

**Stephen F. Austin State University  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
2007 Meeting #362  
November 14, 2007**

Subject to approval at the 362nd meeting.

Senators present were: 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); Randi Cox (10), Lani Draper (11), Deborah Dunn (12), Secretary, Jeanie Gresham (13); Al Greule, (14), Chair, Marc Guidry (15); Scott LaGraff (16), Kevin Langford (17), Perry Moon (19), Rose Powell (20), Clint Richardson (21), Treasure, Elton Scifres (22); Chair-Elect, Sally Ann Swearingen (24); Dan Unger (25), Ken Untiedt (26)

Excused absences: Carolyn Conn (9), Lee Stewart (23), Tomy Matthys (18)

**Call to Order**

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

**GUESTS**

PRESIDENT DR. BAKER PATTILLO

Dr. Pattillo discussed the following:

- Where are we in the Provost search? – We have 35 applications submitted. About ½ of them are completed applications. We do not have any from SFASU. He stated that he hoped to make a recommendation in the January board meeting.
- Legislature Topics:
  - The legislature is concerned with transferability of students. SFASU is currently reducing hours to 120 hrs for programs.
  - Meeting of the Governor with the Chancellors of huge university systems. – Texas A&M tenure policy review.
- Graduate Speaker – Senator Judith Zaffirini from Laredo will be the speaker. She is a UT at Austin graduate with Bachelors and Masters Degree. She was helpful in obtaining funds for the SFASU nursing program. She helped to co-sponsor the bill.
- Baseball Complex – There are about six week left in this quarter. We have about \$2 million dollars presently. This is a big issue on his mind and he will take the issue to the January board meeting.
- Randi Cox asked Dr. Pattillo to take the message to the legislature to make sure that the courses that we transfer do meet SFASU standards. Dr. Pattillo stated that many universities in Texas have this same concern.
- Chair Guidry - Will the legislature demand that universities remove courses from the core? Dr. Pattillo did not know the answer to this question.
- Senator Ballenger – Will the legislature invite faculty representatives to testify? Dr Pattillo said that the legislature does have representatives testify. You testify to committees that are in constant flux with members moving in and out of the

room. Much of how the legislature works is through their assistants. Committees are already working on issues that will be heard in the next session.

- Chair Guidry asked the new faculty to introduce themselves to Dr. Pattillo. He explained how he works with the senate.

#### INTERIM PROVOST DR. RICK BERRY

Dr. Berry discussed the following:

- Process of Prioritizing Space Needs – He said a lot goes into the process. Dr. Pattillo’s priorities on the academic side are chemistry, human sciences, and the performing arts. Priorities generally do not change until you fill them. Then, if you receive funding for programs not on the list, they are funded. For example, we have funding for the Education Research Center. This was on our list. The coordinating board ranks the priority lists. They ranked the Center the highest, and it was funded. The Education Research Center and deferred maintenance were funded. The 80<sup>th</sup> legislature funded the approved programs. In the last session, we were approved funds for the nursing facility. Funding availability decides what will be built. Generally, we look at growing programs or future growth. We look at safety issues, also. We have serious chemistry and theatre safety issues. A priority list is a moving target.
- Filling Faculty Positions - We were able to complete searches for professors 72% of the time last year. The attempt to make that a higher success rate is everyone’s responsibility. He assumes that salaries are at the base of this issue. We need to continue to try to make SFASU a good place to work. We increased our faculty development funding. Working toward collegial work environments is a good thing. “Talking up” the university makes it a good place to work. There is no one way to improve the success rate. We are working on raising salaries. It will not happen in one year.
- CIO Search – The search is shut down. Three candidates on campus were interviewed. We will repost the position.
- Tuition Offsets for Graduate Assistants – Faculty from the sciences are complaining that the GA program will die if something is not done. Is it possible to move to a full tuition waiver by fall 2008? He said it was possible. We would have to prioritize this idea and decide if this moves to the top of needs for funding. He thinks this is a great idea that we can work through the budget process.
- Legislature Issues – The P16 issue is enormous. We are forming a P16 council. Last Wednesday, we had the first meeting. The purpose is to try to enhance a “college going” culture in deep east Texas and increase college readiness. The Coordinating Board has given us funds to have a P16 advisor. We have named Debbie Kiesel an advisor.
- This weekend we lost Dr. J. E. Adams. He joined in 1965. He was Chair of Mathematics and Statistics. He served in many roles and was effective. He is a man that was respected and will be missed. He encouraged the Senate to take a moment of silence. This was completed.
- Senator Untiedt asked if we could waive fees for GAs? We could waive our fees but not statute fees.
- Senator Ballenger asked if we could waive fees for faculty families. – He said that some fees could not be waived that are in statute. We could scholarship. We now can have one dependent scholarship. It is \$1000 a semester. Could it be raised? Yes, if it goes into the priority list.

- Senator Ballenger – What happened in continuing education? There is not talk of bringing it back. It lost about \$200 to \$500 a year; it was not a money maker. Continuing education was no credit generating.
- A new faculty member expressed that they have good things to say about SFASU. It was hard for her to make a decision to come to SFASU. The salary was comparable until I found that I would not have health insurance for three months. I did not find that out until I came here. Perhaps we could look at a gap program until the health insurance program kicks in. Dr. Berry agreed, but is a state issue.
- Another new faculty member stated that the way the contract fell her insurance ended in July. She had to pay Cobra and was in the state of Texas.
- Senator Cox said that new faculty in her department were offered Summer II work so that they can get on the insurance earlier and also on the payroll. It only helped individuals get insurance a month earlier.
- A new faculty member asked about faculty salaries - What can be done administratively and what can faculty do? Dr. Berry said that the best thing to do is to recruit students because more funds are generated. That will not solve the problem though. Administratively, we look at ways to be more efficient. It will be a whole lot of little things that we do.
- Senator Langford said that Dr. Berry needs to look at the break down of attracting faculty by colleges/departments. Dr. Berry said that he agreed. Some departments are in more need than others. We have to look at the overall problem. We have to take special look at the danger areas.
- Senator LaGraff said that we have heard to stop doing some things to increase funding for salaries. Dr. Berry said that in the past the chair of Theatre said that they were limping along. He suggested that they shut the program down to enrich other areas. The results played out. It freed up resources. Those are the kinds of decisions we need to look at all over the campus.
- Senator Brown said that the facilities attracted her to her department. Is there a way to ensure that we have good facilities to recruit? Dr. Berry said that it is all part of the package. Theatre increased from 80 to about 200 with the worse facilities on campus. They do it by offering great programs.
- Senator Langford asked if he hoped that the Strategic Plan will contain these issues. Dr. Berry said that it would be a direction that we could go. It does not ensure that the action will be taken just because it is in the Plan.
- Senator Cox stated that it was hard to obtain the information concerning faculty recruitment. She said that she was surprised to find that locating the information was so difficult. Dr. Berry said that many times we do not know why they fail. Candidates do not always tell us the truth.
- Senator Untiedt said that when we talk about the budget and salaries, who is the “we”? The final decision is made by the President. Senator Untiedt pointed out that we are at the bottom on salaries but in the middle when you look at student enrollment. Where is the disparity? Dr. Berry said that is looked at. He said that every university is different. If you make a lot of profit on auxiliaries, that is money to use to do things. When auxiliaries use a lot, you do not have a lot of money. We have to look at what can we stop doing. The deans, vice presidents, assistants, department chairs, etc. are the “we” that make the decisions.
- Senator Langford stated that SFASU has not kept up with salaries increases, and that we need to see a plan for salary increases.

- Senator Cox stated that the budget is mysterious. The process is mysterious. If there was a better understanding of the priorities, it would be better. Senator Untiedt echoed her concerns. Discussion continued concerning this issue.

ASSISTANT INTERIM PROVOST DR. MARY NELLE BRUNSON

- Student Recreation Center Reduction of Fees for Faculty – It was a part of the agreement to students that no one would pay a fee that was less than the students would pay. We can not reduce below the student fees.
- University retirees are permitted, as faculty, to attend the recreation center and need to procure an ID card. They would then pay their fee.
- Swim Pass for Summer – The staff is exploring that option. They will have their recommendation ready before spring break. They will look at the schedule that corresponds with school summer breaks. For swim only is a proposal they are working on.
- Senator Ballenger – Do we have any numbers for how many students are using the Center? She has not heard the numbers, but Mondays and Tuesday are high attendance days.
- P16 – This initiative is coming out of the Closing the Gap initiative. We are trying to encourage students that have the ability to go to college. We need students in college to sustain our economy in 2015. We are trying to raise the culture of college attendance and be sure that students are ready. P16 is not trying to ensure that all attend college because all are not ready. Dr. Berry said that we are on track as a state to meet the Closing the Gaps goals. Senator Untiedt stated that readiness would be the key.

P16 ADVISOR DEBBIE KIESEL

- College readiness standards were reviewed. Emails were sent to all faculty to take a look at the standards. The history of the standards was reviewed. She encouraged us to review the email and accompanying documents. This is a chance to try to create rigor in high school programs to ensure readiness for college. End of course exams will replace the current TAKS test in high schools. This will be a better measure of college readiness. She encouraged us to look at our appropriate standards and give feedback. Next, the K-12 stakeholders will be asked for input. Senator Untiedt asked why was this begun? She stated that there is enormous concern about developmental course work that has to be offered to freshmen. They are trying to ensure that the courses in the senior year look more like college courses.
- Senator Scifres – Are we trying to ensure that all are ready for college? She said that there were two levels: one diplomas and the other is preparation for college. There is a large difference. She said that there would still be a difference. The End of Course exams will have college readiness questions. Students would take the questions on a voluntary basis.
- Senator Perry asked what would happen if they did not take the questions? She said then they would not be able to use that measure as a measure of college readiness.
- Senator Ballenger asked what would this do to dual credit courses – She said that the legislation is in subchapter 5. Each school district will offer ways to earn at least 12 hours of college credit hours. Dual credit would be the main way to obtain this. Many students do not take the AP exams.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND ACTING  
DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS, MONIQUE COSSICH

- She talked about her office and the demographics of this year's class. We travel. The season begins in September to December. They are conducting college night programs. We have an organized schedule so we are in large areas like Dallas at the same time. We target demographically where we want to follow up. We look at the top feeder schools and where we think that we can grow. We can not go to all schools that request. We have to strategically think about where we go. We also visit community colleges. We do community-based programs. We host events and projects like Showcase Saturday. We do preview events in selected markets and influence events. We have department efforts, and try to get students involved in recruitment. Other initiatives were discussed. Transferability initiatives were discussed.
- She discussed that SFA 101 is a retention effort.
- The Incoming Freshmen Class – She discussed the top high school feeder schools and community colleges. We saw market increases in Dallas, Ft. Worth, Houston, and Waco. She explained the Waco effort. She discussed the market decline, but they were not drastic.
- Freshmen Survey – Why did you enroll? The single most important factors: good program, friendly atmosphere, academic reputation, close to home, beautiful campus. If we were not your first choice, who was: Texas A&M, UT, Texas State, Baylor, UNT. The survey showed that our print material and visits were good points. Money is the number one reason they do not enroll. The second is location and third is perceived academic program offerings. She discussed the secret shopper program to test our marketing techniques.
- Fall 2006 to 2007 Survey: Why did you not reenroll? - Family or personal reasons, location, financial. What are you doing now? - community college is the top answer, working, going to another institution – U of H, UT at Tyler, UNT, Sam Houston.
- Senator Boatman asked if we knew if freshmen were the first individuals to go to college in their family. She said that we did not know.
- Questions concerning several issues were posed to Monique: follow-up surveys when individuals leave, retention rate (present rate is 64%), quality of students (flat this year/SAT-1000 & ACT-20), top ten student numbers, alumni help, nontraditional students, and faculty initiatives to obtain students.
- Monique said that if we increase admission standards the issue needs to be put in the Strategic Plan. She believes that gradual increases are the way to go.
- Senator Langford stated that Jasper Adams was instrumental in setting standards for classes. The developmental students are not staying in classes in some departments. Discussion continued.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made to approve the minutes by Senator Langford from meeting #361<sup>st</sup> and seconded by Norjuan Austin. The minutes were approved as written.

### **Chair's Report**

No report was given due to the lateness of the hour.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Academic Affairs: Senator LaGraff presented a list of ways that faculty can recruit and assist Admissions. A handout was presented to Senate members that outlined why faculty should recruit and practical ways faculty can recruit. In addition, possible institutional changes were reviewed. Discussion continued:

- Scholarship opportunities
- UIL
- Efforts of departments
- Regents' knowledge of our efforts

Administration and Finance: Half of the chairs responded to the request for information on salaries and faculty recruitment/retention. The big issues were presented to Senators in written form.

OLD BUSINESS: Tabled to the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: Tabled to the next meeting.

A motion made to adjourn at Senator Langford. The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm by Chair Guidry.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanie Gresham  
Secretary