

**Stephen F. Austin State University  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
Meeting #357  
April 11, 2007**

Subject to approval at the 358th meeting.

Senators present were: Norjuan Austin(1), Chair, Chris Barker(4); John Boyd(5), Deborah Bush(7), Linda Calvacca(8), Warren Conway(9), Deborah Dunn(10), Jeannie Gresham(11); Chair-elect, Marc Guidry(12); Gina Haidinyak(13); Lani Draper substituting for Kayce Halstead, Kevin Langford(15), Perry Moon (16), Anita Powell(20), Elton Scifres(21), Sally Ann Swearingen(22), Mark Turner(23), Dan Unger(24), Brian Utley(25), Michael Walker(26); Debbie Pace(18), Jeana Paul-Urena(19).

Excused: Julia Ballenger(2), Joe Ballenger(3) Mary Nell Brunson(6); Secretary, Kayce Halstead(14); Wanda Mouton(17), Treasurer, Elizabeth Witherspoon(27).

**Call to Order**

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

**Guests**

Provost and VP of Academic Affairs, Dr. Marlin Young

Dr. Young addressed the following information items:

Dr. Pattillo and Ms. Debbie Baisden (who was invited to this meeting) were unable to attend because they were away at meetings.

Academic scholarships have increased and recipients are now receiving \$4000 instead of \$2000.

There are only 5 designated honors courses for Fall '07. One reason for the decrease may be an assumption that the Provost won't allow classes with fewer than 20 students. The rule from the Coordinating Board states no fewer than 10 students for an undergraduate class and 5 students for a graduate class. We need to increase the number of Honors courses offered because incoming freshmen with high entrance scores deserve to be challenged.

The BOR approved raising the amount of international scholarships to \$60,000, all of which has been committed. The number of international students has increased from 97 to 165 students in about 3 years. Dr. Norton will be traveling to China for more recruiting opportunities, and an additional \$20,000 has been procured from the gift account in Academic Affairs for the trip. Another \$5,000 was made available for a prior trip to a career fair at Midwestern University. Our current international student ratio is 1.75 and we would like to see that raised to 2. These students are some of our brightest.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the library is currently under construction. Part of the floor is walled off to make room for new offices for OIT, the Teaching Excellence Center, Academic Advising, and SFA 101. The space freed in the Boynton Building will house the digital lab currently on the lower floor of the Rusk building. We are looking at 5 months for the movement of the offices. \$550,000 was appropriated for this construction last year. We have moved slowly and made sure everyone has the space they want. No money was put aside for furnishings so we are asking for HEAF funds from the Regents.

A senator had a question about the honors courses. Are they designated? **A.** We like them to be designated as honors courses.

Chair Barker asked about understaffed departments that offer to teach honors classes. **A.** Adjuncts may be hired so that those professors teaching an honors course can reassign their freshman and sophomore classes to the adjuncts.

Dr. Berry thought that there were departments in a position to offer honors courses, but felt pressure to keep classes large. Dr. Young has alleviated that pressure.

Associate Provost and VP of Academic Affairs, Dr. Ric Berry

Dr. Berry addressed the following information item:

We are watching the legislature for other issues. There is a bill that requires universities to allow parents and perspectives students to see data on performance measures on the web sites. Another bill is out on the assessment of advising and there are more issues of accountability coming. We need to try to stay ahead of this instead of always trying to catch up.

Chair Barker asked about reasons why there is a movement toward more standardized testing at all levels.

Dr. Berry commented that their have been longitudinal studies tracking 8<sup>th</sup> graders up to their mid 20's. Statistics available are about the students, not colleges. Dr. Berry heard a researcher speak at a conference and he said that the issues are not level. From 1850 – 1950, we improved. A percentage of the population succeeds in Higher Education. Since then, the percentage has stayed down while the population increases. This is not the same in other countries. A college degree costs more now and people want assurance that the cost is worthwhile.

Senator Swearingen asked if this assessment was trickling down to the faculty. **A.** In some departments it is--especially with the core assessment being reported to the Coordinating Board. There is concern that funding will be tied to this.

Senator Swearingen commented about the amount of time we spend on this. **A.** A committee is looking into the situation in hopes of finding a way to assess more efficiently and with less interference.

Senator Swearingen commented on funding. The stated reason for a tuition increase was faculty salaries. Wasn't there more to it than that?

Senator Langford noted that the media will not always be accurate. As the percentages increase, people will be more critical. The press made it sound as though the tuition hike was needed exclusively for faculty salaries. He would like to see more transparency in the university finances. The tuition increased but faculty salaries did not. Chair-elect Guidry remarked that the news report made it look like the students were being soaked for faculty raises, leaving the students with a bad perception.

Dr. Berry noted that the list in the paper is accurate. We need to look at all those things. Chair-elect Guidry said the fact is there has been a 36% increase in tuition, and salaries have declined comparatively. **A.** We know this; we just don't know what to do about it. Faculty salaries have increased, just not at the same rate. There are better ways to state it.

Senator Scifres asked how the university operates on a deficit. **A.** We have a fund balance that we can utilize. Our deficit is not even close to industry standards.

Senator Moon noted that we should operate no more than 3 months in a deficit. He also asked if there was an attempt to give Academic Affairs its own budget. **A.** We can dream.

Dr. Berry stated that there will be a meeting this week concerning the budget process. Dr. Young said that there is a lot to consider. A department may request new faculty and if the enrollment in that dept. has increased, then Mr. Gallant will probably approve it. Increased enrollment is a good justification for money. Music is a good example of that. We are learning to craft other arguments.

Dr. Young says we need to go back to our departments and ask "what is our focus?" Focus should change over a course of 20 years. We need to try to eliminate duplication in the curriculum. This is all a part of the program review.

Chair Barker asked who makes decisions about how much money goes to academics.

**A.** I am not sure if there is one person or one amount. It is all about who brings the requests. We were hit hard about the library use fee. Does it all go to the library? Last year, of the more than 1 million dollars in library fees, \$600,000 went to the library. The rest went to University operation. The computer use fee became the Technology fee. How do we use it to the advantage of the students? We promised to give free copies. We talked to Ms. Dickerson about 200 free copies/per student but she said there was no way the library could afford it because they are laser copies. There are no more plans to give up library space.

Senator Perry asked if there were plans to improve the physical condition of the library like the condition of the elevators. **A.** Not to my knowledge.

Dr. Young stated that when the Education Resource Center is complete in 2 years, there will be an expense involved in moving elementary education and the early childhood lab. The Phonejacks have not presented a cost to the BOR about their relocation. Banner will be costly. We need to plan 5 years in advance. The Deans need to think about that.

#### Jill Still and April Smith from University Advancement

Ms. Still presented the following information:

She has been with the advancement office for 12 years. It is located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Austin building. Her department is in charge of internal affairs, marketing to parents and alumni. They are now solely the development side since the hiring of an executive director of marketing. Their focus will be fundraising and developing relationships with parents and alumni.

Fundraising has only existed since the 1980s here at SFA. Other institutions have been doing it for decades.

After a new VP is hired they hope to have gift officers who can work in academic departments part time.

The office is planning to do a \$60 million campaign. The BOR has done feasibility studies but things halted after Dr. Holbert left. We are currently in the silent phase of the capital campaign.

In FY'05 we were able to raise \$8.7 million. FY'06 shows the loss of our VP. In FY'07 we are hanging in with \$3 million.

We raise money for academics through major gifts, planned gifts, charitable gifts, annuities, endowment management, and assist with university endowment scholarships. We also have the parent fund which is 100% academic dollars and the Phonejack money goes straight to academic spending accounts.

Ms. Smith stated that their main gift source has been the work of the Phonejacks. They receive 80% of the annual fund. Mailers have not been successful. They raise \$225,000 - \$250,000/ year for academics. They also speak at parent orientation and send post cards to alumni. Their office can create special scripts for departments.

Ms. Still stated that they welcome any ideas about specialty fundraising, and have been successful with it. Faculty may think they can't raise funds, but that is not true. The

policy says to coordinate efforts. We want to make sure we are not targeting the same people. It is helpful to inform us of what you are doing.

Ms. Smith said they could also do mini campaigns. One that was done for the Early Childhood lab netted \$5,500. She has a calendar and knows when everything is going out. It will not take much time and effort on your end.

Ms. Still said they have received gifts through their web site as well.

Chair Barker noted that department chairs may not know about their office, and wondered if they communicate with new chairs? **A.** We usually go through the Deans but are thinking about doing some training.

Ms. Smith said that all Deans and Chairs are invited to interact with the Phonejack students.

Ms. Still also said that they can come and talk to departments and give a presentation.

Chair Barker asked what their office's connection was to Andy Kessling [Executive Marketing Director]. **A.** We have no connection now. Some universities have a connection with development, alumni, and public affairs. Andy's team can go through and proof our work.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Barker says that we need volunteers to serve as marshals for the May 12<sup>th</sup> commencement ceremony. We also need candidates for the executive committee officers: chair-elect, secretary, treasurer, parliamentarian.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The final version was not mailed to all members. We will get Kayce to send them.

## **OFFICER REPORTS**

Chair's report-- no report

Chair-elect report—Chair-elect Guidry says that he is working on a resolution for the baseball complex. Senators will need to send him their vote.

Treasurer-- no report

Secretary-- no report

Academic Affairs--no report

Professional Welfare--no report

Ethics-- no report

Election-- see old business

Administration and Finance-- no report

Faculty governance and Involvement-- no report

### Old business

Chair Barker said that there is a good slate of senate candidates. Senator Mouton is not present, so we do not know the status of elections. One newly elected senator is in English and we already have two senators from that department. The by-laws state that there should be no more than two from one department, but the new chair will be from that department. Chair Barker explained that this is not a significant issue because Marc Guidry, from English, will become the new chair and according to the constitution he will then no longer occupy a department allotment slot in the senate.

New business

Chair Barker stated that there needs to be an amendment to the constitution. It is currently divided up by colleges and still has Liberal Arts and Applied Arts and Sciences separated. Wording changes will be assigned to Jeanie Gresham of the election committee. The Constitution is on the senate site and the selected text is in Article I Section IV.

Chair Barker told the Senators to be thinking about who they want to elect for officers. The meeting in May will be brief, with third year Senators rotating off, and will be held during dead week.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Senator Boyd moved to adjourn. Motion seconded by Senator Walker. Meeting adjourned at 3:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kayce Halstead (Lani Draper)  
Secretary