

Stephen F. Austin State University

**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
November 12, 1997 Meeting #270**

Approved December 3, 1997

Faculty Senate meeting #270 was called to order by Chair Darrel McDonald. The following senators were absent: Elliott-Howard (excused), Greer (excused), Howard (excused), Shows, and Stewart.

The minutes for meeting #269 were corrected and approved as amended.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY CHAIR MCDONALD

Chair McDonald recognized Cyd Adams and Charles Jones for their publication of *Blackjack, Bull Pine and Post-Oak Glade*, a combination of poems and drawings depicting East Texas. McDonald, on behalf of the Faculty Senate, complimented both faculty members and the Center of East Texas Studies who helped underwrite the work. There will be a book signing on November 21st at the Yellow House at 522 East Main.

McDonald recognized Robyn Brown, President of the Student Government Association. Brown presented to the Faculty Senate a bill passed by the SGA to change University Attendance Policy. Brown requested feedback from the faculty on the bill before SGA reconsiders the bill.

Faculty involved with Showcase Saturday were recognized by Chair McDonald. It was noted that about 2,000 persons attended.

McDonald also recognized the Department of Agriculture for the opening of the Poultry Research Center.

Resulting from concerns of the retired SFA faculty, the Faculty Senate received a letter from Dr. Dan Angel giving retired faculty equal access to the Wellness Center during faculty hours.

The Commission of the Future is underway looking at developing the plan for SFA's next five year document, "O3." Chair McDonald is working with Betty Johnson and Dave Kulhavy on faculty retention, faculty recruitment, and faculty awards and rewards for their work at the university. There are nine committees on a vast array of issues. In the future the faculty senate will be looking at where our committees may be able to link up with these committees to provide added information.

McDonald recognized ADA for conducting an interesting seminar on how the faculty responded to its Spring study. For the results of the study contact Dr. Bob Choate or Lucy Stringer at the ADA office.

Chair-Elect Jimmi Rushing was recognized for her work on the web site. McDonald also recognized Hardy Meredith for the pictures of the faculty on the web site. All faculty are encouraged to visit the web site for updates on issues.

Texas Recycle is November 13th. Recyclable goods will be collected in the Free Speech area. McDonald commented that it is important to set the example to keep our campus one of the most beautiful campuses in Texas.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

Chair McDonald reported on the November meeting of the Academic Affairs Council. The Council passed a policy requiring faculty to only attend one graduation a year. If faculty teach the Summer II session, they must attend the August graduation. Frank Codispoti and Mark Simmons will serve as marshals for the December graduation. Senator Martha Sullivan requested a clarification on the reasoning of the revised graduation attendance policy. McDonald indicated that he would check into this.

McDonald attended the October meeting of the Board of Regents. In accordance with the Department of Social Work accreditation the Board approved the name School of Social Work designating Mike Daley as the associate dean who will still report to Dr. James Standley, Dean of Applied Arts and Sciences.

It was noted SFA had an unexpected increase in revenue due to increased undergraduate enrollment. The \$1,442,320, including an increase of \$208,500 for E&G Tuition Revenue was applied to a number of areas, including contingency funds for Educational and General Expenses (\$112,420), Designated (209,045) and Pledged Auxiliary (\$395,736). \$31,000 was provided for salaries and the O&M for the Office of Instructional Technology. Food service also received approximately \$387,000.

Senator Wilbur Clark inquired if this auxiliary fund is athletics. McDonald said he would report back on where these funds actually went to.

McDonald reported that the removal of all asbestos from the campus continues. The next building targeted for removal will be the Twilight Ballroom in the University Center.

Chair McDonald and Chair-Elect Rushing attended the October meeting of the Texas Council of Faculty Senates. Representative Henry Cuellar, chair of Committee on Higher Education and chair of the Committee on Funding of Higher Education, spoke at the meeting. Cuellar reported that the state budget was \$82.6 billion indicating higher education is getting the highest percentage it will probably ever get. Of the new money available this year 63% went to education...mainly public education.

Cuellar also discussed House Bill 1235 which is the announcement of tuition revenue bonds which SFA received \$6 million. McDonald noted that SFA received one of the least amount of tuition bonds in the state. Inquires are underway to see where SFA ranked and why.

McDonald also reported that Cuellar said legislative committees are beginning to review and evaluate graduation rates and see how they might be tied to institutional funding.

It was noted that the Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty goes into law January 1, 1998.

Cuellar also discussed two house bills...HB 588 which deals with equality for diversity inside the academic arena and HB 9109 which requires athletes on scholarships to have the same entrance standards as other students coming into the university.

Cuellar reported that a new tuition fund has been set up by the legislature called the New Horizons Scholarships. Also, under HB 1898 has been established a tuition assistance fund of \$10 million. Cuellar also mentioned the setting up of uniform admittance to universities (HB 150).

McDonald encouraged anyone with comments on our university environment to speak with the legislators especially when the legislators see higher education as a saturated budget item.

McDonald reported the new Commissioner of Education, Don Brown also spoke at the Texas Council of Faculty Senates. Brown spoke on the racial problems being faced and bringing

everyone up to standards. His office sees equal access to education as a very important goal. Brown stated that he was not interested in seeking confrontation with the legislature about funding. He did note the large university systems in the state stating that there were only four independent state campuses.

Chair-Elect Rushing did add that Brown's statement on the university systems suggested that there could be an advantage when asking for money as a part of a system than as an independent university.

Rushing noted that she is working on a tracking form for issues on the web site and will take any suggestions from interested persons.

Rushing also said that memos were sent out to all university committee chairs for their year-end reports last year to keep the faculty senate informed on what the committees are doing.

Chair-Elect Jimmi Rushing attended the October meeting of the Graduate Council. Dr. David Jeffrey reported that SFA's name recognition seemed to be up at several college fairs over the past two years.

Rushing noted that the FY '99 Budget is scheduled to be reviewed at the April Board of Regents meeting, therefore graduate assistant allocations should be announced earlier than usual. Also, promotions and tenure recommendations are going to the Board in January.

Rushing reported on the Academics Affairs Committee of the Graduate Council's discussion on three policy changes. There was a change in the Thesis policy in the thesis guide. This can be found in the Graduate Council meeting summary attached. The committee discussed changing policy so that a graduate student remains on probation until overall GPA is 3.0 or better. Current policy states a graduate student can be removed from probation when achieving a 3.0 or better after a single semester. No decision was made at that time. There was also a request to change policy where overlap students within 12 hours of graduation could be considered for non-teaching assistantships.

Treasurer Mark Simmons reported that the Faculty Senate account has a balance of \$3,319.01 noting expenditures of \$1,774.85 for wages, printing, O&M and travel.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Acting Chair Jill Dumesnil reported that the Elections Committee is still working on getting a list of eligible voters who can be nominated for vacant Senate seats. Fine Arts and Education were again encouraged to nominate candidates for vacant seats.

Senator John Moore reported that the Ethics Committee was given the task to examine the status of statements concerning ethics in the Faculty Handbook and the Policies and Procedure Manual. Their recommendation to the Faculty Senate is that it is unnecessary to place the Ethics Statement from the Faculty Handbook in the Policies and Procedures Manual of which there is none. The Committee feels at this time it is not necessary to include a general statement concerning ethics in either of the publications.

Faculty Government & Involvement Committee Chair Lauren Scharff presented for first reading a change in the constitution concerning term limits for senators. After much discussion it was decided to provide alternate proposals on the web site for further input. A new proposal will be presented at the December meeting. The committee is also still working on the Academic Grievance Process and will have a proposal for first reading at the December meeting.

Senator Frank Codispoli presented, from the Professional Welfare I Committee, the first reading on combining the Academic Freedom and the Academic Responsibility Statements into one

statement and adopting the statement as official university policy. The resolution will be brought forward in December for a vote. Go to the web site to make suggestions. Senators are encouraged to distribute the statement to all faculty for input before the December meeting.

Rushing, chair of the Professional Welfare II Committee, presented a revised resolution to request the Administration update the Status of Women report done in 1982 and to include minority faculty. The resolution passed and will be forwarded to the Administration. Also, presented for first reading were changes to the current Intellectual Property policy. The changes mainly dealt with setting up a special committee to deal with unresolved questions instead of going to the President. The committee would be made up of a member chosen by the faculty person(s) involved, one member chosen by the President or his designee, and one member agreed upon by both parties. The changes are available on the web site for suggestions. This will come up for vote at the December meeting.

Senator Sullivan asked whether data sets in any format that required university funds to put them together are covered under sponsored research agreements.

Rushing indicated that the committee would go back and review this issue.

Chair McDonald expressed the concern of another faculty member that some faculty members were requiring students to buy their materials for their class from them that were not commercially available to a similar class at another institution. The problem was where the money was going...back to the faculty member not the department. No action was taken on the matter.

OLD BUSINESS

Senator Bonnie Todd nominated Joe Devine to fill the vacancy in Liberal Arts for a one-year term. There were no other nominations. Senator Clark moved to close the nominations. Senator Dumesnil second the motion. The Faculty Senate voted unanimously Joe Devine as the new Liberal Arts Senator. Devine will be seated at the December meeting.

The Colleges of Fine Arts and Education are still encouraged to fill their senator vacancies.

Chair McDonald announced that he is helping the Elections Committee collect information about the Grievance Panel set up by the university....whether the Faculty Senate is responsible for filling the positions.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair McDonald assigned the Academic Affairs Committee the SGA attendance policy issue. They are soliciting comments from the faculty.

Chair-Elect Rushing express the concern of a faculty member in the College of Sciences and Mathematics that our graduate assistantship stipends are not competitive with other schools. Our applications have increased, but our admissions have decreased. Several Senators also expressed the same concern from their colleges. Chair McDonald indicated after further review he will assign it to the appropriate committee.

Senator Jeff Briggs moved that the meeting be adjourned; Senator Scharff seconded the motion. The motion was carried; the meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Sherry Williford
Secretary