

# Stephen F. Austin State University

## Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes 2004 Meeting #332 October 13, 2004

Subject to approval at the November 10, 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 Matthys (15), Gary Mayer(16), Lisa Mize(17), Susan Ormsby(18), Chair-elect, Brian Oswald(19), Jeana Paul-Ureña(20), Parliamentarian, Kelly Salsbery(21), Elton Scifres, (22)Treasurer, Sarah Stovall(23), Brian Utley(24), Michael Walker(25), Elizabeth Witherspoon(26), Chair, Gary Wurtz(27)

Unexcused absences:

### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Dr. Gary Wurtz at the Tracy Pearman Alumni Center.

Request made for Senators to make your own copies of Senate minutes and other documents prior to the meeting in order to save money.

### II. GUESTS

#### a. PRESIDENT DR. TITO GUERRERO

Dr. Guerrero was absent because of the Board of Regents meeting.

#### b. PROVOST MARY CULLINAN

The Provost opened with discussion of requests made to her. First topic of conversation was the stipend vs. compensation for summer school. Currently no answer exists because of budget problems, the enrollment drop, a potential 5% budget cut, and the fact that summer budgets are compiled in a unique manner making it difficult to foresee dollar amounts. Fewer sections may be offered as consequence. With a stipend, we may be able to offer more sections. The decision will have to be made on what is more important, more sections with less pay, or more sections with guarantee pay. A dollar amount has not been given and we do not have a base to create a dollar amount.

Stipend vs. Percentage summer pay

**Senator Jackson asked if will be a university, college, or department policy.** Provost's response was that it will be an across campus, university policy.

**Senator Scifres made the comment that consternation is present for a stipend. Keeping the traditional model would be the better of two evils.** Other Senators conveyed the same feelings.

**Senator Wurtz asked if the Provost were open to faculty input?**

Yes.

**Senator Jackson wanted to know when the decision would be made and who would be making it?** The Provost was unable to answer the time frame. Discussion will be held within the Board of Regents and then matriculated down through the various levels of the university. This will be discussed among the Council of Chairs. It is a major issue that will ultimately be decided at the Board level. The invitation is there to express the faculty's thoughts on this matter.

*Senator Wurtz* commented that some view this as either a positive and negative move. Some see it as better to get something than no pay at all.

*Senator Ormsby* commented that the funding base is viewed as an added cost, but in the long run students will be not able to complete academic programs because of the diminished course offerings during the summer. Therefore, we could see a possible decline with student enrollment, thus encouraging students to attend junior / community colleges during the summer.

*Senator Ballenger* emphasized that we attract students because of the summer courses being offered. We will lose professors and students.

*Senator Scifres* commented that many in the College of Business will start getting their resumes ready if this action is seen to fruition.

**Provost Cullinan** remarked to the comments made that she would like to see the student enrollment numbers go up. Students are going to community colleges or staying at home. Our draw is to attract students. We do not want to change the system.

**Senator Wurtz asked if the Provost would like feedback from the faculty.** Provost Cullinan requested all responses be sent through Senator Wurtz. He would then gather all comments / questions and forward them to the Provost.

Activity report & Promotion policy

The Provost began with discussion. A small group of dedicated people have been working diligently on this product. Please give feedback via the e-mail sent today. Also we will be holding a forum for discussion. It is based on process, rather than guidelines. These topics can be discussed together.

A mandate from SACs is to be gathering consistent data that will be posted on the website for our future review. Our self-study must all be on-line, thus causing significant reporting changes.

The activity report that went out this year is a pilot, stressing a pilot. The document was created based on templates used by the Colleges of Business and Education. These two colleges have accrediting bodies that make them do faculty assessment reports. Rather than re-doing documents, the idea was to use existing templates. With the various feedback given, it appeared that we were trying to turn into a research university. That is not the case. It looks that way, it is a misperception. The Provost is open to changing the document and feedback regarding the document.

Neither SFA, nor the Provost is in "harmony" with the Provost who just denied tenure to several faculty members of UNT. The Provost feels the criterion that is already established is very appropriate. SFA is a comprehensive university with a teaching emphasis. The created documents should reflect those priorities. This topic will be discussed at the Chairs council. We are meeting a SACs deadline to have all of these documents posted on-line by next year. The annual report may be different next year, while still reflecting your needs.

Conversation carried over to tenure and promotion. Much concern has been expressed about the template not reflecting teaching abilities. If we see that teaching needs to be added to, then suggest it. Another area asked about was service. This is closely related to tenure and promotion guidelines that have been passed down to the department level. We are asking for departments to create the criteria. Weights should be based on disciplines needs, yet clearly stated. The next level should be the college. The establishment of guidelines needs to coincide with the tenure and promotion guidelines and the annual reports. Various faculty levels have provided very critical feedback regarding all topics in response to the criterion to be set.

The Provost emphasized that she would prefer not to see numbers added to criteria, e.g. must have published "x" number of sole authorship articles. Clarification should be set to the discipline's needs. This move is being done to eliminate the old system of pats on the back. Established communication needs to be created.

### **QUESTIONS:**

**Senator Stovall asked what about the individual who fails to meet the guidelines criteria, yet meets the department's needs. Will they be lost? Are we cutting our own hands off? Once these are written, is it possible to not allow interpretations and take control from the department.** The Provost agreed that it cut both ways. A commitment to all three areas must be understood. For other cases, the department needs to converse with faculty to help that individual follow department's focus. The needs missing need to be addressed in activity reports across the years. This action is more to prevent someone coming up that tenure year, realizing that he/she failed to meet the criteria. We do not want limiting points.

**Senator Jackson stated that we tend to put quantifiable values to assessments. Teaching falls in the gap. When we apply numbers, we tend to put emphasis on research. If we are going to research, we need to talk about future, release time, etc.** The Provost responded that this is an inaugural year for this document. The guidelines for the tenure dossier are more specific with support given to teaching. Past dossier formats also allowed little emphasis for teaching assessment. Our future desire is to allow documents of proof for teaching effectiveness, such as syllabi, teaching philosophies, student work, letters. The goal is not to change the weight of criteria. We just want to allow for more documentation of effective teaching. This is more difficult to do as compared to scholarly productions. We want to create stronger portfolios. This can be done by tying it to the department's goals, wants and needs. Again, we do not want limits set. However, the dossier needs to be self-explanatory beyond the department level. Documents need to clearly explain one's professional life to an audience who does not know.

**Senator Bobo asked with the temporary status of the activity report, will the department's guidelines need to change.** The Provost replied with a no. They will remain with the department's needs. **How much weight will the department's guidelines have once it has gone to the provost's level?** It will have much weight. Guidelines need to meet the departments needs and wants.

**Senator Mize asked how should the form be completed?** No specific format exists. The document was created to try to create uniformity across the campus.

Senator Barker asked about faculty load reports; how are they calculated, who does it and what is our resource for this information. Institutional research, Karen Hall, has the numbers for the state. Since faculty activity reports are being done online, will there be paper backup? How can we prevent contamination of files? It was suggested to still obtain paper copies in folders.

**Senator Wurtz asked if PDF files are unable to be corrupted.** The Provost announced that Rich Barnhard with ITS has been given this responsibility.

**Senator Barker asked if everything is on-line, will there be safeguards of students being able to download, or gain access to faculty's documents.** The Provost responded that no, Rich is doing great job designing these formats. SACs material will be separated from faculty names. All that will be presented on-line will be data. Our bigger problem is the success of the on-line student evaluations.

**Senator Stovall asked if departments will still have control over performing their own student evaluations.** The push given by SACs and other accrediting agencies is to have similarity with all evaluations. We are working on creating 1-2 summative questions that can be used across campus. We are currently happy with the current system.

**Another comment made by Senator Stovall on behalf of her department.** An inquiry was made as to how university committees are formed. A faculty member was notified of being a committee by reading public announcement, rather than being personally contacted. Would prefer to be asked for the volunteer position, rather than being arbitrarily appointed. **The Provost** apologized. Did not realize this had happened, but felt this was a department communication problem, rather than university.

**Senator Matthys asked how are the Activity Reports to be reported. Can they be paper or electronic this year?** Yes, this is our pilot year with this new on-line format.

The Provost thanked the Senate for her time.

### III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Masteries luncheon

Dr. Scharff has asked again to appoint 5 Senators to attend luncheon w/ guest lecturer, Milton Hagle. Senators Oswald, Dalton, Witherspoon, and Bridwell in the UC , President's suite, 12 – 1:30pm, Oct. 21.

b. Senator from Business

Appointed Sue Ormsby

c. Congratulations were extended to Senators Boyd and Haidinyak for their 10 year service awards.

d. From the floor

Highlighted tenure & promotion open forum regarding Policy E-380, Promotion policy on Tuesday, 26th, allowing an opportunity for feedback.

### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Meeting 330: was only re-done because of the exclusion of resolutions. Motion to accept by Senator Davis, seconded by Senator Paul-Ureña. No discussion. Approved.

b. Meeting 332: Senator Boyd moved to accept (with typos) the minutes as written, seconded by Senator Utley. Discussion held. Addressed to Secretary to please add date to meetings. Amended. Vote for date to be included. Motion to accept amendment by Senator Dalton, seconded by Senator Boyd. No discussion. Approved.

c. Meeting 333: Asked to change "Julie" to "Julia" Motion to accept by Senator Ballenger, seconded by Senator Bush. No discussion. Accepted.

## V. OFFICER'S REPORTS

### a. CHAIR'S REPORTS

President Guerrero was absent; met with Provost Cullinan. The Ethics committee sent forth faculty discipline policies. The issue of a Graduate Dean has become a topic. Those involved with graduate programs are concerned that college deans are not always able to have the best interest of graduate studies because of conflicts of interest. Currently not sure where this will go. A seed has been planted. Another concern is that decision making for Graduate faculty will be taken away.

Senator Jackson commented that the position was done away for various reasons. The emphasis of a new Graduate Dean is to provide graduate students with more consistency in authoritative decisions. This is important to all disciplines. Deans of Colleges does create conflict of interest with graduate decisions.

**Senator Salsbery asked if we could have the position of Director of Graduate Studies.** We currently have one, David Jeffrey. SFA does not want the addition of another administrative position.

This position was downsized in position, power, and money. A new person is not necessary. We do need to know what we will do with graduate programs. It would make it difficult to offer new graduate programs without one.

**Senator Wurtz asked if the Senate should take this to a committee and issue a resolution.**

Some of the faculty concurred with the aforementioned statements. Most parties agreed that this position, the Graduate Dean, is very important to programs that have intact graduate programs. The College of Education noted that their faculty, despite being short-handed, has been filling the role as a graduate dean for quite some time. Some members of that college expressed their openness to the hiring of a Graduate Dean. This should not be a departmental sole responsibility. In the past some students have had to write own graduate degree program because of negligence.

**Senator Wurtz agreed** that this does need to be addressed and continued as a topic to the President and Provost. The Academic Affairs committee was charged with this topic.

Senator Wurtz continued by asking Senator Jackson, Chair of Academic Affairs, if his committee would like to split his committee due to the high volume of responsibilities. Senator Jackson responded to wait until the next meeting to see what other responsibilities may be charged to their committee. If suggested, the committee will be created by pulling from other existing committees.

Senator Oswald volunteered to assist with the creation of the resolution.

Discussion was held in regards to the Graduate Dean's position.

Senator Wurtz discussed other topics brought up in the President's Cabinet. The overhaul of SFA's website is a project that is currently being performed in order to assist with recruitment. It is the desire for all websites linked, or affiliated with SFA to have the same appearance in order to create uniformity and consistency across disciplines and departments. The goal is to have it completed by fall 2005.

Senator Wurtz announced that no topics of relevance were ready for discussion for tomorrow's Board of Regents meeting.

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

Presented after the Graduate Council's meeting:

Monies are present for faculty leave funding for three full semester slots to be dispersed to individual departments, including pay for an adjunct if needed. Have not had many applicants. Calling for people to apply. Applications can be obtained from the Academic Affairs' website.

Academic Curriculum Planning Committee is moving forward with the Environmental Science doctoral program. A concern was expressed in regards to small institutions offering doctoral programs.

Renovation to the library was discussed.

SFA has 700 Honors students. Would like to keep those numbers going, but want to offer more for them. Consideration of restructuring courses available is in line with the changes of the core curriculum. Suggestion was given to change from "contracts" to "sections" because of past difficulties of being able to maintain the criteria for the Honors contracts.

Wireless computing was again discussed.

**Senator Barker asked about website changes and converting already established content.** Senator Oswald responded that standards will be established. The OIT department is reviewing software that will allow a person to import all content to the new web pages. This policy was created on 07.08.04 by the Board of Regents. The hope is to have it intact by fall 2005. Installation of the transfer software, Luminis will hopefully be installed in academic departments by 07.2005.

Address any suggestions or questions to Philip Reynolds. Discussion was held. Some felt departments should be able to have their own guidelines. Some viewed the biggest problem would be if the information would not import. Some requests for OIT help have been on hold because of the format change. A question was addressed if Mac computers will support the newly proposed FTP software.

## **c. TREASURER**

The Treasurer reported that the Senate account had currently held at \$4,250.72. This was not including the encumbered amount for the student assistant who is being paid hourly.

**d. SECRETARY** – No report

## **e. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### Academic Affairs – Senator Jackson

--Grading will not come back on the agenda, because the Registrars office can not change it with it being this late into the school year. It will be temporarily put off.

--Old business regarding the Dean's performance review committee was brought up again. It was tabled because of the Provost's search, tabled again because of the Provost's first year. This will be sent forth again as a recommendation supported by the

Senate. This action was already passed as a resolution. The resolution called for four faculty members representing the different colleges.

#### Professional Welfare – Senator Davis

--Was asked to look over the Faculty Handbook and then distribute to various committee members for future recommended changes. The gist was to decide the format for the handbook in regards to its content. After discussion with all parties, it was decided to forward this to the New Faculty Orientation Committee

#### Ethics Committee - Senator Mayer

--Was charged with finding nominations for the Piper award. It was discovered that Deans give nominations. It was requested last Friday. None have come forward. The committee will move forward with review and selection from the nominations that have been received.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

Web reconstruction – Senator Wurtz announced that we are unable to "hire" someone at a salary. We were able to pay someone hourly. Roni Lias will be the person re-doing and maintaining our webpage. Please contact her [liasrr@sfasu.edu](mailto:liasrr@sfasu.edu) for any suggestions.

Senator Walker expressed concern of the website changes would affect the layout of the new Faculty Senate webpage. It was also suggested that the site should reflect archives, resolutions, minutes from the past. The upkeep of those has not been that great. Suggested to assign this task to the student worker, LaTasha Cotton

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

### 1. Annual Reports

Many comments and opinions were reflected with this discussion.

- felt they were not very clear in what was expected
- some departments have been asked to provide specific tenure guidelines, counteracting what the Provost had mentioned today
- specific guidelines would be difficult. The evaluations should be performed by professionals making it a difficult task to be fair.
- A point of concern was voiced regarding the merit pool given to each college. Senator Ormsby reported on behalf of her department that top levels received pay increases that exceeded the "5% pool." Clarification was provided in regards to the number of "5%." That was the amount given to each college. From that 5%, each department was permitted to decide on the percentage to be given to each individual faculty member.
- Many departments gave their 5% out differently. Some were based on student numbers, some were given solely on merit
- Senator Wurtz said that the 5% would be brought up in the Executive Board's meeting with the President and Provost, but did not feel it would create much discussion.

### 2. Maternity Leave

- A faculty member had expressed concern regarding lack of support given by the university as a supplement to the FMLA act.
- This was given to the Professional Welfare committee to research

3. Wireless Computing

- Senator Wurtz discussed the campus' plan for wireless computing. Should the Senate provide support to AI Cage with this issue?
- An expressed opinion was that there are many topics pertaining to technology that need support, but we can not write a resolution for everything that needs updated.

4. Summer Stipends

- Senator Wurtz discussed how it was believed each department has a summer teaching policy, apparently that is not the case. This needs to be addressed in order to create argument to allow summer pay policy to be kept within the departmental level.
- Some departments expressed lack of desire to participate with surveys, or information gathering because of the lack of follow-through.
- Liberal Arts has asked for clarity for equitable distribution for summer load teaching and pay.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business to conduct, a motion for adjournment was made by Senator Boyd, seconded by Senator Davis. The Senate stood adjourned at 4:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Linda Stark Bobo  
Secretary