone, the use of jargon, and buzz words. But, she thought the report was very readable and should maintain this style when rewritten.

Senator Jones agreed that the report was readable, but he questioned the validity of the points being made. For instance, mixed conclusions can be taken from the story of the boy and the target on page 2? What is our purpose: to act like the little boy or denounce his actions? Does the story speak clearly to our purpose and mission? Jones said he would prefer more substance, more specifics, more plainly stated concerns, and less blanket claims.

Senator Rulfs said thought it was excessive to dwell on the language of the document; this was easily changed. She welcomed the use of standards of Total Quality Management, the source of a concept like the 'student as customer,' and said the Schools of Education and Business found this notion to be a very viable. She did, however, think a clear statement of the university's academic mission needs to be in the document, for instance, more emphasis on excellence. Her constituents wanted a more direct statement of specifics to aid in the achievements of their goals; what specifics are there to help us achieve excellence? The College of Education wants very much to see a new paradigm in education, but they have been hampered by a lack of flexibility in scheduling, course formats, funding, etc. In general, she concluded, that the College of Education's response to the SFA '98 was quite positive.

Senator Dahmus emphasized that the wording of the document was very important, especially if the document was to be sent all over the state. What will prospective students think when they read a document focusing on movies, sports heroes, comic strips, etc. - What about a focus on academics? Will good students be turned away? A good high school counselor will encourage good students to go elsewhere.

Dr. Angel commented at this point that the draft did not intend to concentrate on too many details; it was taking a macro view rather than getting into a micro view of implementation. We need to emphasize the things that need improving and what is really important. The idea

of TQM cannot be thrown whole into other areas but must be adapted. Must clarify how we want to define the phrase 'student as customer,' for it can be misleading. Maybe some of the statements concerning the mission of the university could be added to the beginning of the document. A direct statement of commitment is implied in the fact that many possibilities are discussed in the draft. In asking for money, we need to have a document that would define for the donor why he or she should give to SFA and not Sam Houston State. Maybe we need two documents; one for external purposes, broad enough to include this general material, and one for internal purposes. He agreed that the language was important, but this should not prevent someone from having fun with language. He intended a powerful document that was readable; and to which they would say yes, SFA is going in the right direction.

Senator Mace rejected the notion that the negative reactions to the document came from the distinction between inside and outside views, or even from the emphasis on the improvement of administrative functions. There were many things which the draft suggested that needed improvement. However, the draft's failure to distinguish between administrative functions and academic functions is a serious flaw.

Senator Jones wanted the document to emphasize more the professional/client relationship between student and teachers.

Senator DiNucci said his constituents agreed that editorial work needs to be done; on the other hand, they liked the very clear manner in which the document was printed and respected the president for being willing to share this type of discussion with the faculty.

Senator Turner reviewed the survey on SFA '98 conducted in the Department of Management and Marketing. On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest), the survey rated the document a 2.5. They felt the tone was inappropriate for higher education, that it failed to speak to long-term objectives, controls, methodology, and evaluation measures, and that they feared it might lead to 'SFA Community College.' The big missing component is academic focus.

Senator Berry found the document difficult to evaluate. To whom addressed? What was it to be used for? Etc. He was gratified the emphasis on goals and means; the Fine Arts are very outcome-oriented disciplines. But, for instance, their college at present does exceptional work in advising and does not need to be told to shape up. Furthermore, the overriding concern for the university is an academic one; the driving forces should be academic and not student services.

Senator Mueller complained of the absence of statement of goals. He did not like the concept of the 'student as customer;' he did not like the inmate running the jail. Language which has multiple meanings or which could be better defined should be omitted. In addition, if the university wanted more students, give us more faculty, too. Especially in Criminal Justice, where there are 500 majors and 4 faculty members, the university needs to address the problem of the allocation of resources in the future.; better distribution of faculty and student resources.

Senator McCune said he had heard many good comments on the concept of 'students as customers.' For the students, he wanted to see emphasis placed on their success in the classroom and as persons. More importantly, however, he wanted to see the document hit harder on the setting of standards of conduct for the faculty, such as stronger guidelines for tenure, emphasis on professional activities such as teaching and research.

Senator Mace rejected the arguments of Dr. McCune concerning faculty evaluations. She said the faculty were constantly being evaluated; if any element of the university had been unresponsive to students, it would probably fall in the administrative areas like Financial Aid.

Dr. Angel, in his concluding comments, recognized that the document had unleashed massive concerns about where we were going and what we are doing, but he hoped that the Faculty Senate, which had a reputation for being negative, would remain positive and constructive in their thinking. The session today was just a beginning. We can make this document work, he said.

Dr. Mueller pointed out that the administration of Dr. Johnson refused to listen to comments, but if Dr. Angel will listen, the faculty would cooperate.

Dr. Weems affirmed the faculty's need to be heard on this SFA '98 Draft and felt that the reports from the faculty committees should be seen and circulated. She asked the faculty to continue to submit in written form their suggestions.

Senator DuFrene noted that it would be a little out of order to refine the document without a mission statement.

Dr. Ashley said she would have a final draft of the proposal by January before Angel takes it before the Board of Regents. The Dean's Council had met to discuss the matter of a mission statement and would supply the Senate with a copy of ones now in existence.

Resolution

On a motion by Senator DiNucci, seconded by Senator Turner, the Senate voted unanimously to authorize the Chairperson to appoint an Ad Hoc Committee from the Senate to work to enhance the academic component, in particular, of any second draft of SFA '98.

In the discussion before this motion was passed, Senator Jones made a plea for an emphasis on real substantive ideas as additions. Dr. Berry reiterated his earlier point that the academic component should be the driving force in the who document, not just an afterthought. Dr. Weems also spoke for the integration of an academic thrust throughout the document.

IV. Old Business: MERIT

Senator DiNucci voiced his opinion that the department chairman should make the decisions on merit, with the understanding that there would be a mechanism for appeal.

Senator Dahmus added that unless the faculty as a group got a cost of living raise, a merit system would only make trouble for everyone.

Vice President Ashley reminded the Senate that the mandated 3% increase last year was not a cost of living raise; by legislative decree, all raises must be "merit based." The awarding of merit, however, was being placed at a lower level - down to the colleges and departments.

Senators DuFrene, Turner, and Gobel all expressed concern that too much power was being placed in the hands of the chairmen; the mechanisms for appeal and for oversight were considered very important in order to avoid personalities and political decisions.

Senator Clark asked about the decision process for awarding amounts of money to the department in the first place; great inequity could occur before the department ever had time to make its decisions on the merit of individuals.

Several Senators voiced similar concerns about the equity of the distribution system of money as well as the awarding of merit. Senator Ford commented that the policy as it now stands punishes a large segment of the faculty and is destructive of good will.

Motion

On a motion by Senator Hearrell, seconded by Senator Mueller, the Senate unanimously referred the drafting of the merit statement to the Professional Welfare Committee with a request for a report for the November meeting of the Senate.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion

On a motion by Senator Rulfs, seconded by Senator Dahmus, the Senate postponed the approval of the September minutes until the November meeting.

V. Reports from Committees

Because of the lengthy discussion on the Discussion Draft of SFA '98, most committee chairmen delayed their reports until the November meeting. Senator Turner said he would have a comparisons of salaries by department at other universities; Senator Hearrell circulated a statement concerning the lack of coverage of the 1st Amendment for E-Mail messages; Senator Jones will report on the evaluation of deans and merit in November; the Treasurer gave only a balance (\$4438) and delayed a full report.

Senator Wright's Committee on Faculty Government and Involvement submit two resolutions:

Resolution

On a motion by Senator DiNucci, seconded by Senator Jones, the Senate approved the following and asked that the officers take this to Dr. Angel:

Be it resolved that cost saving in university administration be pursued in a thorough but prudent fashion. Reorganization of Colleges should be explored; however, decisions on mergers of Colleges should be based on the genuine organizational integrity of the plan rather than on the conveniences of vacant positions.

Resolution

On a motion by Senator Jones, seconded by Senator Dahmus, the Senate approved the following and asked that the officers take this to Dr. Angel:

Be it further resolved that faculty be involved at the earliest states of any organizational study of Colleges that is done.

VI. Adjournment

Senator Hearrell made the motion to adjourn; Dr. Mace seconded it; all agreed!

Appendices

Agenda and List of Questions Submitted to Dr. Angel by the Executive Committee

Comments from the Academic Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate on SFA '98 (Various Handouts)

VISITORS

Toyna Solis, Daily Sentinel

Barbara Carr

Jim Reese

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Robert Mathis

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Jasper Adams

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