

# Stephen F. Austin State University

## Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes May 5, 2004 Meeting #329

Subject to approval at September 8, 2004 meeting.

### **Senators present were:**

Beverly Reed, Gary Wurtz, Brian Oswald, Carol Scamman, Rob Culpepper, Roy Joe Harris, Tracy Zinn, DawnElla Rust, Alyx Frantzen, Leisha Bridwell, Joe Ballenger (sitting in for David Gundersen), Kelly Salsbery, Linda Bobo, Jere Jackson, Troy Davis, Vi Alexander, Mark Simmons, Stephen Jeffcoat, Tom Houston, Jill Dumesnil (sitting in for Sarah Stovall), Parker Ballinger.

**Excused absences:** David Gundersen (sent sub), Sarah Stovall (sent sub), Dixie Mercer (ill), Cody Edwards (lab)

**Unexcused:** Lisa Mize, Sam Copeland, Gary Mayer.

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 2:35 p.m. by Chair Darrel McDonald at the Tracy D. Pearman Alumni Center.

### **Guests**

#### **PRESIDENT TITO GUERRERO**

In reference to the controversy reflected in the media, including a barrage of comments from callers to the Daily Sentinel's "Sound Off" column, Dr. Guerrero was asked to discuss his \$43,000 raise. He stated that the raise was unrelated to his job application in New Mexico. It was the Board of Regents' idea, and he has never asked them for a raise. He turned down the raise they offered him last year. When he heard that they were determined to give him a raise this year, he asked them to wait until he could assure faculty and staff that they would also receive raises. He talked about faculty raises and the 5% salary pool. It is a \$2.8 million pool. He would like it to be even more, but it represents all the funds available. There are only three ways for the university to increase dollars available; from the Legislature (which they did not appropriate), from increased enrollment (our enrollment has been flat), and from an increase in tuition (which is what we have had to do). As indicated in his memo yesterday to faculty and staff, raises will be based on a combination of merit and salary equity. Additionally, some consideration will be given to cost-of-living. There may be additional money mid-year, and a provision was added to faculty contracts and letters of employment to allow for mid-year raises. Some people could see double-digit increases.

Dr. Guerrero looked into a question Senator Jeffcoat asked at the last meeting concerning the salaries of adjunct faculty and whether they would receive raises. Dr. Guerrero distinguished

between those whom he considers to be true adjuncts, who are employed on a per course basis, and someone like Senator Jeffcoat, who is a Lecturer, and others referred to as adjuncts, who are employed on a yearly basis. The 5% pool includes Lecturers, but not necessarily those who are employed on a per course basis. They need raises too, but he doesn't know how that will be addressed this year.

Dr. Guerrero asked for questions from the floor:

Q. Senator Jackson: He read a comment from a caller to today's "Sound Off" column in the Daily Sentinel that everyone should look at. A misinformed caller talked about the supposed "20-hour work week" of SFA faculty. Shouldn't Dr. Guerrero or somebody at the university respond and try to correct that misinformation?

Another senator interjected that the faculty member who called "Sound Off" comparing their \$35,000 [nine-month] salary with the President's [yearly] salary made incorrect statements.

A. Dr. Guerrero: Much of what passes for information from callers to the Sentinel's "Sound Off" column is misinformed opinion, and he doesn't think we should pay that much attention to it.

Q. Senator Reed: Is the firm we hired for public relations firm one we have worked with before?

A. No. We are working with STAMATS. We haven't used them previously, and are awaiting their recommendations.

Q. Senator Alexander: I'd like to speak to the salary pool. If departments get 5% of their combined faculty salaries, doesn't the equity gap continue to grow wider by awarding high salaried faculty greater pay raises while some faculty members see very little of the salary pool?

A. Yes, and we have discussed this and will continue to look into this.

Q. Senator Salsbery: What is the scope of advertising and recruitment? Is any effort being made to give us more national and wider regional exposure? I'm originally from Iowa and have to admit I hadn't heard of SFA before applying here. When I told people I was moving here, the few colleagues who had heard of SFA only knew of its reputation for a good basketball program. Now that I'm here, I'm aware of many excellent programs that SFA ought to be widely known for.

A. East Texas has been tapped as much as possible, and it is not a growth area. We currently draw heavily from East Texas, the Louisiana border, Dallas/Ft. Worth (more Dallas than Fort Worth), and Houston. We need to look beyond East Texas and concentrate more on untapped regions such as South Texas and San Antonio. We do well when we capture the kids on campus. Two hundred-fifty HB1403 kids will be on campus tomorrow.

Q. Senator McDonald: Give us the result of the investigation into the removal of tenure packet removal by three deans.

A. The investigation was conducted, and a letter was written to each dean clearly indicating that this practice is inappropriate and should never happen again. I asked Dr. Wurtz, as the Faculty

Senate's Chair-Elect, to be present and take part in the investigation as a representative from the faculty. He is free to share whatever information he deems appropriate.

## **PROVOST MARY CULLINAN**

Dr. Cullinan summarized the year. This year had many challenges addressed by creating committees that looked into tenure policy and creating a transparent budget. We've already made progress; in the past there wouldn't have even been committees with as much faculty representation to look into such things. We were faced with enrollment issues and a sense of who we are and how we are perceived. This must be addressed through admission standards and rewarding and recruiting faculty. She asked that the Faculty Senate and faculty as a whole work together with her. She doesn't want to be at odds, since it will hinder progress. Her closing statement was, "Let's do this together."

Dr. Cullinan asked for questions from the floor.

Q. Senator Oswald: Can the Faculty Senate look at the Tenure Policy draft before it is sent to Regents?

A. There's little time left. Tuesday, the deans will review the policy and then it goes to the Policy Committee. She said she would post on the Academic Affairs web site the middle of next week. Input is still encouraged and can be emailed to Dean Standley, Chair of the Policy Committee, after Tuesday. She wants the Board to have it for the July meeting. Departments and Colleges will need to write their policy for awarding tenure.

Q. Senator Alexander: Do you have a time frame in mind for revising the promotion policy?

A. Yes, early next year.

Q. Senator Frantzen: Which policy goes into effect this coming year? The old or new? Which policy will those applying for tenure next year be under?

A. I guess a faculty member could use the old, but hopefully, we'll be operating under the new policy. I want to be fair to faculty members who have been using the old policy. I think the new policy would be better for new applicants, but much needs to happen in a very short time. We'll have to look at this.

Q. Senator Frantzen: I'd like for you to speak to independent study and practicum compensation.

A. In general, they are included in people's work load. She acknowledged heads shaking and said, "Not true?" We need to look at how we handle work load and explore the options. The Faculty Workload Policy needs to be reviewed. Work loads are currently not handled evenly across colleges. She wants it handled consistently in every college.

Q. Senator Rust: Where does the money for independent studies go?

A. It's put into a big pool of money from Austin. We cannot separate it, and it is very difficult to see where it ends up. She is still amazed at and trying to understand the mysteries of Texas state budgeting.

Q. Senator McDonald: Please speak to students needing independent studies to graduate on time and placing faculty in a bad position to tell them no. When students go to the chairs, they are usually told to try to find a faculty member willing to direct an independent study. That puts a lot of pressure on the faculty member. It's not fair to tell a student that they'll have to graduate a semester later. Faculty are uncomfortable with this. Someone needs to tell them---not the individual faculty member.

A. Yes, we need to look into this. Advising is also a factor. When there are fewer mistakes in advising to begin with, requests for independent studies later are less likely to occur. There are legitimate reasons for needing independent studies, and we need to look into this.

Q. Doesn't the Board see how demoralizing the President's raise is when they can't find money for travel, etc.?

Comments from Joe Ballenger and Senator Jackson regarding the Board not listening to faculty. Jill Dumesnil, sitting in for Senator Stovall, stated that we don't work for the Board. Administrators set our salary.

A. I think we have a Board that is really committed to both the students and the faculty. I believe that there's a window of opportunity to work with this Board that SFA hasn't had in a long time.

Q. Senator Darrel McDonald: What are the budget priorities and what are some of your initiatives for next year?

A. Number one is equity/merit raises. Faculty searches and development needs are also on the list. I have a long list of initiatives I would like to move forward. Since the first priority is raises, many initiatives on that list may not get funded this year. There has been no budget decision beyond raises. The budget will be reviewed in two to three weeks.

## **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair McDonald distributed the Academic Planning Committee minutes for the May 3, 2004, meeting.

## **CHAIR-ELECT'S REPORT**

Chair-elect Wurtz served on the committee to look into the allegations of documents removed by three deans. He has never been one who was "out for blood" on this issue and tried to be objective. He stated that he listened to testimony from both sides and met with Associate Provost/VPAA Dr. Young, Dean Standley, and Dean Herbert individually. Dr. Marlin Young says that he's never removed a document, ever. Dr. Wurtz felt that he was in an uncomfortable position, but he looked at each one straight in the eye and asked the hard questions. Based on the manner

in which they responded, including their body language, he felt that each one was telling him the truth. Dr. Wurtz reiterated that while others might see things differently, he was there and is one of the only ones who has heard both sides of the story. After talking to each of them, he believes that they were following a standing practice. They tried to follow a directive for blind review at the college level. The directive had been issued in the form of a memo many years ago. In Dr. Barbara Michaels's situation, it was her chair who first asked about removing the document. The chair took it to the dean, who took it to Dr. Marlin Young. Since it was from a tenured faculty member, they felt that the "letter compromised blind review" at the college level. The removal was not done with malicious intent. In the other cases of document removal, the faculty members received tenure, so the removal had no effect. All expressed what Dr. Wurtz considered to be sincere regret for the decision, and one dean was especially remorseful. Dr. Wurz urged him to come forward to apologize to the faculty, but understood why the dean felt he had legitimate reasons for not doing so. Dr. Guerrero wrote each one a letter. Dr. Wurtz and President Guerrero both signed the letter written to reprimand the deans and asking that the practice stop. Dr. Wurtz characterized the content of the letters as more of a "slap on the wrist" than the most serious reprimand possible.

Dr. James Howard, a visitor, former past chair, and president of a former Senate chairs' association asked permission to question Dr. Wurtz. He asserted that much of Dr. Wurtz's impressions seemed to be based on the deans' body language. He questioned Dr. Wurtz's qualifications to interpret body language. Dr. Wurtz agreed that his training is as a musician but that he responded in his capacity as a faculty member.

Questions and discussion followed about how faculty could best be informed of Dr. Guerrero's findings and the action taken. Dr. Dumesnil noted that the minutes would reflect Dr. Wurtz's account. Dr. Wurtz expressed that senators should feel free to convey their impressions of the discussion to their colleges. There was agreement that a detailed report should be recorded in the minutes, which can be widely distributed.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Treasurer distributed a copy of the budget account report. Available cash in the budget is \$2,673.13. There are student wages that haven't been paid for May and a small O&M is still outstanding.

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Senator Mercer was absent. Senator Alexander is filling in as secretary for this meeting. In the secretary's absence, Dr. Wurtz and Senator Scamman distributed ballots for officers nominated for the 2004-05 Faculty Senate.

The slate of candidates was as follows:

Chair-Elect: Dr. Roy Joe Harris and Dr. Brian Oswald

Secretary: Dr. Troy Davis and Dr. Linda Stark Bobo

Treasurer: Dr. Kelly Salsbery and Dr. Sarah Stovall

The candidates present spoke briefly. Senators voted, and two past chairs, Dr. Larry King and Dr. James Howard, served as tellers for the election.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **COMMITTEE FOR ELECTIONS**

Senator Scamman, committee chair, reported on elections. The first ever online elections had just concluded. Drs. Brian Utley and Rick Jones had tied in a 10-10 vote in the College of Fine Arts. A runoff election just finished at noon, and Dr. Utley received the plurality of the votes with 12 votes to Dr. Jones's 9.

Senator Scamman thanked Dr. McDonald for giving her a great committee to work with. She feels that with this year's experience under their belts, the committee can make online elections even better next year.

The real key to good elections, whether online or by paper ballot, is to take care of any issues effecting voting as early in the fall semester as possible. That would allow for longer voting periods. For example, there are some amendments she hopes next year's Faculty Governance and Involvement Committee will propose concerning voting and elections. They should be proposed no later than the October meeting (and the September meeting wouldn't be too soon). Then the Committee for Elections could ballot the amendments, the Constitution could be revised if they pass, and the committee would be free to concentrate on elections in the Spring semester.

### **EXTENSION OF SENATOR SCAMMAN'S REMARKS:**

For the first votes, we had a participation rate of 253 out of 734 votes. This gives a percentage of 34% of all eligible voters participating in first ballot voting. We arrived at this percentage by summing the total number of votes cast by faculty senators in each college (excluding votes in the adjunct race) to get 253 and then summing the total number of possible votes (number of eligible voters in a given college times number of positions for that college) to get 734 possible votes.

This compares favorably with an overall average of approximately 40% participation for all colleges in first ballots in last year's Spring elections. Last year's figure was derived from a count of the number of ballots returned. It was based on the assumption that the number of eligible voters in participating colleges was approximately the same as this year's, since there is not an exact count of the eligible voters available.

For this year's electoral ballots, the numbers are only slightly different, because the College of Applied Arts and Sciences is the only college for which the first ballot was not also the electoral ballot. This participation rate is 258 votes out of 734 votes, which gives a percentage of 35% of all eligible voters participating in electoral ballot voting. We computed the percentage as for the first votes, except that AAS contributes 13 votes instead of 8 to the total number of votes cast on electoral ballots.

More detail will be provided in an end-of-year report to the new chair. Recommendations for next year will also be part of the report.

#### ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Senator Culpepper, committee chair, met with Roland Smith regarding access to budget by the Faculty Senate. Since Senator Wurtz is on the Budget Council, he might be the best liaison for the Senate. Senator Wurtz suggested that Senator Culpepper would be better suited.

#### PROFESSIONAL WELFARE

Senator Frantzen, committee chair, distributed course demographics of independent study and practicum courses with the funding formula. The document was created by Institutional Research.

#### FACULTY GOVERNANCE AND INVOLVEMENT

Senator Alexander, committee chair, called for a vote on a proposed amendment to wording to Standing Rule IV.C. Elections.

**Proposed Amendment to the Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate  
Faculty Governance and Involvement Committee  
Stephen F. Austin State University**

We move that standing rule of the Elections Committee be amended to read as follows:

Standing Rule IV. C. This committee shall organize and conduct all senatorial elections and any other elections which the Faculty Senate is asked to conduct for the University. **THE COMMITTEE SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING THE CONTENT OF THE FACULTY SENATE ROSTER TO THE SENATE'S WEBMASTER.**

(Note: Changes are BOLD and in CAPS).

Amendment passed unanimously and will be entered as accepted by senators.

#### ETHICS

Senator Davis, committee chair, stated that the committee had taken into consideration the results of the test survey on Chief Caddo. While a small sample, the faculty who took the time to respond seemed to indicate they felt there was no need for a resolution to end the practice of Chief Caddo . Senator Salsbery, the other committee member, pointed out that some interested faculty may not have had time to respond to the survey. This discussion will continue next year.

#### ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Senator Oswald No report.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Chair-Elect Wurtz: No report; the committee never received a charge.

## OLD BUSINESS

Tenure Policy draft distributed. Senator Alexander stated that the committee had collected all comments and recommendations from the open forums, email, etc. The Tenure Policy Sub-Committee considered all recommendations and are working to integrate any necessary changes. The document should go to the Provost on Monday of next week.

### **Resolution 2004-5.1 on Individuals Removing Materials from Promotion and Tenure Files**

#### **Whereas,**

Two academic deans at SFA have admitted to removing materials from the applications of faculty applying for tenure and/or promotion;

#### **Whereas,**

The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs has admitted that, while serving as the Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, he approved of the removal of materials from promotion and tenure applications by these deans;

#### **Whereas,**

University Policy E-50A clearly states that "Each 'Promotion/Tenure Application,' including all supporting materials, will be evaluated by all tenured faculty from the applicant/nominee's department," that "The chair of the candidate's department will evaluate the packet of materials submitted by the candidate and will forward these materials, along with his/her recommendation with supporting comments and the recommendations of the tenured faculty of the department, to the dean of the college," and that "Each application/nomination for tenure, including all supporting materials, will be evaluated by a college tenure panel";

#### **Whereas,**

The removal of materials from promotion/tenure applications is a clear violation of university policy;

#### **Whereas,**

The university community has a reasonable expectation that university policies will be enforced and that violations of university policy by any employee, including administrators, will lead to adverse personnel actions;



**Whereas,**

The removal of materials from promotion/tenure applications is a clear violation of faculty trust in the integrity of the promotion and tenure process;

**Whereas,**

Reestablishing trust in the tenure and promotion process among faculty will require that those who have violated that trust be held responsible for their actions;

**Whereas,**

The removal of materials from promotion and tenure applications is clearly unethical;

**Whereas,**

The university must unambiguously reject and deal authoritatively with unethical behaviors on the part of any person associated with the university; and

**Whereas,**

The President has assured faculty that the actions of these individuals will not be ignored; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved,**

That the Faculty Senate calls on the Provost and President to deal in a significant and meaningful manner with those who have violated university policy, the trust of the faculty, and reasonable standards of ethical behavior by removing or approving the removal of material from promotion and tenure applications.

A vote was called for the new resolution. Ayes 0, Nays 6, Abstentions 11. Resolution failed.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair McDonald said that he enjoyed serving as the Senate president and working with the senators.

FACULTY SENATE RECOGNITION

Chair McDonald read a resolution from the Executive Committee and presented Senator Scamman with a plaque for the first ever "Outstanding Faculty Senator" award for 2003-2004.

[RESOLUTION 2004-5.2]

**FACULTY SENATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD**

**Whereas,**

the Faculty Senate is an elected representative body of the Faculty at Stephen F. Austin State University,

**Whereas,**

Faculty Senators volunteer to become nominees of their respective colleges;

**Whereas,**

Faculty Senators put in many hours of work to provide recommendations and resolutions to the President of the university;

**Whereas,**

peer recognition, to many, is a meaningful reward for this service;

**Whereas,**

the Stephen F. Austin State University Faculty Senate Executive Committee decided to recognize outstanding contributions to the Senate by establishing a Faculty Senator of the Year award; be it

**Resolved,**

that the 1st recipient of the Faculty Senator of the Year plaque be awarded to Carol Scamman for her contributions to the Faculty Senate 2003-2004.

Senator Wurtz presented Chair McDonald with a plaque of appreciation for his service. Chair McDonald presented a gift to Avis York, student assistant, for her dedicated work.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Senate voted unanimously to adjourn the regular session at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vi Alexander  
Acting for Dixie Mercer, Secretary  
Faculty Senate