

Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2001 Meeting #299
(Subject to Approval at March Meeting)

I. CALLED TO ORDER by Chair Kandy Stahl at 2:31 PM

Absent: Rick Abel, Thomas Caffery

Excused: Marie Saracino

II. General Announcements

Patti Mason is replacing Ray Horn.

The university has hired a search firm for its presidential search. The field will be narrowed to 10 applicants by March 8, and then 3-5 for campus interviews during the week of April 16. As before, the faculty will have one hour with each candidate. The board will interview the candidates on May 1. Faculty are requested to nominate; send nomination letters and CV's to the address in the minutes packet.

New SHSU surveys will be sent out to replace the old ones that were misprinted.

In the minutes packet was also a proposed amendment to the cheating and plagiarism policy.

The policy rewrite on administrative evaluations is not yet complete; however, three deans will be using the new policy even though it is not yet officially in effect.

III. Approval/Correction of minutes of Meetings #296 (November 2000)

Senator Zagrodnik requested that the sentence "Senator Zagrodnik disagreed: students in developmental courses are often writing at a higher level than students in credit courses." be amended to read "Senator Zagrodnik disagreed: students in developmental courses are sometimes writing at a higher level than students in credit courses." The amended minutes were approved.

IV. Officers' Reports

A. Chair:

The academic affairs council requested Chair Stahl to name a senator to serve on the calendar committee; Senator McCune volunteered. There will also be one faculty member from each college.

Roger Bilow discussed an application fee recommendation with the board. Senator Fleet said that an application fee "begs the real issue, which is entrance standards." Senator Sullivan said that East Texas students "are being ignored" as far as recruiting is concerned. Senator Sementelli asked why we aren't recruiting nationally. Senator Ballenger suggested that the senate invite someone from admissions to explain the university's recruiting strategy. Chair Stahl will invite Roger Bilow to the March Senate meeting. Senator King said that Lamar's enrollment has risen by 500 students; the

president of Lamar said that they had refocused their recruiting efforts from Houston and Dallas onto their traditional service markets, including Nacogdoches county.

The research council made recommendations to eliminate discrimination against forestry.

Chair Stahl pointed out to the board of regents that they did not discuss our resolution. She invited the board members to attend the March senate meeting.

Senator Devine and Chair Stahl met with Dr. Ashley to discuss a faculty listserv; Dr. Ashley observed that many faculty do not use titan accounts, which could make it difficult to include all faculty. Senator Sementelli inquired about the possibility of a web-based message board rather than a listserv; Senator Sullivan suggested that perhaps both media would be useful.

Chair Stahl also spoke to Dr. Ashley regarding the senate resolution to name Liberal Arts North for Vera Dugas; the executor of Dugas' estate would like to name the Hall of Honor for her instead. Senator Devine said that the goal is just to name something suitable to honor her.

The Senate finance hearing "went well"; the senate will be considering faculty and staff salaries.

Chair Stahl was informed that posting students grades is legal provided that the grades are not linked to social security numbers or other symbols that identify the student. To be on the safe side, faculty should have students sign voluntary consent forms. Senator King expressed doubt as to the legality of grade posting under any circumstances.

Chair Stahl invited legal counsel Clark to the February meeting; Clark declined, saying, "it doesn't make sense to answer the same questions I did last year."

B. Chair-Elect:

The graduate council discussed the declining graduate enrollments. The major undergraduate enrollment problem seems to be retention.

C. Treasurer:

The treasurer's report was submitted to the senate as a handout.

D. Secretary: No report.

V. Committee Reports

A. Academic Affairs:

The committee met and discussed research on uniform graduate admissions standards. The committee will be looking at summer provisional admissions and whether electronic blocking of enrollment in a course for which a prerequisite has not been met is working. Senator Howard asked what faculty are responsible for when non-campus police come to arrest a student in our classes.

The senators received a new senate roster and committee list in a handout.

B. Administration and Finance: No report.

C. Elections: No report. In March, the senate will need to identify those senators who will be running for senate offices.

D. Faculty Government and Involvement: No report.

E. Professional Welfare:

Senators received a handout regarding distance and distributed course materials as amended from the UNT policy. Senator Oswald requested that all senators read the materials for discussion at the March meeting.

F. Strategic Planning:

The strategic planning committee is working to discern faculty opinion about joining a system and is preparing a questionnaire for that purpose. After some discussion about the format of such a questionnaire, the point was raised that the strategic planning committee is not required to obtain the senate's approval of its instrument; however, the members of the committee requested that anyone with comments direct them to a committee member.

VI. Old Business

The senate discussed the advisability of hiring a consultant to investigate faculty salary inequities; senators received a handout detailing salary comparisons across the state. Dave Castle of Lamar has indicated willingness to assist with a salary study for a minimal fee; Dr. Castle was primarily responsible for Lamar's salary study. Senator Williams said that an outside resource would aid the study's credibility.

The proposed study would deal with 9-month salaries only, as benefits are determined at the state level. Senator Jones asked whether adjunct salaries would be included in the study. The study will include all full-time faculty.

Senator Dougal asked where the report would be going. It would go to the media and to the administration.

Senator Ballenger asked how long the study would take; it is not known at this time.

Motion to negotiate a contract with Dr. Castle passed with one opposing vote.

VII. New Business

The senate discussed a resolution to put the university budget online, available in a handout. Friendly Amendment: "Resolved: all amendments and adjustments to the budget are relevant ..."

Motion passed unanimously.

Assigned to academic affairs: there is an increase in the rate of cheating and plagiarism. The committee is charged with investigating the desirability of an honor code. It would require the full backing of the faculty, but it is worth looking into. Senator Sullivan said that an honor code might not be feasible on this campus owing to the quality of SFA's student population in general. Chair Stahl said that such a policy could have the effect of improving the quality of SFA's students. Research has suggested that rates of cheating have dropped at schools that adopted an honor code.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.