

Stephen F. Austin State University

**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
February 11, 1998 Meeting #272**

Draft, February 11, 1998

Faculty Senate meeting #272 was called to order by Chair Darrel McDonald. The following senators were absent: Josephsen (excused), Kenner (excused), Loving (excused), Oswald, Stewart, and Thompson (excused).

The minutes for meeting #271 were approved as written.

SPECIAL GUESTS

Monique Nunn, coordinator of the Multicultural Center, addressed the Faculty Senate. She gave an overview of the Center and its activities. The Center offers planning and training for leadership workshops and seminars for the whole university not just for minority groups. The Center does have five organizations under them. Nunn reported that Diversity Week is coming soon sometime in April. If anyone has some suggestions on programs or seminars, please contact Nunn by e-mail at munn@sfasu.edu.

Her biggest aim right now is for university support to achieve more notoriety of the Center across the campus.

Robyn Brown, SGA President, presented the senate a revised version of the attendance policy passed by the SGA on 2/10/98. Brown asked for comments from the faculty which may be forward by e-mail to sga@sfasu.edu.

Dr. Pat Russell, director of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Self-Study, gave the first of monthly reports on the progress of the SACS self-study. Every ten years the university is required to do a self-study on everything concerning the university...physical plant, library, faculty, administration, etc. The rationale is that we have to be accredited. The self-study aims at showing that we are in compliance with the 400+ rules and regulations set down. The study will look at the strengths and the weaknesses in our organization. It will showcase the things we do well and correct those things where we are weak. Each department makes a report that feeds into other committees set up on campus. Spring 2000 a visiting team from outside of the state will come after receiving our self-study. They will be on campus three days to inspect the university. Russell stressed that everyone needs to know what is going on.

Chair McDonald asked Russell what arrangement is being made to work with the '03 Commission.

Russell reported that the two groups would be working together. Some chairs are in both committees in both studies. Russell also announced that there would be a general session meeting Thursday, February 19th, in the McKibben Education Building, Room 131, at 3 p.m. Anyone with questions or needing more information may contact Dr. Russell by e-mail at prussell@sfasu.edu.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY CHAIR MCDONALD

Chair McDonald introduced Laura Jennings, a new student worker for Faculty Senate.

Chair-Elect Jimmi Rushing and McDonald will be attending the Texas Council of Faculty Senates February 20-21st in Austin.

McDonald encouraged everyone to answer the technology survey for the '03 Commission by Friday, February 13th. The survey is located on the web. Also, there is a survey by Roger Bilow from the Academics Standards Subcommittee that needs to be filled out.

McDonald reported that an Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Standards has been given to Senator Mark Simmons to coordinate with the '03 Commission on standards. Senator Joe Devine has also agreed to serve on the committee.

The '03 committees are looking for any input from faculty to include in this next five-year plan.

McDonald also informed the senate that Mike Jennings is talking with state about the ability to lease capital equipment with HEAF instead of out right buying the equipment. This may be a way to cycle out changing technology.

REMARKS FROM DR. JANELLE ASHLEY

Dr. Ashley thanked Dr. Pat Russell for spearheading the SACS self-study. She also announced that Kellogg had extended the grant for the ACE Project which would likely continue SFA as a participant in the project. Ashley encouraged everyone to respond to the surveys already mentioned plus a survey on academic programs by Dr. Allen Richman.

Dr. Ashley reported on the timetable for the Commission on the Future planning process. Subcommittees will turn in reports by the end of May. During the summer the commission will compile a draft from all the information for presentation in the Fall for feedback. The first '03 draft is targeted to be presented to the Board of Regents in October 1998. The final approval of the '03 plan by the Board of Regents would take place at the January 1999 meeting.

Chair McDonald asked Dr. Ashley about the budget for the Fall.

Ashley reported that there would be a 3% pool of money available for merit for non-classified professional staff and faculty. Classified staff will have a 3% across the board salary increase. O&M will be flat due to the focus on salary increases. The state had mandated a cut in travel money by 10%, however, that has been reinstated with local funds available for travel.

The question was asked whether 1st year faculty is eligible for merit. Ashley responded that they are eligible for merit subject to guidelines developed by individual colleges. There are separate funds available for promotions. Faculty is also eligible for merit raises during a promotion year.

Chair McDonald asked about faculty development funds for the next budget.

Ashley responded that they were requesting at least the same amount of funds that we had last year. Ashley said she would push for more but frankly does not think it will happen.

Ashley was asked about the 21 people in English who did not get paid on time. She said that it concerned call faculty teaching contingency courses. The paperwork will not go through until it is known for sure that the courses are making. The people involved know that this will or may happen.

A question was asked about the days between semesters in the upcoming university calendar. Dr. Ashley responded that there were 39 days between semesters FY97 and FY98. The university looks at when the Coordinating Board tells them the first day of school must be and then when we have commencement. There has to be 15 weeks of instruction plus one week of finals. There is also a Coordinating Board rule that specifies the number of days before Christmas that you must stop. When you put all of those items together, you come up with a format to determine the university calendar. Starting FY99 for the next two years SFA will have 24 days

between semesters. The Fall '99 semester will start August 26th, August 25th for the year 2000, August 23rd for 2001, August 22nd for 2002, August 21st for 2003 and August 20th for 2004.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

Chair McDonald met with Dr. Dan Angel this month. Dr. Angel will refer the Senate's recommendations on a new Academic Freedom and Responsibility policy to the Academic Affairs Committee, and hopefully it will move on to the April Board of Regents meeting. The request for a study on the Status of Women and Minorities was denied, since the data was already collected and analyzed for the Bakewell case. The senate's recommendations on changes to the Intellectual Property policy will be forwarded also to the Academic Affairs Committee. Dr. Ashley did make the statement that the President automatically sends all policies and resolutions to the Academic Affairs Committee. Ashley went on to say that Regent Ron Adkinson has an interest and expertise in the Intellectual Property policy and in a copyright policy with interest in faculty protection of research and products.

McDonald reported that Gerry Liner's office will no longer support Unix equipment on campus. It was reported to Angel that there is a large amount of Unix equipment still on campus. To help better understand the issue senators were asked to check if any Unix equipment and maintenance are being used in their departments. Indicate if you have a maintenance contract for hardware and software.

Several safety issues were passed along to Dr. Angel by McDonald. One example is that there is no pedestrian crossing sign ahead of the crosswalk between the UC and the Rusk Building that is very heavily used. Angel was very interested any other safety issues to make the campus a more safe environment for all.

Senator Martha Sullivan expressed congratulations to the grounds crew for landscaping in front of Liberal Arts North.

McDonald went on to say that in the budgeting process Dr. Angel pointed out that one of the reasons we have an early budget is that all fee increases have to be voted on and approved by the Board of Regents before pre-registration. Ashley noted that you cannot raise fees if students have already registered. However, if you raise fees, you may get a re-look from the legislature that you need less state appropriations...putting us in a difficult situation.

Chair-Elect Rushing and McDonald attended the January Board of Regents meeting in Houston. In addition to faculty appointments and raises approved for coaches, the Board agreed to add \$1 million dollars to the funds available to renovate the Miller Science Building and 10% over any Coordinating Board approved amount to replace and/or renovate the Homer Bryce Stadium track, turf, lighting, and sound system. The estimated cost is approximately \$1.4 million dollars. The Board also approved to expand the Alumni Center for just under \$600,000 in private funds which will be called the Tracy D. Pearman Alumni Center. This expansion will add about 2100 square feet with the opening taking place by Fall 1998. Also, approved was the renovation of the Tucker House with a \$4.97 million five-year grant from the Temple Foundation for housing the Forest Resources Institute. Thirty-two policies were put forward to update university policy. Thirty passed with two held out for further research.

McDonald also reported on the Academic Affairs Council. Glenda Harrington spoke on the Family Medical Leave procedures and requirements. One item discussed was that a 30-day lead notice should be given if possible and a return to work statement must be filed before returning to work. If there are more than three days consecutive absences, you have to file a PAR. Dennis Jones reported that as of 1/27/98 enrollment was 11,017 students. This is a couple hundred students above last Spring's enrollment. It was also reported that the Coordinating Board is reviewing faculty work load. Dr. Ashley commented that since performance measures are used to supplement tenure and tenure-track faculty, workload must be reported in the same. Core

Curriculum committee will have a first reading of their recommendations in early April with a final reading due in July. Fall '99 will be the first students effected by the policy. This is for a 42-hour block that will transfer freely from community colleges to universities.

McDonald announced that April 7th is the Teacher Excellence recognition with Dr. Jim DiNucci delivering the address in the UC.

Chair-Elect Jimmi Rushing attended the January 29th meeting of the Graduate Council. The Council announced that the GRE & the GMAT are currently being offered at the new SFA testing site with five subtests to be added soon. Graduate application forms are now on the web but must be printed and faxed or mailed in. Kris Rhodes, coordinator for the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, has resigned to take a similar position in West Virginia. There is 3% new money available for graduate assistantships for Fall '99. The minimum will increase from \$5,800 to \$6,000 with some money available to pay over the minimum. Nominations are being solicited for the Marilyn Odom outstanding graduate student (graduating August, December '97 or May '98) and for the William R. Johnson outstanding thesis award for calendar year 1997. You may contact the Graduate Office for guidelines and to submit nominations. Dr. Ashley announced that the new graduate bulletins are available. Dr. Jeffrey also noted that the Council was looking at graduate faculty qualifications to be able to better accommodate professionals who are starting to become part of graduate committees. Rushing went on to report that a policy is needed by September 1st to comply with SB961, which disallows state funding for doctoral students with over 100 hours. There was more discussion of graduate school application fees. The graduate student representative indicated that they were an expected expense. The proposal was tabled. There was additional discussion of whether a proposal should be required before students enroll in thesis research classes. No action was taken. McDonald noted that the Academic Affairs Committee passed a clarification on the suspended graduate student. If you need more information, contact Dr. Jeffrey.

Chair-Elect Rushing reported on a luncheon held to introduce interested faculty to the Extended Degree Program from Washington State University. Dr. Muriel Oaks, director of Extended University Services, presented a video discussing the various distance education programs and answered questions on funding and technical support, faculty participation and remuneration and other issues.

Rushing announced changes on the Faculty Senate web page. The web page has been updated to include a Current Issues Forum. Links to information on current issues such as Core Curriculum, Evaluation of Tenured Faculty, and Alternative Dispute Resolution are available. There is also a new link to the SACS Self-Study information. Suggestions are welcome.

Treasurer Mark Simmons reported that the Faculty Senate account has a balance of \$2,657.00.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Elections Committee Chair Becky Greer reported that the preparation for elections of new senators is underway. Nominations will be taken in March with ballots to go out early April for voting. The committee will also conduct the vote for the term limits amendment should it pass. McDonald encouraged senators to go back to their colleges to get faculty to run for vacant senator slots.

Lauren Scharff, chair of the Faculty Government & Involvement Committee, moved to accept the changes to term limits for faculty senators where senators would be able to serve multiple terms. The motion passed and will be voted on by the entire faculty due to a change in the constitution. The committee also moved to accept changes to the Academic Complaints by Students policy. A friendly amendment was made by Senator Frank Codispoti to allow the appeal process to be within 30 days of the next "long-term" semester instead of next semester taking into consideration

people not being around in the summer. The motion to accept policy changes with the friendly amendment passed with one opposing vote.

Professional Welfare II Committee Chair Jimmi Rushing brought forward a resolution to adopt mediation procedures on campus. Committee member Florence Elliott-Howard provided background information on the resolution. This is in response to SB694 which states that "it is the policy of this state that disputes before state agencies be resolved as fairly and expeditiously as possible and that each state agency supports this policy by developing and using alternative dispute resolution procedures in appropriate aspects of the agency's operations and programs." The committee recommended that the use of mediation was the best method for the university community in alternative dispute resolution. There are a number of certified mediators on campus, or if the money is available, a person could be hired from the outside. This would be a method to resolve disputes without going to more formal procedures or litigation. This would also be in addition to formal procedures already set in place. Rushing moved for approval of the resolution which recommends that "the goal of establishing campus mediation services and policies for all members of the university community be incorporated into the SFASU Commission of the Future Goals for 2003." The mediation guidelines could be defined by the appointment of perhaps a task force or other means determined by the administration. After brief discussion the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Senator Codispoti suggested the appointment of a committee to look at the traffic and pedestrian safety problems for recommendations to the Administration. Chair McDonald indicated that this issue would be assigned to the appropriate committee.

Senator Codispoti also made the suggestion that in a body like the Faculty Senate there needs to be a presiding officer or speaker to run the meeting. This person's sole function would be to preside over the meeting but not be a member of the senate. This would free the chair to participate in discussions on the floor of the senate. McDonald again will send this to a committee for a report on the need.

McDonald reminded the senate that an Ad-Hoc Academic Standards Committee had been appointed with Senator Simmons as chair and Senator Devine as a member of the committee.

Chair McDonald asked for a senator to chair an Ad-Hoc Adjunct Faculty Committee that would have the members of the committee be adjunct faculty giving them input on items to bring forward to the senate. Senator Elliott-Howard agreed to serve as chair with Senator Kandy Stahl helping her.

The issue of how departmental policies are created, enforced and changed has come to the attention of McDonald. Is it the responsibility of the chair or is there a working group in the department making these decisions? This issue will be sent to a committee for study.

Senator Sullivan asked whether there needed to be a formal report from the Academic Affairs Committee on the SFA Attendance Policy. McDonald did not think that was necessary, but that all feedback be forwarded to the SGA President.

Senator Bonnie Todd moved that the meeting be adjourned; Senator Lauren Scharff seconded the motion. The motion was carried; the meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

Sherry Williford
Secretary