

**Stephen F. Austin State University**

**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
October 8, 1997 Meeting #269**

***Approved, 11/12/97***

Faculty Senate meeting #269 was called to order by Chair Darrel McDonald. The following senators were absent: Greer (excused), Kenner (excused), Stahl (excused).

The minutes for meeting #268 were approved as written.

***REMARKS FROM DR. DAN ANGEL***

Dr. Angel reported on several items occurring on the SFA campus.

1. Dr. Angel indicated that the SACS accreditation process has started with a visitation from a creditation official in November of this year. That process will unfold all the way through the year 2000.
2. A consulting firm has been working on the new Capital Campaign since last Spring with a logo, slogan and other things ready in the near future. This year is a "Behind the Scenes High Dollar Contribution Year." SFA will be announcing some big contributions at the kickoff of the campaign Fall 1998. At the same time it will be announced the amount of money SFA will be seeking over the next four years. Sid Walker is the Capital Campaign director if you know of the possibility of some high dollar donations.
3. Also in the works is "Celebration SFA '98 and the 75th Anniversary Celebration of the existence of Stephen F. Austin. Lots of activities will take place next Fall. Dr. Angel encouraged the suggestion of ideas to celebrate this event.
4. The new Commission on the Future called "SFA '03" is underway. It will be a long range, directional plan which will go through the year '03. Dr. Janelle Ashley will be chairing this effort. They are seeking thoughts on what direction the university should go into the next five years. A draft document will be available Spring 1998. The Board of Regents will be given the document in October 1998 with adoption tentatively set for January 1999.
5. A couple of legislation issues are taking place. There is a group of legislative staff from Senator Ratcliff's education committee assigned to go around the state and look at special items. SFA has done well on special items. Special items have quadrupled between 1992 (\$1.2 million) and 1996 (4.8 million). There is consideration in the legislature that they do away with all special items that exist which is about 17-percent of the money higher education gets in Texas. This money may be spent into formulas instead of having special items. Some institutions do very well with special items. However, SFA could probably do better under formula funding if all special item funds were included. SFA did spend its special items money on special items, and we did significant things with the money. Significant means that the project improved the economy in your area, received federal dollars as a result of the project, or developed a major educational benefit that suited the university mission. The two legislative staff that visited SFA were convinced that we had accomplished valuable things with special item funding.

Chair McDonald asked Dr. Angel about the formula reevaluation started by a committee appointed by Commissioner Brown. Angel responded that the new formula rewards the number of tenure and tenured-track faculty an institution has and the number of those teaching in

freshman and sophomore years. SFA is one of the higher ranking institutions....ranking about 7th or 8th out of 35 institutions in this area.

Senator Martha Sullivan asked of Angel about salary raises for the SFA faculty. Angel replied that last year SFA gave the largest raise to faculty since 1989...a five-percent merit raise compared with 4-percent merit the year before. The state average has been about three-percent over the last three years. Dr. Angel noted that we are above average in giving faculty raises. He indicated that more money has to come in before it can be given out. Angel sees small raises for the next few years. Angel did say that the general use fee could be raised to match tuition.

Dr. Angel commented on SFA getting \$6 million in tuition revenue bonds to make changes in the Science Building. SFA will receive \$2 million, each biennium for three bienniums, when a floor at a time will be worked on in the Science Building. It is conceivable that it will take more than \$6 million. We will have to wait and see Dr. Angel also reported on a study focusing on raising academic standards at SFA. One firm from Colorado has come forward to bid on the consultation to study academic standards. Angel said when you ask faculty, they want you to raise academic standards. However, Angel wants the faculty to be sure and look at the consequences.....more qualified students from across the state or lose students and have financial consequences? Don't put blinders up but analyze what will be happening....who is coming to the university and why. This is an opportunity to study issues beneficial to SFA. The study should be ready by March and the dialogue will begin then.

#### ***ANNOUNCEMENTS BY CHAIR MCDONALD***

Reminder was made for Faculty Recognition Luncheon Oct. 14 at 11 a.m. in the UC President's Suite for those employed at the university for 10, 20, 30 and 40 years. McDonald went on record recognizing Dr. Doyle Alexander for exemplary service to SFA for 40 years.

The Board of Regents meet 10/13 at 1 pm and 10/14 at 9 am.

The Commission on the Future is a representative body of the campus with 30 individuals. They will be subdivided into committees looking at specific issues that are being solicited from everyone across campus. Anyone with a concern can bring it to Chair McDonald's attention.

Dr. Pattillo & Dr. Holbert are spearheading some of the activities for SFA '98. They are taking ideas for the celebration.

Chair McDonald had received a couple of web sites of interest to faculty from Morgan Eldred. They concerned teaching evaluation and better teaching practices. The first one is the KSU Idea System Site and the other is a site with 22 better teaching strategies. Contact Chair McDonald for more information.

Information has been passed on to Chair McDonald about faculty being a part of ACE (the American Council on Education) Fellows Program. The faculty member must be nominated by the whole institution to be a fellow for a semester, year or for topical sessions of shorter duration.

Chair McDonald also announced that the Faculty Senate has hired a student, Steve Benson, to do web site development. Steve will be working five hours a week to keep the Faculty Senate web page current.

#### ***OFFICERS' REPORTS***

Chair McDonald reported on the September meeting of the Academic Affairs Council. The university schedule for the upcoming years were approved noting that next year the second summer session will end within 10 days of the start of the fall semester. There will also be a 39

day break between Fall '97 semester and Spring '98 semester decreasing to a break of three weeks in the following years.

There was a redefinition of non tenured faculty to a Designated Rank title. Dr. Ashley explained that this is an opportunity for unique titles for unique situations.

Also, McDonald noted the addition to Policy A-41 where verification of grade is the responsibility of the instructor. The registrar will be sending instructors a copy of the grades entered by the instructor to verify that they are correct. Another change was made to Policy 5-A in terms of add/drop dates....how long students would have to add/drop and a clarification on mid-semester classes.

Chair-Elect Jimmi Rushing attended the October meeting of the Academic Affairs Council. Al Cage requested support to cancel journal titles costing over \$500 to provide increased electronic document delivery to the university community.

Another item covered in the meeting was the Financial and Administration Committee's proposal on distance learning with possible \$500 teaching stipends per course, a \$35 stipend going back to the department of the course and a \$35 course fee added to tuition for a distance learning course.

A calendar correction for the year 2000 was made with summer commencement now set for August 12th, fall semester beginning August 23rd, and fall commencement occurring on December 16th.

The Council also added a policy called "Courses in Shortened Format" with a minimum length of courses. They reviewed several policies taking out the procedures element if they were located elsewhere.

Chair-Elect Rushing also attended the September meeting of the Graduate Council. It was noted that the number of graduate students decreased from 1574 last year to 1434 this year. Also new graduate forms are now available for graduate admission.

Rushing reported there is a Writing Center being developed in the Academic Assistance & Resource Center (AARC) by Dr. Ed Nagelhout for developmental purposes for graduate students.

Chair-Elect Rushing attended the core curriculum workshop given at the University of Houston. The workshop discussed Senate Bill 148 which requires each higher education institution to develop and accept a 42-hour core that would completely transfer from one state institution to another. Contact Jimmi Rushing for a more complete summary of the workshop.

Senator Sullivan asked if there had been any discussion on the impact of the bill passed involving the \$1000 bonus if a student graduates with less than six hours more than your degree plan requires.

Dr. Ashley replied that we are waiting on guidelines from the Coordinating Board on the bill. However, SFA has a strong relationship with regional community colleges that articulate requirements that will transfer.

There was concern expressed about possible \$200,000 cuts of library serials on whether the faculty would be asked about what to cut and not cut.

Dr. Ashley reassured the senate that the list would be widely distributed before any cuts are made, and you will have ample opportunity to make your suggestions.

Treasurer Mark Simmons reported that the Faculty Senate account has a balance of \$4,047.58 noting expenditures of \$418.42 for wages, printing, and dues.

Secretary Sherry Williford reported that they were working on getting the minutes and future meeting agendas posted on the web site.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Senator Mark Simmons reported that the Administration & Finance Committee had conducted a survey on the salaries of Vice-Presidents of Academic Affairs across Texas. The average salary was \$110,556. The survey was conducted to get a better understanding of administrative salaries in positions on the university campus noting that the VPAA is the league vice-president in an educationally based mission university. One indicator of an institution's dedication to the mission may be the salary structure.

Chair McDonald noted that Senator Becky Greer, chair of the Elections Committee, will be unavailable for a short period of time so Senator Jill Dumesnil, last year's chair, has agreed to fill in. The Elections Committee will be obtaining names to fill the vacancies in the Faculty Senate for a vote at the November meeting.

Senator Lauren Scharff indicated that the Faculty Government & Involvement Committee has placed the grade change policy back in committee for further research. The committee is also asking for feedback on term limits on the Faculty Senate. If faculty want to serve on the Faculty Senate, should they be limited in the number of years they can serve or will they get too powerful and influential serving more than one term limit? It was noted that the Faculty Senate is only an advisory body to the Administration and Board of Regents. The term limit suggestions is available for comment on the Faculty Senate web site.

Senator Frank Codispoti reported that the Professional Welfare I Committee is working on adopting the Academic Freedom Statement & the Academic Responsibility Statement as official university policy with the support of the Administration. They are asking for additional input on the Academic Responsibility Statement especially where it states "...freedom of expression must be balanced with the interest of the State...". Codispoti said that they would ask for an interpretation from Yvette Clark. It was also noted that "point #4" in the Academic Responsibility Statement was redundant to what was already in the Academic Freedom Statement. A memo will go out to all faculty for comments. The committee hopes to have a resolution by the November meeting. This document can be viewed on the Faculty Senate web site.

According to Chair-Elect Rushing, the Professional Welfare II Committee is looking at the intellectual property rights policy. They hope to have a draft of the policy by the November meeting. Rushing encouraged feedback on the policy by way of the web site.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Rushing, chair of the Professional Welfare II Committee, distributed a resolution in support of a request that SFA commission a study on the status of women and minority faculty at SFA. They see this study as being informative and beneficial for SFA and as a good instrument for recruitment of new faculty. The resolution was presented and will be voted on at the November meeting. Senator Sullivan moved that the December meeting of the Faculty Senate be moved from December 10th during finals to December 3rd and that the Executive Committee meet December 1st. Senator Dan Beaty seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Senator Codispoti brought up the need to elect a Faculty Grievance Panel so it would be in place if the need arises. Chair McDonald gave this issue to the Election Committee to work on establishing the panel by the end of the year.

Senator James Howard moved that the meeting be adjourned; Senator Dan Beaty seconded the motion. The motion was carried; the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Sherry Williford, *Secretary*