

Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
#441
Wednesday, November 9, 2016

I. Call to order

The regular meeting of the Stephen F. Austin State University Faculty Senate was held on November 9, 2016, at 2:30 p.m., at the Baker Patillo Student Center, Tiered Classroom 2.201. It was presided over by Chair J.D. Salas.

Attendance

Voting Senators in attendance: James Adams (proxy for Bradley Meyer), Mary Catherine Breen, Lauren Brewer, Erica Chapman, Carolyn Conn, Carlos Cuadra, Sharon Eaves, Paula Griffin, Janice Hensarling, Candace Hicks, I-Kuai Hung, Kyle Jones, Ginger Kelso, Stephen Kosovich, John Mehaffey, Herbert Midgley, Olga Minich, Mark Montgomery, James Morris, Kefa Onchoke, Jason Reese, Kerry Roberts, Chris Ryan, J.D. Salas, Paul Sandul, Le'Ann Solmonson, Louise Stoehr, Steve Taaffe, Todd Whitehead

Senators not in attendance: Dennis Gravatt, Bradley Meyer (with proxy)

II. Presentations

A. Dr. Steve Bullard, Provost & VPAA

- a. Professional development funds will be restored to last year's funding levels. This was accomplished without eliminating any faculty positions. Dr. Bullard thanked the faculty senate for its advocacy on this issue.
- b. Post-tenure review policy will be implemented beginning immediately. However, the deadlines for promotion and tenure do not apply to the post-tenure review. Those who haven't had a comprehensive review in the past six years must be reviewed. A team will be convened including senate representation to establish the general procedures for completing these reviews. Criteria will be determined by departments and colleges. Portfolios must be developed, but the contents of the portfolio have not yet been determined. Implementation may be staggered if a large number of faculty within a department need to be reviewed.
- c. The use of Digital Measure to complete the Faculty Activity Report is being evaluated to determine how it can be made more user friendly. Consultation from other universities using Digital Measures will be requested to assist in this matter.
- d. Time was provided for questions.

B. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson, Associate Provost

- a. Dr. Brunson was unable to attend

C. Dr. Dana Cooper, Student Success Center

- a. Dr. Cooper presented an overview of the Student Success Center. The center currently includes three faculty/staff positions: Dr. Dana Cooper (Executive Director), Chelsea Heidbrink (Coordinator), and Dr. Monique Nunn (Transfer Coordinator). The Center oversees the Academic Advising and Resource Center (AARC), SFA 101, and the Academic Advising for Undeclared Students. The center also works with GenJacks, Smith-Hutson Scholars, Buddy Low Scholars, and JacksPass. A video slideshow included pictures of GenJacks activities and quotes from participants. Plans are in place to seek funding to expand GenJacks services and increase the number of seats available.

D. Dr. Heather Olson-Beal, CTL – New Faculty Training

- a. Dr. Olson-Beal provided an overview of the new faculty training. New faculty training began in 2011 when wording was added to contracts requiring 14 hours of professional development. The topics covered in the training include pedagogical and procedural issues. While no data were kept in the first few years of the training, anecdotal reports of the value of the training were negative. The training was changed in 2015 to the Foundations of Teaching and Learning, which combines face-to-face and online sessions. This training is intended to align with the strategic plan for supporting high quality faculty, fostering academic and co-curricular innovation, and redefining university culture. Satisfaction data were collected and show the majority of faculty found the training valuable and all participants reported that the training helped to develop relationships among colleagues. Revisions will be made to the training for the next cohort. Discussion ensued about the merits of making this training compulsory or voluntary.

III. Approval of minutes from Meeting #440

Chair Salas requested approval of the minutes from meeting #440.

Senator Roberts moved that the minutes from meeting #440 be approved as written, Senator Whitehead seconded. Motion carried to accept Minutes #440 as written.

IV. Officer Reports

A. Chair – Dr. J.D. Salas

- a. Chair Salas attended the meeting of the Board of Regents this past weekend and addressed the cut to professional development funds. The board was supportive of reinstating the funds. Other topics covered at the meeting include the marketing campaign. The next phase of this campaign will highlight faculty through online promotional material of Teaching Excellence Award winners. Policies issues were also addressed including how to implement changes to promotion policies.
- b. Chair Salas also attended the Texas Council of Faculty Senates. At this meeting they screened the movie Starving the Beast, which addresses ideological shifts in the nature of higher education. Chair Salas also learned that some universities produce a State of the Faculty report. The faculty senate

at SFA is encouraged to consider whether it should produce a State of the Faculty report to be presented at a meeting of the Board of Regents.

B. Chair-Elect – Dr. Le’Ann Solmonson

- a. Chair-Elect Solmonson provided senators with a copy of the faculty and administrator salaries for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. Budget and salaries will be discussed under New Business.

C. Secretary – Dr. Ginger Kelso

- a. Secretary Kelso reminded senators to please sign in. Visitors should sign the visitor log. Proxies should sign the visitor log and write the name of the senator they are representing. If an absence is planned in advance, please notify Secretary Kelso of the absence and the name of the proxy by email prior to the meeting.

D. Treasurer - Dr. Dennis Gravatt

- b. Faculty senate had a previous balance from October 12, 2016 of \$5,009.32 in O&M and \$1,100.00 in Travel. Total expenditures from October 2016 to November 2016 are \$762.78 for O&M and \$532.80 for Travel. Expenditures from O&M include food and multimedia charges for BPSC for senate meetings, coffee and donuts for Faculty Senate Coffee, and dues and attendance fee for Texas Council of Faculty Senates. Account balances as of November 9, 2016 are \$4,246.54 in O&M and \$567.20 in Travel.

V. Committee Reports

A. External (University) Committees

- a. **Academic Affairs:** Chair Salas reported that the committee has not met since the last senate meeting. A meeting is planned for next week.
- b. **Core Curriculum Assessment:** Senator Minich reported that the Core Curriculum Assessment Committee decided to finish the current cycle of assessments as planned. The committee is considering future changes to the process such as revising rubrics and eliminating LiveText due to costs. The committee is also discussing how to revise the system to make the assessment data more meaningful. Dr. Solmonson asked if the technology fee will be reduced if LiveText is discontinued. Minich reported that consideration of changes to the technology fee are part of the discussions, but no final decisions have been made.
- c. **Distance Education:** Senator Onchoke reported that the structure of the committee has been reorganized, but it has not met this year.
- d. **Graduate Council:** Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that the Graduate Council is evaluating the levels of graduate faculty membership because the previous levels were not in alignment with faculty rank. The council plans to change the adjunct level to affiliate and the associate and full levels were collapsed into one level. Membership terms are either two or five years. The Graduate School is working to identify anyone whose membership has lapsed and will request that they renew. Membership information can be obtained through Digital Measures. The Graduate Council is also considering revising the bylaws of the council. Dr. Stoehr suggested that the post-tenure review might take place of graduate faculty membership since they serve the same purpose.

- e. **Policy:** Senator Sandul reported that the policy committee has reviewed additional policies with only minor changes.

C. Internal (FS) Committees

- a. **Academic Affairs:** Senator Stoehr stated that Dr. Don Gooch will report on the Teaching Effectiveness Forum under New Business.
- b. **Administration and Finance:** Senator Reese reported that the goal of the committee is to increase transparency in the budget. Discussion ensued about changes to O&M and instructional capital funds. Dr. Salas reported that O&M will not change and instructional capital funds will be centralized. Requests for instructional capital funds will be submitted and reviewed. The senate will advocate for faculty involvement in the review and funding decisions. However, procedures for requests and review have not been finalized. Discussion ensued.
- c. **Communications:** Senator Chapman reported the video stream of the faculty senate meeting had 15 viewers today. The communications committee has not met this month.
- d. **Elections:** Senator Jones reported that the elections committee reviewed the distribution of senators across colleges and they determined that the current distribution is representative of number of faculty. The committee is also rewriting the Article 1 Section 7 of the constitution, which involves information for runoff elections. Section 4 says only two faculty can be elected per department. Section 7 needs to be aligned with Section 4. Chair Salas suggested that the committee consider changing the term limit for adjunct senators from one to three years.
- e. **Ethics:** Senator Kosovich reported that the ethics committee has not met. However, a topic of interest is that the faculty senate does not have representation on the redefining university culture committee of the strategic plan.
- f. **Faculty Government and Involvement:** No report
- g. **Professional Welfare:** Senator Eaves reported that the committee has started the process of soliciting nominations for the non-tenure track teaching excellence award. All school directors and department chairs have been asked to submit nominations. The deadline for submissions will be Feb. 1. Senator Eaves also reported that no suggestions for policy revisions have been submitted.
- h. **Strategic Planning:** Chair-Elect Solmonson reminded committee chairs to align goals with the university strategic plan. Chair-Elect Solmonson also stated that the first faculty coffee was a success. Next Tuesday a Social Hour will be held at Macklemore's from 4:30 – 6:30 PM. A special event menu will be available.

VI. Old Business

A. New Faculty Training Concerns

- a. Information was presented about the New Faculty Training by Dr. Olson-Beal earlier in the meeting. Discussion ensued concerning the time commitment required and strategies to compensate for the time spent in training such as through course release. Senator Conn stated that there needs to be equity for those who cannot obtain a course release and that the university needs to clearly communicate the value and importance of the program.

B. 2016-17 Policy Revisions

- a. Chair Salas reported that the policies have been on the website for three weeks. The senate welfare committee received no comments or suggestion for revision. Chair Salas requested a motion to endorse the academic policies as a group. Senator Eaves motioned and Senator Stoehr seconded the motion. Discussion ensued concerning whether faculty development leave applied to summer terms. Motion carries.
- b. Chair-Elect Solmonson requested that senators encourage faculty to be involved in the review of policies. Policies under review are posted on the faculty senate website.

VII. New Business

A. Faculty Senate Hosted Financial Forum

- a. The Faculty Senate Hosted Financial Forum is planned for December 7 at 2:30 PM. Rooms LA North 142 and Business 133 are options for the forum. Information will be sent out to faculty. Faculty will be asked to send questions to be addressed at the forum. Dr. Bullard and Dr. Gallant will be in attendance. Chair Salas asked the any suggestions for other forum participants be sent by email. Senator Minich suggested that the forum should be divided into portions to keep the topics moving and also suggested Kennedy auditorium as a venue. Dr. Solmonson suggested that efforts should be made to ensure the venue is accessible. Discussion ensued about the meaning of the salary numbers in the budget and possible reasons for disparate raises.

B. Teaching Effectiveness Forum

- a. Dr. Don Gooch from the Teaching Effectiveness Committee presented the results of the committee over the last year. Due to inconsistencies in evaluation of teaching across departments, the committee created a standardized evaluation model for teaching. The document includes objectives and models for how to evaluate each objective. The suggested evaluation focuses on student learning rather than satisfaction. Time was provided for questions. Discussion ensued concerning the intent to create a new policy. The document will be sent out to faculty two weeks prior to the next meeting seeking feedback prior to further discussion.

C. Grade Distribution

- a. Dr. Salas asked that an ad hoc committee be created to address discuss the issue of using grade distribution in the tenure and promotion process.

VIII. Adjournment

Senator Brewer moved to adjourn the meeting, Senator Stoehr seconded. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

J. D. Salas, Chair

Ginger Kelso, Secretary