

Stephen F. Austin State University

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

2006 Meeting #345

February 8, 2006

Subject to approval at the 346th meeting.

Senators present were: Parker Ballinger(2), Vice-Chair, Chris Barker(3), , John Boyd(5), Mary Nelle Brunson(6), Debbie Bush(7), Warren Conway(8), Treasurer, Deborah Dalton(9), Troy Davis(10), Deborah Dunn(11), Mark Guidry(12), Greta Haidinyak(13), Secretary, Kayce Halstead(14), Lu Yu(15), Wanda Mouton(16), Chair, Brian Oswald (17), Debbie Pace(18), Jeana Paul-Urena(19), Anita Powell(20), Kelly Salsbery(21), Elton Scifres (22), Brian Utley(24), Michael Walker(25), Elizabeth Witherspoon(26), Leisha Bridwell(27).

Excused absences:

Julia Ballenger(1), Linda Bobo(4), Dan Unger(23).

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by **Chair Brian Oswald** at the Tracy Pearman Alumni Center.

GUESTS

PRESIDENT DR. TITO GUERRERO

not present

PROVOST MARY CULLINAN

Dr. Cullinan began by mentioning Dr. Abernathy's speech presented earlier today which was well attended and a wonderful moment for the campus.

She had a few updates:

- The Teaching Excellence Center is now open with Dr. Scharff and Dr. Moore as co-directors. Dr. Cullinan has hopes of getting some funding for a renovation of the 2nd floor of the library where the TEC is housed. She will be making a presentation with John Rulfs at the BOR retreat next week and will show them the plan and stress the importance of having a place on campus that emphasizes faculty support.
- First year experience project has a number of things going on. Plans have been finalized for a summer reading group to begin in summer 2007. All incoming freshman students would read a particular book, and ideas from that book would be incorporated throughout the summer and could continue into the fall semester if they fit into classroom programs. Her hope is to

choose a book with an author who could be invited to campus. The first-year experience task force is interested in gathering ideas across campus from all the areas that are part of the student first-year experience. Dr. Clipson and Dr. Szafran will be setting up focus groups in the next few months to gather ideas from everyone who is interested in participating. Ideas are welcome via other avenues as well as focus group attendance, so feel free to send ideas forward to her.

- 120 hour legislation is still with us. There are rumors that it will be abolished, but no one in administration has heard that it is going away. We should hear something first hand in March when Commissioner Paredes will be here. Although it should affect students in fall of 2008, planning should begin now. Deans and department chairs have been asked to put together ideas and proposals in March. She asks for cooperation, as it will be a lot of work for everyone. **Senator Guidry** asked about programs requiring more than 120 for accreditation. **A.** We will have to look at those programs individually, as there could be compelling academic reasons for some programs to be longer, but not all. **Senator Salsbery** asked if she had some sense of what other institutions are doing in this regard. **A.** Other provosts are communicating with her, and they too are asking for proposals from their deans in March, and will review programs in the spring. Some institutions don't have as much work to do as we do.
- Faculty Handbook project—Dr. Cullinan thanked Dr. Davis who took on the project of updating the handbook some time ago, but it is a bigger task than originally envisioned. There needs to be something more than a set of policies; it should be somewhat inspirational, and useful. She wants faculty input. **Senator Utley** responded to the matter. His committee has looked at the handbooks of other universities and found them to be much more searchable and user friendly. Ours is neither. Ours has a table of contents, but it is not in a very logical order. It seems to be something that needs to be started over. Certain links are dead, and some policies are outdated. The overall content and presentation seems to be inadequate in relation to others they looked at. Dr. Cullinan asked if their committee was planning to make any recommendations. **Dr. Utley** thinks it should be more than his committee working on it. There needs to be a group from across campus that meets regularly to get all the information together. It is a large task. His current committee could recommend what kind of group is needed, i.e. a Faculty Handbook committee devoted just to that task. Dr. Cullinan mentioned that some kind of timeline needs to be considered as well, and she will wait to hear a recommendation from his committee—perhaps in fall '06. She had no other business to report. **Chair Oswald** asked what is going on with small classes. **A:** The classes need to be reported to the state each semester and to the Board of Regents, because they are being tracked. There is statewide oversight

on small classes, and there is a push now, that we put resources into classes where there are more significant numbers of students, and make every effort to keep small classes to a minimum.

Next, **Chair Oswald** introduced **Bill Wagner** from Information Technology Services.

- Mr. Wagner discussed the telephone pricing issue. There have been requests and/or complaints about long distance charges which are currently \$.21/minute for intrastate \$.73/minute for interstate calls. There have been questions about using prepaid cards, and the answer was always “no” because personal calls could be made using them. ITS wants to find a way to rectify the problem. ITS pays a much lower rate to a vendor--\$.2 cents/minute for interstate and \$.3 cents/minute for intrastate. The proposal is to get department long distance rates down, but the other side of the matter is that ITS is funded using the expensive rates. Currently, it is costing departments \$6 dollars a month/per phone, and students \$9 dollars a month for phones in their rooms. ITS is overcharging on one side (long distance) and undercharging (line charge) on the other. They are proposing a break-even point by passing cheaper long distance rates on to everyone, and raising line charges for everyone. The problem is how much departments actually use long distance—and whether it would save or cost them money. This matter needs to be discussed within departments.
- **Chair Oswald** asked Mr. Wagner to explain Banner.
A: The current system being used is a product by SCT called Plus—it does the accounting and administrative work for the campus. The vendor has an upgraded web product called Banner. We have wanted to use Banner for some time, and need to move there because SCT will eventually stop supporting Plus. A demonstration was held in 2002 and the campus planned to move forward then, but a group called Texas Connection, was not willing to commit to doing the statewide modifications for Banner, because they were a Plus company. So it took a couple of years to get them to commit to providing the resources for the statewide roll-out for Banner. There was money in our budget for FY2005 to make the changeover. There was a start in winter of 2005, but it will be a multi-year roll out, and then the money in the budget for FY2006 disappeared, so for now it is sitting and waiting. Dr. Guerrero is confident that Banner will go forward, and the budget is being prepared right now for FY2007. He thinks that training for the first module would be spring '07, and we will go live in September, 2008. It is a multimillion dollar project and will take several years to be completed.

Senator Urena asked who uses Banner? **A:** Department offices and the business office. **Urena:** Is it information that is not available from Campus Pipeline? **A:** He can't really tell us whether all the information is there too,

but it may be arranged in a different way. **Senator Barker** asked if the SFA Administration used another version. **A:** Yes. **Senator Walker** asked about the freeze on technology spending, and whether there would be no allocation of funds for an unspecified amount of time. **A:** At the last BOR meeting, a member asked for a moratorium on new technology spending until a consultant could come in and look at the entire technology structure on campus. ITS is continuing to do regular business, but is not initiating any new projects. There is some concern about how this will affect next year's budget.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No new announcements.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of meeting 344 was made by **Debbie Bush** and seconded by **John Boyd**. Motion passed.

Chair's Report

Chair Oswald asked if anyone would be willing to look over old minutes on the Senate web site and list all the past senators for the years not yet completed. He may ask Roni Lias to do it.

He suggested that we make people in our offices aware about the proposed telephone charge changes. Next month Robert Hill will be attending the meeting. The topic regarding publishing charges mentioned in an email did not seem to be a big enough issue to warrant attention by the Senate.

He asked if anyone had noticed an increase in paperwork required from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs when applying for matching grant money, and to let him know if we hear anything.

House Leader Craddick was here on campus and there was a productive talk with Dr. Guererro about revenue bonds. The priority list may shift some. The university also may ask the state for help in debt reduction.

He asked for any suggestions on guests to invite to the April or May meetings. Finally, the survey was discussed. He has asked three faculty (not on the senate) to take the narrative responses and arrange them in a more condensed and understandable way for presentation to the Board of Regents.

A short summary of the survey is:

- 346 faculty responses--nearly a 65 % response rate
- 59% hold at least one degree from a Texas school—SFA is the number 1 school
- 52 % say we should join a system
- 19 % had no opinion
- Rest said no
- Number 1 choice was Texas tech system
- Then Texas state system
- Then A&M system
- Salary increases is a high issue
- Increase emphasis on academics
- Those who said “no” to joining a system were concerned with losing our own identity.

One last item: **Chair Oswald** received a letter from SGA regarding some international students who were forced to resign as RAs, asking if we would like to take any action. Should we address this? **Senator Urena** asked why they were dismissed. **A:** They failed to attend a mandatory training seminar in early January, because they were not notified far enough in advance to make changes to their scheduled international travel arrangements. There was discussion about what the senate could do. Finally, it was decided that we did not have enough information to make a resolution, and that it does not seem to be a faculty senate issue. **Chair Oswald** will inform the SGA.

Chair Elect report

Vice-Chair Barker said there was not much to report. Regarding the graduate VP search committee, they are at the stage of making phone interviews, and hope to be bringing some people to campus.

The core curriculum assessment committee will be sending guidelines to departments because all core classes will need new assessment instruments designed in order to comply with a new state mandated initiative.

He attended the Web site workshop held in the library. The status of that is the company who has been hired to create the new university web site is going to take all existing department websites and put them into a template, and when that is done, they will contact department web masters who may then go to that site and make any suggestions for changes. Once that is done, the new university site will be ready to go public sometime near the beginning of summer. **Senator Urena** asked if faculty web pages will be affected. **A:** Yes, but you will have more of the template page to use than departments. It will all be a lot of work for people who maintain department pages.

TREASURER

Somehow we gained 9 cents from last month. We have \$3642. in the account now, but will spend \$600. on dues to the *Texas Council of Faculty Senates* organization.

SECRETARY

No report

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Elections

There is concern about faculty who contribute but are not holding faculty rank. Shouldn't we consider representation for those who do not hold rank i.e. nurses teaching clinical, and others in other departments? **Chair Oswald** said we are open to doing anything we want to do for those being represented. We may need to approach it by college and we will need clarification. He suggested the committee come up with a proposal. Ballots will be going out in March and April. All outgoing senators work with **Vice-Chair Barker** to create a slate of officer candidates for the May meeting. Two candidates are needed for each position.

Administration and Finance

Senator Scifres discussed the handout he brought. The committee pulled out items in the university budget related to athletics which described funds and sources of expenditures. Most appear to be coming through tuition and student service fees. He wants senators to look at the information and come up with questions.

Senator Salsbery asked: What is the status of the baseball complex? Who is paying for it? **A:** Nothing has been heard yet. **Senator Scifres** wants to compose a document with all our questions and send them to the people responsible for these areas, and then his committee could meet with the various individuals involved.

Faculty Governance and Involvement

The Survey report was given by **Chair Oswald** earlier. Someone asked about the status of stipends for family member—**A:** Reduced, and on hold for now. There is a phone number for anonymous reporting of fraud because the committee dealing with that issue thought it was the best possible way of handling it and still comply with the state mandate.

Ethics Committee

No report

Academic Affairs

No report

Strategic Planning Committee

No report

Professional Welfare

Discussed earlier

Academic technology

No report

OLD BUSINESS

Nothing is happening with the Chapel idea so far.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Oswald wants to hold off on the Wellness Center resolution right now. He sent Dr. Worsham a question about the old outdoor pool, asking whether it will be here this summer, and will the new pool, when it is built, be available to the campus community? He has not received an answer yet. **Senator Dalton** asked if faculty and staff will be able to use the new recreation center when it is finished? **A.** Some say yes, but we need clarification.

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Davis moved for adjournment, with **Senator Boyd** seconding. Passed. Adjourned at 4:23pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kayce Halstead
Secretary