

Stephen F. Austin State University

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes September 8 Meeting #331

Subject to approval at the October 13, 2004, meeting.

Senators present were: Julia Ballenger(1), Parker Ballinger(2), Chris Barker(3), Secretary, Linda Bobo(4), John Boyd(5), Mary Nelle Brunson(6), Leisha Bridwell(7), Debbie Bush(8), Deborah Dalton(9), Troy Davis(10), Greta Euginia Haidinyak(11), Kayce Halstead(12), Roy Joe Harris(13), Jere Jackson(14), Tommy Mathys (15), Gary Mayer(16), Lisa Mize(17), Vice President, Brian Oswald (18), Jeana Paul-Ureña(19), Kelly Salsbery(20), Elton Scifres(21) Treasurer, Sarah Stovall(22), Brian Utley(23), Michael Walker(24), Elizabeth Witherspoon(25), President, Gary Wurtz(26)

Unexcused absences: None

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:31p.m. by Dr. Gary Wurtz at the Tracy Pearman Alumni Center.

II. PRESENTATIONS

A. PRESIDENT DR. TITO GUERRERO

Dr. Guerrero began his discussions stating he did not know numbers for enrollment, but expects a slight decline and a “roller coaster” of numbers to come. Student SAT scores have gone up along with an increase of positive characteristics. Number of applications has a closer correspondence to characteristics of students and applying. Quality of students is increasing despite numbers decreasing. Retention statistics should be around 64%, a fairly dramatic improvement. Ninety additional students in resident halls, not large numbers, yet remarkable considering decline across time. Attributable to enhanced retention techniques, a possible 1% decline?? No numbers yet to verify.

Opened for questions from the Senate

Senator Wurtz asked if the resident hall number increase was due to Resident Hall Scholarships. Not all scholarships were accepted. Low to mid-50s was accepted. Do not know if the students are new enrollments, returnees, or had already chosen to come before receiving the scholarship. “Regents Scholarships,” (the new title) along with Academic Excellence scholarships are competitive, but timing of notification is vital. Other universities notified the students much sooner than SFA, some were lost because of that.

Extending benefits to dependents of university employees was addressed to the Board. In the upcoming Coordinating Board meeting, the plan is to ask for increased authority. The question was addressed as to why this can not be done. Response--only for monetary reasons. On the average, \$750 is given to an employee. The search is on for additional funds, then looking for additional extension. A specific solution is unknown; student enrollment numbers have to be finalized. Have to decide, one or the other... increasing employees, or extend health benefits to dependents.

Senator Wurtz noted that he would like that to be a charge of the Faculty Senate, to ask for tuition extensions offered to dependents of SFA employees.

Senator McDonald asked what did the President mean when he said he was going to “shoot for the stars” at the next legislative session. The President responded with, that the request will be to ask for substantial tuition revenue bond money. Monies, or special items, are being asked for an Early Childhood research facility, expansion for the nursing program and the addition of allied health programs, building a black box for the theatre, and expansion of “special item funding.” A reduction of the initial amount of funding request was done in hopes to raise total dollar amounts allotted. Special items are defined as “things wanted.” Exceptional items are defined as “good ideas.” Standard items across all 4-year institutions were to increase funding for faculty/staff salaries.

Lieutenant David Duhurst will be in town next week with a visit on campus to drive the legislative agenda for next session.

Senator Gary Wurtz asked about the addition of baseball. President Guerrero began by explaining the history of the baseball proposal. Baseball was not high on his personal priority list. The concept came from within the Board of Regents at a retreat where none of the SFA administration was invited. The Board decided to work with a facilitator. All members came out in uniformed decision, baseball was an approved item. Another possibility to view this, athletically within the Southland Conference SFA is lacking baseball. A commitment was already made to the Rodeo club for an equestrian program without creating problems with Title IX. If you further require more detail regarding finances, the Senate might want to invite Roland to anticipate economic impact:

Advocates of the two additions want a comprehensive response to better SFA. It was felt this would generate a greater number of students applying. More are meeting admission criteria. The problem lies in the transition from admit, to enrollment. Students are questioning why they do not have certain programs, i.e., Baseball, in addition to poor dorm residences, while also noting the possible addition of a Student Recreation Center and other academic enhancements. These are all equal comprehensive responses for enrollment challenges.

Referring to a handout "Annual Enrollment Revenue and Operating Costs / Baseball and Equestrian Programs." The President explained the projected revenue created with the addition of the two athletic programs.

The represented numbers were a conservative monetary estimate. Also believed this would add to recruitment of general population students.

How will this affect the university? It is possible these numbers do not fully represent the potential of monies raised, but the President feels the Board is supporting something “good” for the university. He does not feel that anyone designs any decisions to hurt the university. Reasonable people can healthily disagree. It was reiterated, this was not the President’s initial plan. In the eyes of Monique Cossich, SFA needs assistance with roll over of student admits, to students’ commitments to SFA. SFA needs a comprehensive approach to all student enrollment and retention.

Senator Scifres asked about capital expenditures. The President responded with that these need to be supported by the private sector. The baseball and softball complex needs to be raised privately, not by tax dollars. Until then they will operate at the city location.

Senator Stovall asked what is included in enrollment funding. The President explained, tuition and fees, that formula funding equaled state funding (based on semester credit hrs). Funding per credit hour is based on discipline and level.

Senator Jackson asked are there ideas to raise monies from the private sector. The President explained there has to be a “quiet phase.” Campaign intact for private funding but cannot talk about b/c of “silent” phase. Advised to invite Jerry Holbrook to talk about Capital campaign phase, funding, and process.

Senator Walker: Identified Coach in multiple periodical references; however, numbers do not match the memo presented today? The President noted he, too, had read the articles. If investments are made, it is expected it should generate revenue, but in reality it does not happen. Not all institutions work under same rules. Rarely do universities make money. There are ways that funding can be used. Another dynamic can be used (if growing, or staying flat), but we have to guess on the fact that students are leaving. So we are trying to attract and retain. **Still concerned with funding issue....? can not fill seats, but why should we build more if we can not fill seats at current athletic events?.** The President agreed with the statement and feels it will not help bottom line. But we do need to be concerned with “why they are leaving?” Attendance to events can not be defined based on the first game of the season.

The President provided two examples with the pressbox with a faculty member being a first time attendee. That person would have never stepped foot had he been invited to attend a game as a guest of the press box. Perhaps the pressbox is beneficial to allow these experiences across campus. With his first Presidential transition to full time administration, he became more aware of across campus experiences. Everyone should use the opportunity to experience all programs on the campus.

Senator Salsbery asked in connection with Public Relations, has anyone investigated why students do / don't come. Yes, however, the research received contained contradictory information. A comparative study was performed looking at schools (5) to be most likely to draw away students, or who were teeter-tottering. Factors were looked at: language, style of universities, first impressions. With 1200 respondents, SFA fared well with a strong academic program being its forte. Then why do students apply, admit, and then leave? May be due to the residence halls, not sure. Past research was inconclusive. “National Study of Student Engagement” was able to see what students said, but compared it across the nation to what others are saying, not specific to SFA. We also want to do a comparative study of a student evaluations’ overall experience.

Senator Jackson asked how many scholarships (in estimates) will cross over to other academic programs. The answer is unknown. The focus is not on “net” registrations. Problem for us is that students turn us down despite the attractiveness of scholarships. The focus is not only one problem; the focus is on many. **What about equestrian?** One such program in California has 100 participants

Senator Utley asked where we are with STAMATs. Logo is a small component. The main component is the comparative study. I don't know where we are with logo.

Senator Bobo asked about the mention of future Allied Health programs during the State of the University Address. An expanding array of possibilities exists in Allied Health. We currently have a working relationship with UT, Galveston. We want to enhance and strengthen that with the possibility of the addition of programs. Talk with UTMB for the support and creation of Master in Nursing and Physical Therapy has been made.

Number of graduate programs have been scrutinized, study of graduates, different department were titled “low producing.” Are the implications that some are in danger of losing their programs? Is there any movement for graduate assistant funding and scholarship? The President responded with, yes, we have offered positions to the extent that we can afford. Low productivity might be indicated from the Coordinating Board, in which they have

certain expectations for graduate production. If numbers stay low too long, the program might run risk of being eliminated.

The President thanked the Senate for their time.

B. Special Presentation: by Lauren Scharff , as part of the Strategic Plan.

Implementation of *Masteries Approach* was the agenda. A push for this academic year to educate across campus and discuss how the process will be implemented. Refer to handout .

Dr. Scharff requested the formation of subcommittees and asked Faculty Senate to present with names that would qualify for these. In addition, to work in developing a university wide criteria for these different masteries, e.g., communication and career preparation. The ideas will be presented to University councils, get departmental feedback, the get approved through the line of authority, finishing with the President and Board of Regents. This is not a program designed for dictation. The objective is for students to develop all “masteries” with departmental input given by Faculty.

Suggested to Chair for the Senate to form a subcommittee to find nominations for committee members across campus to implement the Masteries.

Lecture Series: Remind everyone to put topics on the calendar which can be found on the Strategic Plan '08 website. Please post if you have any. Different levels exist for speakers. We need help getting started. Need good “Regent” speakers as a way to recognize rich resources on SFA’s campus.

Want Senate to help nominate two nominations for speakers.

C. PROVOST MARY CULLINAN

The Provost welcomed the Senate back by stating she is enjoying doing things for a second time. The Provost wanted to respond about the low producing programs. Every four years a list from the Coordinating Board is given. The last list was long containing programs that have low, marginally graduates in degrees. Minimums are tracked. We were asked to review programs and report by Oct. 1. We will not eliminate all programs. It has made us look at degree programs. A coding problem existed. Certain majors were not being put in the correct major because of similarities. We cleared up the number problems. However, there are programs with no graduates. The Deans met for advice. Our report to Coordinating Board is we will work as hard for the next three years with recruiting to produce majors.

Senator Jackson asked if there was any correlation with scholarship in area to number of graduates. The Provost responded that may be something to examine and review. We need to make the corrections to the courses being offered, rather than eliminating programs. On the other side, we want new programs, but we can not until we resolve the other low numbers.

The Provost made the following announcements.

Honors Program, Drs. Stroup and Richmond will disseminate information across campus. This information should be accessible to all majors, not limited to certain majors.

Assessment component of Core Curriculum Open forum this Friday, 1:30, Education building. Trying to meet the Coordinating Board’s deadline and SACS.

Doctorate in Environmental Sciences: a joint effort of the College of Forestry and Math and Sciences. Building on strong areas of excellence already in existence. Received planned

authority to plan program and then get approval. We need to push the existence. This addition will enable us to move up in Carnegie levels.

New project: Renovation in Library enables us to create Academic Community prior to Al Cage's retirement. Academic Advising will move to library near ARC. Move OIT to 2nd floor. Make place for Faculty Development / Teaching Excellence (part of strategic plan). Hired architect to implement and design. Want faculty input for the design. Do not have funding to staff place, we want to find the space first.

Want to move The Photo shop to Boynton once OIT moves.

Working on Search for Library Director. Will be coming to you to serve on Committee. Search for Dean of Science / Math. We are doing elections within departments for those who want to serve on the Search committee.

Senator Salsbery asked if a committee will be formed for the Teaching Excellence design. The Provost responded that we are just getting the word out. A committee can be formed. It is not a difficult task to get space. We are not moving towards implementation yet. Again, this is not "highly complicated." If want to be more involved, you may be. In lieu, research of other facilities has been done, do you want to know more of specific content? Yes, I want to see as great amount of space and resources offered. **Want to know services, rather than space?** Yes, we are going to distribute a questionnaire. We want to build on ideas, rather than concrete making it more apt for reality.

Senator Bobo asked if we are moving to more scholar intensive and moving away from teaching. The Provost responded with a "no." We are teaching with a scholarly component. We want better doctoral programs. Yes, there may be a stronger influence. Focus should be on baccalaureate degrees.

Senator McDonald asked if we were given a "budget" this year. The Provost responded, yes, it was given for faculty merit, but that wiped it out. We got our number one item request. We did not have a lot of flexibility. But, we are pleased, and the other Vice Presidents have a stronger sense of what a Budgeting / Planning process would look like. At our retreat, we laid out timelines for budgets. Do not expect to see overnight transitions, but we are seeing changes.

We now have a Budget committee to create a more transparent budget. We are making progress, but not turning things around overnight. We are making changes.

Dean searches, would you comment on the position? Dr. Standley is moving to the classroom. We are only addressing the Dean of Math and Science vacancy at this time.

Low producing and in terms of number of graduates, number of graduates to Graduate Assistants; if we can not offer more assistantships, it will be impossible to get more graduates. Is there hope for more money? Graduate Assistantship pay was raised to \$8500. We found it more crucial to raise the amount, rather than the numbers. The question is - do we increase tuition for graduate students in order to allow programs to give more money for assistantships, or work on external funding for them?! It is hard to find money in the existing budget. In three years we will have to make big decisions. We need to look at programs that are in jeopardy.

The Provost thanked the Senate for the time.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Handed out folders to Senate
- B. Gathered contact information for Senate roster
- C. Committee adjustments:

-Since Meeting #330, three Senators have stepped down. An election was not needed. The Senate needed to vote in a separate meeting whether to accept Tommy Matthys and Elton Scifres. But need another meeting to decide.

-Assignments were discussed.

D. No announcements from the floor.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Not able to accept minutes from meeting #329; however, minutes from meeting #330 are able to be discussed from which the new Senators were seated. Motion to accept by John Boyd, seconded by Deborah Dalton. No discussion. Accepted.

Table minutes from meeting #329 until October 13, 2004.

V. OFFICERS' REPORTS:

A. CHAIR'S REPORT

Reported to Board of Regents. Was asked by the Sentinel to summarize the meeting and was incorrectly stated.

- Thanked the Board for recognizing and addressing salary indifferences. Other topics brought forth were faculty contributing to the new parking garage, the addition of baseball, and updating faculty furnishings.
- The search for the two vacant dean positions of Deans Atchison and Standley were addressed. An interim will fill the College of Applied Arts and Sciences position. The search process will enact the dean search policy in regards to faculty participation. This policy apparently states that a majority of people on the search committee should come from the college. Dr. Cullinan also requested chair representation. The search for Director of Library will be primarily librarians, with some faculty representation (from the Senate and others).
- Addressed President Guerrero about faculty dependents receiving reduced costs while attending SFA. Cost was the issue, but talk of a possible scholarship fund to defer costs was discussed.

B. CHAIR ELECT'S REPORT

- Graduate council has not met yet. A request for more money to fund graduate assistants and more positions was requested.
- Core Curriculum Forum meets this Friday, September 17.

- Was asked to assist with Library search by asking the Senate to present three faculty names from three colleges. Contact Senator Oswald if you have any. Senate was urged to become involved because the library is everyone's investment. Expect an e-mail as follow-up.

C. TREASURER

- Currently not sure of account status. Still balancing the books.
- Faculty Senate purchased a computer for the secretary position to record minutes.
- Buying refreshments will continue, and will be taken from the budget.
- A student worker was hired for this academic year. Her office is located on the 2nd floor of the library. Be sure to use her services.

D. SECRETARY

No report.

E. COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports from the committee because of a new academic year.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Constitution & Standing rules need to be revised. Through time, some revisions were never documented. Strategic planning committee will review this action. If any Senate members know of items missing, please report to the mentioned committee. We also need to view the rules as they were and as they are now. Do they need revisions? Chair called for members to assist. Did not feel it necessary to assign two committees for this task.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. In Meeting #330, May's meeting, it was voted to approve funding for a webmaster for the Faculty Senate web page, included was management for that year. A person has been sought with the agreement of \$1500. The hiring process will begin as soon as possible.

Senator Jackson made a motion to approve. Seconded by Senator Ureña. Discussion. Is there not a mechanism to assist with this? Unaware of any, but all agree the website needs a vast improvement. Web development is in the library. They will set it up the site, but will not maintain it. Passage unanimously accepted.

B. Grading concerns: Deans are stressing that the current system is not working. Faculty Senate was asked to pass a resolution about this subject. This will be assigned to the Academic Affair committee for further discussion.

Senator Dalton commented that a student had to repeat a course at SFA. Discussion. It was decided to table for discussion for next meeting.

C. Faculty Handbook: Dr. Cullinan requested revisions / changes. This was assigned to the Professional Welfare committee. Senator Davis said that it be reviewed and reported on by all committees. It was questioned on how the responsibility would be dispersed.

Senator Salsbery asked if the Faculty Senate is responsible for this task. The Chair replied that we were asked to look at it, not re-write it. The Provost requested recommendations to make it better because of the outdated content.

D. Library renovation: Wants faculty involvement.

E. Added: From the floor? Dr. Scharff wants us to nominate people for two speakers for Regents presentations and Task Force. Stemmed from Strategic plan 08. How do we proceed? Seems Academic Affairs request. Senator Jackson can view and make decision. Sent to Academic Affairs committee.

Senator Tommy Matthys felt it interferes with curriculum / department. Senator Jackson also stated it did not make sense to increase the student, teacher ratio. It was suggested to identify core courses that contain life-long characteristics.

Senator Witherspoon 1) asked why the faculty is being assessed for the parking garage. It was explained that parking fees and tickets generate over 1million dollars. They generate too much money to lose these sources. Another question was asked about a discount for couples. The Chair responded that it can be brought up, but to be careful with the discussions to be brought forth.

The Chair concluded the Senate needed to immediately re-convene for another meeting to vote for the new Senators.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to conduct, a motion for adjournment was made by Senator Salsbery. Seconded by Senator Boyd. No discussion. Accepted. The Senate stood adjourned at 4:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Linda Stark Bobo
Secretary