

Stephen F. Austin State University

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

2005 Meeting #339

May 4, 2005

Subject to approval at the #341 meeting.

Senators present were: Julia Ballenger(1), Parker Ballinger(2), Chris Barker(3), John Boyd(5), Leisha Bridwell(6), Mary Nelle Brunson(7), Debbie Bush(8), Deborah Dalton(9), Troy Davis(10), Greta Eugenia Haidinyak(11), , Roy Joe Harris(13), Jere Jackson(14), Gary Mayer(16), Lisa Mize(17), Chair-elect, Brian Oswald(18), 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: Sue Ormsby(19), Tommy Matthys (15)

Excused absences: Secretary, Linda Bobo(4), Kayce Halstead(12)

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

PRESIDENT TITO GUERRERO

Reported on Gary's report to the Board of Regents. A commonality with other institutions with low salary raises for faculty is that every one has declining or flat enrollment. We have reasons to be optimistic about our fall enrollment. We are doing a better job of matching our admission requirements with those students who are interested in coming to SFA. If we have increased enrollment, it will be easier to justify faculty raises. We have tried to counter increasing enrollment arguments with a quality argument. If quality is taken into account, we actually do quite well. Texas Senate is inclined to give higher education more funding, the House is not.

The student recreation center fee bill is in limbo because of philosophical differences between the two bodies. The bill made it through the House, but is sitting in the Senate. One Senator is opposed to the provision that allows SFA to raise the amount taken from student fees without a referendum.

Ordinarily, we receive about \$6.5 million from HEAF, but may have a reduction of about \$1 million. However, talk is being made for an adjustment or reallocation to HEAF, where we may come out better.

Senator Wurtz: What is the difference between designated tuition and designated funds? The question arose from an article in the *Pine Log* mentioning these terms.

President Guerrero: Designated tuition is the component of tuition that we can raise up to no more than \$94. We want to raise it from \$64 to \$76. A designated fund is a place where residual balances that come from different sources of money go in to at the end of the year. There was a designated commitment of about \$5 million for the UC overage. The problem is that there is not a predictable amount each year, so we certainly would not want to take salary raises from it. We can think of designated tuition as a problem-solving fund.

Senator Walker: Have we gotten a resolution or any communication on the issue of Angelina College offering classes in Nacogdoches?

President Guerrero: We have had correspondence from the Coordinating Board assuring us of an answer very soon; but have had none, which is very disappointing because we have gotten chastised for similar situations.

The President thanked the outgoing Senate and assured us that our concerns are heard.

PROVOST MARY CULLINAN

The Provost has made a decision to go ahead and get the software program Turn It In, a software program to inhibit plagiarism and on-line reference resource for students.

She welcomed suggestions for increasing communication on campus via email.

Senator Wurtz: We have now handed you a copy of our resolution on office hours. Can you clarify how you feel about making changes to the policy?

Provost Cullinan: As long as the language is flexible enough to allow the department chair room to tailor to individual classes or faculty.

Senator Jackson: Have you given any more thought to the creation of a position for Graduate Dean?

Provost Cullinan: David Jeffrey has indicated that he would be retiring next year, so we need to redefine what we mean by that position, and then open a search.

Senator Wurtz: Is recruiting being drafted in to job descriptions by deans and chairs?

Provost Cullinan: Some are. That request has not been mandated. Some faculty have indicated that they were not hired to recruit, but it is our responsibility to recruit.

Senator Wurtz: How will the value of recruiting be measured? How will a "good recruiter" be defined?

Provost Cullinan: I hesitate to talk about a set definition. I was hoping that the value of recruiting or retention would be judged departmentally, that it would actually be something that is considered valued for your department.

Senator Wurtz: To clarify, perhaps the intent of what you are saying is that recruiting is valued for tenure and promotion. Faculty are feeling like they may have to hand out purple pencils or make cold-calls, and perhaps that is not the case.

Senator Jackson: As a historian, the main problem with low faculty salaries is that with previous administrations, faculty salaries have not been a priority for a long time. In the past, there has been no correlation between enrollment and faculty raises. Senator Jackson urged the Provost to continue to encourage the Board to make faculty salaries a priority.

Provost Cullinan: The Board is beginning to hear. The President is certainly committed.

Senator Walker: You are saying that you do not have directives from your office to mandate recruiting, but there is a separate merit pool. How are we to know what to mention in terms of recruiting if we were to apply for merit from the university-wide pool. This is not something that is decided departmentally, so how will we know what to mention? So there must be some definition that the university is using to make judgments.

There was some confusion about the recruitment merit.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Faculty Staff Picnic is May 5, 4-5:30pm
- B. Commencement; we have Faculty Marshals

V. ELECTIONS FOR OFFICERS

Lisa Mize passed out a sheet with the newly elected senators.

Science and Mathematics: Lu Yu

Fine Arts: Anita Powell (3 yr term)

Ag/Forestry: Warren Conway (2 yr term); Dan Unger (3yr term)

Business: Deborah Dunn (3 yr term); Elton Scifres (3 yr term)

Liberal Arts: Marc Guidry (3 yr term)

Applied Arts & Sciences: Wanda Mouton (3 yr term)

Adjunct: Deborah Bush (1 yr term)

Chris Barker and Julia Ballenger are candidates for Chair-elect. For treasurer, the candidates are Leisha Bridwell and Deborah Dalton. For secretary, Kayce Halstead and Elizabeth Witherspoon are the candidates.

The results of the voting are:

Chair-elect—Chris Barker
Secretary—Kayce Halstead
Treasurer—Deborah Dalton

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES from Meeting #338

After several minor changes, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Senator Haidinyak and seconded by Senator Boyd. Minutes were approved unanimously.

VII. OFFICER'S REPORT

a. CHAIR'S REPORT

Faculty Senate Report to the Board of Regents

April 28, 2005

Dr. Gary Wurtz, Senate chair

As always, thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the faculty. My time as chair of the faculty senate is almost finished, and this will be the last time I will enjoy this privilege. I have to say that I have enjoyed the position. I've

learned a great deal about the way universities work, and I have especially enjoyed all of the people I have gotten to know. With me today is Dr. Brian Oswald, the next chair of the senate, who is a member of the faculty in the College of Forestry. He has been a pleasure to work with, and I'm sure you will be impressed by his dedication to SFA and to its faculty.

The last time I addressed this body I stated that in order to ensure that SFA is a place that is attractive to high-quality applicants for our openings, and that it remains a place that compels the good faculty that are already here to stay, SFA must be competitive in its salary offerings as well as the funding of other faculty related issues. After stating that our salaries are among the lowest in the state, I was told that if I were going to make statements like that I would be well-served to support it with data, and so that is what I will do today.

Before I present the data, however, I want to make something abundantly clear. I am not here to accuse anyone at SFA of being overpaid. Nobody. Not the administration, not the athletics coaches...not anybody. I offer up this comparative data simply to make a point about the ranking of faculty salaries. The Board of Regents has shown great interest in trying to keep SFA on level ground with our peer institutions in many respects. It was that kind of logic that led to decisions like the raising of our president's salary last year, or the decision to bring wireless internet capabilities to our campus just one meeting ago. I have to believe that you have the same concerns with regard to how the faculty salaries compare to our peer universities as well.

Before you is data compiled by the American Association of University Professors that compares faculty salaries at Texas public universities. I have separated the data to show how SFA compares by rank. On p.1 you can see that in FY 04-05 SFA ranks 24th out of 27 at the Professor rank, and 25th out of 27 schools in salary at the faculty ranks of Assistant and Associate Professor (shown on pp. 2-3.) Because not all schools are members of that organization, not all of our peers are included in the comparison. Blatantly missing, for example, is UT-Tyler, but some of the institutions with which we might easily compare ourselves are Sam Houston State, who pays an average of \$10,000 more annually to their full professors, \$7,000 to their Associates and \$5,000 to their Assistant Professors. Lamar University also pays full Professors \$10,000 more, while paying Associates and Assistants \$5,000 more on average.

Page 4 comes from the Coordinating Board. This one compares the salaries at 35 public universities by averaging the top 4 ranks (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor and Instructor.) In this study you can see that SFA ranks 31st out of 35 universities for faculty pay with only A&M Kingsville, Angelo State and the two Sul Ross campuses below us- all schools with significantly lower enrollment than SFA's. Page 5 shows a list of those same 35 Texas universities listed by enrollment numbers. Although our faculty salaries are ranked 31st, you can see that our enrollment is 15th highest in the state of those

same 35 universities. In other words, MANY schools with lower enrollment than ours pay faculty better than SFA does. As a matter of comparison only, I will point out that the next few sheets in your packets show that SFA is 18th in regard to percentage of the budget spent on administrative costs (p.6), 12th in regard to tuition costs to the student (p.7), 19th for our president's salary (p.8), 15th for the provost's salary (p.9), the average for our other vice presidents salaries is 11th (pp.10-11), the deans average out at about 10th (pp.12-13), and the data I saw showed our head athletic coaches earn an average salary that puts them at 9th in the state (p.14). I obtained all of this data from our own office of Institutional Research. To put it all in perspective, I have summarized the data in the line graph entitled "SFA's comparative rankings" on p.15 of your packet.

The bottom line, it would seem, is that SFA has done a good job of positioning our costs and salaries with our ranking in the state in terms of the size of the institution for all but faculty salaries. If the graph you hold were a report of the earnings on your stocks, I believe you would be dismayed. To bring us to the rank of 15th in salaries would mean an average raise of about \$9,000 per faculty member. Due to the wide gap between where we are and where we need to be it is logical to assume that achieving this goal cannot happen immediately, but it is nonetheless extremely important to the faculty that I deliver the message that we need and trust you, the regents, to champion this cause on our behalf and help to find the means necessary in the next few years to bring SFA's faculty salaries in line with our position in the state.

b. CHAIR-ELECT'S REPORT

One comment from the Board mentioned a concern about under-enrolled classes. As a warning, be alert that the Board is looking at under-enrolled classes, whatever they think that means.

One board member mentioned that we as faculty might not even work that hard. Please send Brian a play-by-play of your day.

c. TREASURER'S REPORT

No report.

d. SECRETARY'S REPORT

No report.

e. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Elections – Lisa Mize

Elections for faculty senate offices were held and reported on earlier.

Administration and Finance – Senator Scifres

No report.

Faculty Governance and Involvement – Senator Salsbery

No report.

Ethics Committee – Senator Mayer

No report.

Academic Affairs – Senator Jackson

No report.

Professional Welfare – Senator Davis

No report.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

No old business to report.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 10 former chairs formally request that the Faculty Senate conduct a survey of the faculty as to whether we would like to become part of a university system. Dr. Larry King emphasized that we are not encouraging Senate to vote one way or other.

Senator Jackson moved that we conduct the survey. Senator Boyd seconded. Discussion ensued. Senator Salsbery is worried that people might not know the implications about joining or not joining. Chair Wurtz asked what would we do with the information if we got it. The Senate voted to conduct the survey, but not this semester.

B. Resolution on Electronic Office Hours

Senate gave a first reading for the resolution. A small amount of discussion ensued. Action on the resolution is deferred to the next Senate.

Senator Troy Davis was given the Outstanding Faculty Senator.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to conduct, a motion for adjournment was made by Senator Stovall, seconded by Senator Boyd. The Senate stood adjourned at 4:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Sarah Triana Stovall (substitute)
Secretary