

Stephen F. Austin State University

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes October 8, 2003 Meeting #323

Subject to approval at November 2003 meeting.

Senators present were:

Sandra McCune substituting for Vi Alexander, Gary Wurtz, David Gundersen, Tom Houston, Kelly Salsbery, Liza Mize, Steve Jeffcoat, Larry King, Alyx Frantzen, Troy Davis, Brian Oswald, Carol Scamman, Jere Jackson, Parker Ballinger, Tracy Zinn, Peter King, Cody Edwards, Sam Copeland, Dawnella Rust, Linda Stark Bobo, Gary Mayer, Leisha Bridwell, Rob Culpepper, Roy Joe Harris

Excused: Sarah Stovall

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:33 p.m. by Dr. Darrel McDonald at the Tracy Pearman Alumni Center.

GUESTS

Provost Mary Ann Cullinan

Dr. Cullinan wanted to update the Senate on some of the searches that are going on campus. Dean Jacobsen will be chairing the search committee for the Dean of Business. There will also be a search for a new Director of Research and Sponsored Programs. The University is also finalizing searches for tenured faculty who will come on board in the fall of 2004. The idea is to have a larger ad in the *Chronicle* that covers all of the positions that SFA has to offer.

Dr. Cullinan reviewed progress that has been made with the changing of the committee structure of the Academic Affairs Council, which has had its last meeting in its old form. It will now become the Provost's Council and will meet fairly infrequently and generally on a specific issue. The membership on this committee will also change significantly. There will also be a policy committee, which will be chaired by Dean Stanley. An Academic Planning Committee that will participate in the establishment of academic priorities, which eventually will become the budgetary process, will also be formed. There is a new Enrollment and Retention committee and a Student Success committee. These groups have already been meeting frequently, because they are involved in policies related to the TASP and how it will be used. Academic Technology Committee will also be developed. Dr. Cullinan had hoped to develop Undergraduate Council, which is parallel to the Graduate Council. They have taken the Curriculum Committee with

Dr. Ormsby as chair and moved it in that direction. A Distance Education Committee has been developed, and Dr. Randy McDonald is chair. An Academic Assessment Committee chaired by Dean Herbert and Dean Atchison will be responsible for evaluating programs as a basis for SACS. Dr. Cullinan wants to put a Program Review Committee and Academic Resources Committee together in the spring. A Committee on Committees will also be formed in order to be sure that the right people get involved on the committees.

The Provost indicated that she had had a good meeting with the Honors council and she felt that it was a very good, positive start to getting some discussion started. She also stated that she plans to have an open forum in order to meet more people, and listen to the faculty voice their concerns. She also volunteered to come to Department or College meetings.

Pam Fitch – Executive Director of Nacogdoches Convention and Visitors Bureau

With the decentralization of the Continuing Education program, the Convention and Visitors Bureau may be able to help with setting up and encouraging the development of conventions. The NCVB would like to partner with more faculty members at SFA in setting up meetings of associations or academic groups, etc. Ms. Fitch reviewed the services, which are provided by the Bureau. The goal is to help make planning a meeting very easy and as economical as possible. It is a full service bureau, and they can assist with locating housing (often with group discounts) and meeting space. They also have manpower to help with tasks such as registration, providing receptions, name tags, etc. at no cost.

Bill Wagner – Director of Information Technology Services

Holiday schedule and services interruptions – The new telephone switch will be in the Human Services Building. Around Christmas, there will be an outage of telephone and email services. Some things are beyond SFA's control. First, we're working with public utilities. Second, we have a limited budget, and the personnel costs can be prohibitive. Third, the calendar is terrible for this task. Critical services need to be down as short a time as possible. Grades are due by 12:00 noon on Dec. 23. SWBT will begin cutting phone cables two hours later. Finally, there is a basketball game scheduled, and the weather is always a question. On the data side, there will be a very minimal outage between SFA and the world. That is scheduled to begin Wednesday Dec. 24 at 8 a.m. The down time should be about 1 hour. Data on campus will continue to flow even during this time. Beginning at 8 am on the 24th the voice will be rewired on a building-by-building basis. Mr. Wagner has a list as to when the phones will go down and back up. Phone service cannot be guaranteed after 2 p.m. on the 23rd. Elevators will be shut off, as emergency phone service won't be available. Even given the worst case scenario, phone service for the entire campus will be back at 5:30 p.m. on the 30th of December. ITS will publish a detailed schedule after the contract with SWBT is signed.

University Identification Codes – The University will be converting from Social Security numbers to another kind of personal identifier. The new software will generate a random 8-digit identifier for each student. As we do this, the system will be able to remember the number and respond to that and the social security number. Users will have a choice as to whether they use the social security number or the campus identification number. There may be some downstream problems with the campus image system, changing out SFA ID cards, and what they do. Hopefully, the first phase, generating the alternative identification numbers, will be ready to go after the Christmas holidays.

Surveys – Information Technology wrote election software for SGA using Oracle. This code has been generalized for a wide variety of surveys. The question is, can faculty use the election software to develop specific surveys for classes? The answer is “yes.” Response time may vary, but ITS will be happy to help with customized surveys. It is possible to develop a customized list of people to target for survey. There is no cost for these services. Online voting is confidential and secure. Senator Scamman, who is chairing the Committee for Elections, asked how a directory of voting faculty members could be created and maintained. ITS could work with her committee. If the criteria exist in Human Resources database, they can do it. She was advised to contact Rich Barnhart in ITS.

Telephone charges – There are questions about whether there are higher charges for using 1-800 numbers as opposed to out of state charges. There are currently some negotiations going on for a new telephone company. The rates will be much better from a university perspective. Information Technology is very positive about the change and feels that the new company (BarTech) will do a great job.

Budgets for Information Technology – Mr. Wagner explained that he is often asked if there are Information Technology projects that need/deserve support. He indicated that there is no dedicated technical support structure for the students. In August, the residence halls were shut down for extended times to disinfect computers. Volunteers did all this, because there is no money to support this kind of student help. They can't keep working with all volunteers. There are legal and liability issues. Information Technology is trying to be proactive in this area, and they may need more funds to address this need. A wide range of issues needs to be addressed before the problem can be corrected.

OPSCAN – Senator Zinn had a question regarding the OPSCAN system. How are decisions made to use this software? Was there any faculty input? Senator Houston indicated that he, too, had experienced many problems, and he has discussed these with personnel in ITS. Mr. Wagner explained that the old system was unsupported, so a new system was installed in order to be proactive. The reason that this software was selected is that it was a universe of one. There were no other systems available for purchase.

OLD BUSINESS

Dr. Larry King observed that last year, the Senate looked at the policy regarding Evaluation of Deans. It was deferred by the Senate and sent to the President. It went to the Interim Vice President. No action has been taken. The current system is not working well. The changes that we requested included faculty input in the evaluation process and working with the Provost to develop evaluations. The primary change would be to include the faculty in the process, which would lend some credibility to the evaluation process. Dr. Darrel McDonald suggested that the Senate should look at the resolution again, because it fits in nicely with the type of process and system that Dr. Cullinan has planned.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Dr. McDonald has made committee assignments, and if individual Senators want to change they should do it quickly by exchanging assignments with someone who is on the their desired committee. The first charge for the Committees is to get an idea of the role that each body should play. They should each write a mission statement. The second charge is to examine whether or not your committee can be modified to work more closely and easily with the Provost's office.

PRESIDENT ELECT'S REPORT

Dr. Wurtz presented a report from the latest meeting of the Graduate Council. His report is inserted here:

1. Graduate Council- For information regarding Graduate Council, go to: <http://www.sfasu.edu/graduate/index1.html> (as of 9:00 am today it was not current.)

- grad enrollment is up to 1661 from 1573 last year (5.6%)
- grad credit hours up to 10,152 from 9,347 last year (8.6%)
- 24 foreign students, most of whom are grad students
- Assistantships: total last year- \$1,255,918, this year- \$1,328,408 (Drs. Guerrero and Young strong forces in securing the increase, which has led to some new assistantships as well as extension of others from 9 to 12 month assistantships.
- Some other funding has led to the retention of some second year research assistants.

- 2 new Ph.D.'s being proposed (Environmental Science and counseling)
- other (Dr. Oswald?)

2. Salary Equity- continues to work. They are handling one grievance at this time. Dr. Guerrero has asked for advice on how to handle a hypothetical situation whereby there is some pool of money available for raises this year. If it should come available, should it be used to rectify some of the equity issues not completed last year, or to provide a small merit pool?

3. Please provide timely responses to all committee membership requests from above, so as to reflect an eagerness to work together, and to show respect for the involvement we're being allowed.

4. Finally, I would like to encourage all of you (or at least one per college) to send a report to your colleges about senate goings-on, and make it as positive as possible, so they'll be less apprehensive about serving when you rotate off.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Senate has the same amount of funds available, minus the amount spent on binders for the Senators. Dr. McDonald thanked Sandra McCune for substituting for Vi Alexander.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. McDonald brought the Minutes from Meeting 320 back to the table. Senator Oswald made a motion that they be approved. Senator Frantzen seconded. Passage was unanimous, and the Minutes were accepted as submitted.

Dr. Darrel McDonald brought the Minutes from Meeting 322 to the table. Senator Carol Scamman suggested some minor corrections. Senator Salsbery moved to accept the minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Senator Houston. Approval as corrected was unanimous.

ELECTIONS

Dr. Beverly Reed is the sole candidate from Liberal Arts at this time. An election will be held in order to provide an opportunity for write in candidates, and will examine the potential for conducting an uncontested election by sending ballots as attachments. We need one more senator from the Business College's Department of Finance and Economics. Senator Scamman took a straw poll on using elections through mySFA. The straw poll indicated that many, but not all,

senators would like to try secure, electronic voting through mySFA. None were strongly opposed to the idea.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution on Review of Tenure and Promotion Policies

A joint resolution from Academic Affairs and Professional Welfare Committees was given a first reading. A draft of that proposed resolution follows:

Request for University to Review Tenure and Promotion Policies Across Campus

Whereas, achieving tenure is a critical and timely issue facing university faculty nation-wide and locally at Stephen F. Austin State University:

Whereas, over the last few years more than half of the faculty have entered into volunteer modified employment or retired:

Whereas, new tenure track faculty have been hired to fill most of these vacancies:

Where, tenure requirements vary and should vary across disciplines but are often not well articulated or documented at the department or college level for tenure-track faculty to access to help guide their development:

Whereas, tenure requirements need to be met by faculty to gain tenure;

Whereas, promotion also is an important goal for faculty and the requirements are hard to find in an organized package; Be it Resolved:

That the Faculty Senate requests that the Provost's office initiate a campus wide review of tenure and promotion requirements to bring about a clear understanding for faculty as to the requirements and review process of tenure and promotion at SFASU.

We are asking that the first step in this process should be the submission of all departmental and college tenure and promotion requirements and procedures to the Provost's office so that the Faculty Senate may initiate a review process in conjunction with a cross campus representative committee including representatives from the Provost's office.

Senator Oswald indicated that the Committees are trying to get an idea what the policy currently is and to pull things together so that people have better information about what to include in their tenure packet.

Senator Rust asked if the Senate can also get clarification on when faculty members are eligible to go up for tenure and promotion. She suggested the addition of the following phrase to the Resolution: "Whereas the year at which a faculty person can apply for tenure or promotion is not clearly specified." Dr. Wurtz indicated that he has discussed this with both the President and the Provost, and they are willing to have us craft the policy.

Dr. Darrel McDonald observed that the other issue that has come up is the lack of collegiality as a basis for refusal of tenure or promotion. At least a few of the last rejections were based on this. There is no clear definition of what collegial is. Senator Rust's addition is a friendly amendment.

Senator Scamman suggested adding, "as to the requirements, progress reporting, and promotion requirements to bring about a clear understanding for..." to the second to the last paragraph.

Senator Zinn asked how the Senate could coordinate with other groups on campus who are talking about the same issue (ex. The Liberal Arts Council).

Dr. Darrel McDonald indicated that he would ask the Provost to make the information that we are working on these issues available to all of the other groups on campus.

Piper Aware Candidate

SFASU has three candidates for the prestigious Piper Award. Dr. McDonald has indicated that the Provost has asked us to assist our three candidates. The Ethics Committee will take this charge.

Reallocation of Senators

Every three years, reallocation of the number of Senators should be examined according to the Constitution. The Committee for Elections was charged with this.

Reverse Graduation

Faculty Governance and Involvement Committee charged with working with reverse graduation and acknowledgements. This involves a process by which students are granted an Associates Degree at their Community Colleges while they finish their work at SFA.

Charge to all Committees

Retention Committee has to put together a report on Retention to go to the Board on December 1. Dr. McDonald would like the Senate to pass a resolution on what we think our stance should be on strategies for retention. All committees

should meet very quickly and develop their strategies and these should be emailed to Dr. McDonald. He will put together a resolution and distribute it for comment from the Senate. He would like to hold a virtual meeting for the first reading on November 25. We will vote on it at the November meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Alyx Frantzen made a motion for adjournment, and Senator Troy Davis seconded. The Senate stood adjourned at 4:47 pm.