

**Stephen F. Austin State University  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
2007 Meeting #360  
September 12, 2007**

Subject to approval at the 361st meeting.

Senators present were: Neill Armstrong (1), Norjuan Austin (2), Joe Ballenger (3), Sara Bishop (4), Vikki Boatman (5), Dennis Bradford (6), Erin Brown (7), Parliamentarian, Ken Collier (8); Carolyn Conn (9) Randi Cox (10), Lani Draper (11), Secretary, Jeanie Gresham (13); Al Greule, (14), Chair, Marc Guidry (15); Scott LaGraff (16), Kevin Langford (17), Tomy Matthys (18), Perry Moon (19), Debbie Pace (20), Rose Powell (21), Treasure, Elton Scifres (22); Lee Stewart (23), Chair-Elect, Sally Ann Swearingen (24); Ken Untiedt (25).

Excused absences: Deborah Dunn (11), Dan Unger (22)

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**GUESTS**

PRESIDENT

Dr. Baker Pattillo stated that he enjoyed working with the Senate in the past year and looked forward to a good year. He relayed that he met last week with the two officers, and they shared concerns about the following. Dr. Pattillo's responses to the questions posed by the Senate officers follow:

1. The Strategic Planning Committee - The Committee will seek input from faculty during the upcoming semesters. The Regents' Board Chair will serve on the Committee.
2. Salary Equity and the Strategic Plan - Dr. Pattillo stated that he thought it was an initiative to be addressed but the decision as to whether salary equity would be on the Plan was not made because the Strategic Planning Committee had not met yet this semester. He felt that it will take a lot of discussion and consideration. He reviewed how the legislature is considering salaries. He said that he supported that salary equity be an issue included in the Strategic Plan.
3. The Provost Search - Dr. Pattillo stated that a committee has been appointed. The dean from forestry is serving as chair. The committee is conducting a search during the fall semester, and the committee is to submit three names to Dr. Berry. He hopes to have a recommendation by the January Board meeting.
4. CIO – Dr. Pattillo stated that the search is in progress. There are two candidates who have or will attend the campus.
5. Instability in the Austin Building - He stated that he does not see any instability or turmoil in the Austin Building. The provost retired, and Dr. Berry was appointed as interim. A search will be conducted but Dr. Pattillo stated that he had confidence in the present Interim Provost. Dr. Pattillo also stated that Steve Westbrook has been here for 25 years so he sees no instability there. He filled the Vice President for Finance and appointed a man that had been here for a long time. Vice President of Development was open when he came in to the

- office. That search is coming to a close. He also relayed that the Alumni Association Vice President is open. An eight member search committee co-chaired by Steve Westbrook and the Alumni Board Chair will conduct a search.
6. The New Education Building and the New Student Recreation Center – He responded to the Senate officers question concerning whether the buildings would be “green” buildings (efficient). He stated that did not know the definition of a green building, but the buildings are the most efficient that can be built.
  7. The baseball complex – He said that there is not a great deal he can tell us. Athletics has raised about two million dollars. Dr. Pattillo said that this is September; and we are moving toward the last quarter. Many donations do come in the last quarter. He stated that the decision will be made in January; he will make a recommendation at that time.

Dr. Pattillo was asked by a Senator if the 25% is not raised will he recommend the field? He stated that he does not know at this time.

8. Relocation of the Baseball Complex to the New Raguet Apartments Site - He said that area is not appropriate. That is where the new education building will go. In January bids will probably go out for the new education building. He also stated that moving the complex to the swimming pool location is not a consideration.

Dr. Pattillo relayed the following comments:

- September 12 is the 12<sup>th</sup> class day. We do not have final figures. We are going to be down about 150 students. He said that they are probably three reasons: last year we had the largest graduation class, we have a small junior class, and a year ago SFASU instituted the Return to Learn Program. The students did not return after the conclusion of that program.
- Dr. Pattillo told the Senate that he enjoyed working with Senator Scifres. He was the only faculty member in the state chosen to participate in a newly appointed legislative committee.
- Dr. Pattillo stated that he will serve on a Formula Advising Committee and Foreign Students Committee for the legislature.

Dr. Pattillo asked for questions: None were asked.

#### INTERIM PROVOST and INTERIUM ASSISTANT PROVOST

Dr. Rick Berry comments:

- Strategic Planning Committee - The Strategic Planning Committee, composed of about 20 people, has met about five times. Last spring was for learning about the university and bodies such as the legislature that impact SFASU. The committee reviewed such topics as demographics of students and faculty. This semester the Committee will seek input from faculty and staff.
- SACS Reaffirmation - The Reaffirmation from SACS is being considered at the same time that the Strategic Planning Committee is in place. The Quality Enhance Plan has to be presented to SACS. The plan must contribute to student learning. The Strategic Plan needs to include the Quality Enhancement Plan. A webmaster and office is being put in place. Roni Lias will be the webmaster. The SACS report is all online. There will soon be a Strategic Planning website where faculty and staff can input ideas.

- CIO - Two weeks ago the first candidate came to SFASU, and the second candidate is on campus today. A recommendation may be made by the end of this week concerning that position. The position needs to be filled because we have a centralized and decentralized system. We lack the contact person when we have to report on things to the state. Presently, we do not have a person charged with this responsibility. We were audited this last spring and concerns were noted.
- Academic Program Developments - He believes that they should come from the faculty and they are. The reduction of most degree programs to 120 hours maximum will be finally approved this fall and official in fall 2008. SFASU will meet that deadline. It has not made our programs better but weaker. Even though all programs could not be reduced to 120 hours; those programs have been reduced.
- 30-hour Rule - The 30-hour rule is still in place. It will apply to students after 150 attempted hours. Then, they will pay out of state fees. Advisors need to keep that in mind.
- Six-drop Regulation - The new six-drop regulation is important to students. A student can only drop six courses over their college career. There are certain exceptions; drops before the 12th day do not count. We can not allow students to violate this rule in our institution. They can fail as many times as they want. The problem is how to police it because all universities do not show drops the same way. The rule is now in place for 2007 freshmen.
- Core Curriculum Assessment - We are continuing with Core Curriculum Assessment. It was mandated by the Coordinating Board. We have to report on this in 2009. Last Spring, we were better at reporting on it.
- Interim Assistant Provost – Dr. Berry introduced Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson as Interim Assistant Provost. Dr. Brunson will help with university academic assessment. SACS requires us to have an assessment system to show that our programs do what they say they do. We will be moving into program assessment. Mary Nelle worked on this during NCATE. The assessment system will give us information on how we are doing.
- Task Forces - Dr. Berry has asked several to serve on two task forces. One is International Studies and will look at how the program stands now. The task force is to make suggestions about how to keep this program vital and how to develop them. Another committee is reviewing summer programs. The summer enrollment is dropping. We have dropped about eight percent. SFASU costs more than community colleges; fuel is high. We need to do something to entice students. The committee will be looking at options.
- Enrollment – Dr. Berry has asked the deans to come in to talk about enrollment. It looks like the credit hours will remain somewhat stable. He has asked them to cover:
  - What is the history of enrollment?
  - What is needed to make the program grow?
  - What each department is doing in a systematic way to recruit?
  - What do we do to increase retention?
  - What can each department do to build community?
- Faculty workloads: He addressed the question, “Is there any follow up to a report given to the Regents?” The report was a report given at the April Regents’ meeting concerning the Sam Houston policy pertaining to 3/3 and 4/4 teacher workloads. He said he had not done anything formally. He thinks we need to take

a hard look at it. It is a recruiting tool for faculty to build in research time in the load. It has cost. We should raise salaries and make the 3/3 some type of option. He does not know how to fund it, but he will strive to move in that direction.

Questions:

Dr. Berry asked for questions: Senator Elton Scifres just commented to Dr. Berry that there may be some money available for the 3/3 workload issue from the legislature.

Senator Langford stated that the value of a degree is based on the faculty, and he appreciates Dr. Berry's comments. He is nervous when thinking of the Strategic Plan. Senator Langford said he hoped that salary would be included. He wants to challenge Dr. Berry that salary equity has to be a part of the Plan, or there will be a crisis. Dr. Berry stated that he believed that it would be on the Plan. The Regents have heard the message, and now it is time that it is a priority.

Senator Cox made a comment about work loads. She wanted to consider more than the number of classes but consider the number of students per semester. Dr. Berry said that he thought that any revision would also consider class size. Also, it was brought up that labs should be considered.

Dr. Berry said to keep in mind that a one percent salary increase costs SFASU \$700,000. He said it would take three and one half million dollars each year to sustain a five percent salary increase. He stated that it is a concern where to get that money.

Dr. Berry also stated that he had watched the Regents for about ten years. He has not seen them turn down a request for faculty raises.

Senator Ballenger asked if there had ever been a champion (administrator) for salary increase. Dr. Berry did not know.

#### FIRST FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE

Dr. Elton Scifres reported that he was the only faculty representative for the state legislature. He went last week to the Coordinating Board meeting. The legislature has set aside one hundred million dollars and the Board has to decide how to spend the money. The good news is it has to be ready by January. The Board's tentative plan has set aside eight million for the top ten percent of graduating high school students wanting to major in critical need areas such as nursing and has set aside funds for at-risk students. An RFP will go out for improving student quality. 72 million is set aside for the number of students graduating in critical fields, weighting is based on the major and whether they are at risk. Based on that criteria, SFASU would receive close to a million dollars. A funding category in the plan is for schools that increase graduates. SFASU would not benefit because the Board is looking at the top ten schools. These funds may be a one time issue, and if the funding continues, outcome data would be tied to the funds.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Guidry relayed the following announcements:

1. Some senate positions need to be replaced for one year. The Senators that need replacing are:
  - Wanda Mouton
  - Anita Powell

- Mark Turner
- Linda Calvacca

The following senators were added by unanimous vote from the Senators representing their colleges.

- Carolyn Con
  - Tomy Matthys
  - Rose Powell
  - Al Gruele
2. Chair Guidry said that tomorrow is the last day for submitting a letter to the Army Core of Engineers concerning the Bo Pilgrim Park.
  3. Tonight is the state of the student body address. Any student or faculty member can attend Senate meetings. Kent Willis is a communications major and serves as the president of SGA. He has reviewed the Senate agendas and wants to work with the senate. Chair Guidry introduced Mr. Willis and asked him to speak. Mr. Willis stated that understands the issues. He said that he is concerned with what is taking place at SFASU.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made by Senator Swearingen to approve the minutes from meeting #358 and #359. The motion was seconded by Senator Langford

Minutes were approved as written.

### **OFFICER REPORTS**

Chair Guidry had the following items to discuss:

1. Mr. Willis has asked for a joint meeting with the Senate and SGA. Chair Guidry said we could not change our dates. He said one meeting might be appropriate. Senator Moon stated that it would be fine if there was a real agenda instead of an open forum. Chair Guidry wanted to know if it was to our advantage. There was discussion concerning if it was worthwhile, as to the date of the meeting, and if there was a significant agenda. Chair Guidry will talk with Mr. Willis, SGA president, to discuss what the agenda might be for a one-time joint meeting. We would request a firm agenda and decide the meeting date. October may be a potential meeting date.
2. The committee assignments were reviewed. Chair Guidry ask the committees to meet. Faculty Government and Involvement needs to meet because its function is being given back to the Senate. The Elections Committee has to function. All other committees need to begin work to decide what work is needed. Chair Guidry asked the Administration and Finance Committee to find a tied between low salaries and failed searches so that he can present the data at the October Regents meeting. The data could be anecdotal. The data collection needs to be done more systematically than it has in the past. Senator Cox said that they committee could begin with assistance from Senator Scifres. The rationale is that not being able to recruit faculty may be a factor that will influence the Board. He asked if anyone had comments about committee assignments. None were given so the committees will stand.
3. The baseball complex was discussed. Chair Guidry stated that athletics is having difficulty raising funds. The next step of the Core of Engineers is to hold a public

hearing. Senator Guidry said that his strategy was to write a letter to the Core of Engineers asking for a public hearing. He hopes that the hearing will cause the issue to die. Discussion concerning this strategy emerged.

- A concern is that the Senate may be crossing a line.
- The baseball issue had not been voted on yet by the Senate.
- Dr. Pattillo seemed to have changed his position that the issue would be killed if the money was not raised.
- Faculty opposition to the field or wetlands was discussed.
- Raised student cost was a concern.
- High cost of this complex as compared to other projects on other campuses was an issue.
- Location was discussed.

Senator Moon stated that the Senate had not dealt with the issue and Chair Guidry's strategy of writing a letter looks to the Core of Engineers to handle the issue. He stated that we should pass a resolution.

Discussion continued:

- It was brought up that the Senate should talk to Dr. Pattillo.
- A concern was that the Regents will continue with the issue no matter what is decided.
- A suggestion was to take a positive stance and point to student costs.
- Faculty is not against the baseball program but against spending the money on the complex was a comment made.
- It was stated that undermining fund raising is not a good issue; faculty will be blamed.
- Faculty needs to know we are taking a stand was another comment.

Chair Guidry directed the Senators to ask people in each college to see if they want a resolution opposing the field not the program. He said that in October we could review the results, and if there is a strong feeling, we would write the resolution.

Senator Boatman recommended using Survey Monkey to poll the faculty instead. It was decided that Lee Stewart would create the survey in Survey Monkey and Chair Guidry will craft the survey questions. Chair Guidry will send the questions to the Senators prior to Senator Stewart posting of the questions in Survey Monkey. Senator Matthys asked to include the location of the complex in the survey.

Treasurer Scifres: The report was given by Senator Ballenger for Senator Scifres. The Senate has \$3438.59 available with nothing encumbered.

Secretary Gresham reported that Chair Guidry asked her to note that the Senate passed the Marlin Young resolution via electronic vote prior to the September 12, 2007 meeting in order to coincide with his retirement reception on August 31, 2007. The official tally on the Marlin Young resolution was:

18 votes "for"  
0 votes "against"  
0 abstentions

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No reports were given.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 pm by Chair Guidry.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanie Gresham  
Secretary