

**Stephen F. Austin State University**  
**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**  
**#442**  
**Wednesday, February 8, 2017**

**I. Call to order**

The regular meeting of the Stephen F. Austin State University Faculty Senate was held on February 8, 2017, 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:** Mary Catherine Breen, Lauren Brewer, Erica Chapman, Carolyn Conn, Carlos Cuadra, Sharon Eaves, Dennis Gravatt, Paula Griffin, Nathaniel Gworek (proxy for Bradley Meyer), Janice Hensarling, Candace Hicks, I-Kuai Hung, Kyle Jones, Ginger Kelso, Stephen Kosovich, John Mehaffey, Herbert Midgley, Olga Minich, Mark Montgomery, James Morris, Kefa Onchoko, Jason Reese, Kerry Roberts, Chris Ryan, J.D. Salas, Paul Sandul, Le'Ann Solmonson, Louise Stoehr, Steve Taaffe, Todd Whitehead, Claudia Whitley (proxy for Mark Montgomery)

**Senators not in attendance:** Bradley Meyer (with proxy), Mark Montgomery (with proxy)

**II. Presentations**

**A. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson, Associate Provost**

- a. Dr. Brunson presented updates on several university initiatives intended to increase student achievement and retention. As a part of the Reimagining The First Year initiative, students are encouraged to enroll in 15 hours per semester (instead of 12) in order to finish on time the degree within four years. Another initiative is called Clear Pathways, which shows students their ideal class schedules for all four years as well as specific core requirements for the discipline.
- b. In the Early Alert system faculty can issue an alert if concerned about a student. Cases are closed if students cannot be contacted. The Provost's Office is working to identify courses with large number of first time students (25% or more) and courses with large numbers of D/F/W grades. Discussion for how to increase student learning in these courses are underway.
- c. Several initiatives are focused on efficient student advisement methods. Implementation of multiple-term registration, in which students register for a full year of coursework, has been delayed. Elementary Education EC-6 and History students will participate in a pilot of this program. The use of a block scheduling procedure for incoming freshman is under consideration. This would allow incoming freshman to enroll in blocks of courses as a cohort. Meta-majors are also under consideration. This program would allow disciplines that have common courses to align schedules.

d. Time was provided for questions.

**B. Dr. Janet Tareilo, Associate Provost**

Dr. Tareilo provided an update on the post tenure review process. Departments should be working on written standards. These standards will then be reviewed by the college Deans and the Provost. Standards should be submitted to the Provost by May 31<sup>st</sup>. The first group of post tenure reviews should also be completed by May 31<sup>st</sup>. Time was provided for questions. Faculty concerns about development of standards were expressed.

**C. Dr. Dana Cooper, Student Success Center**

- a. Dr. Dana Cooper introduced Dr. Monique Nunn, the transfer coordinator at SFA within the Student Success Center. Her role will include recruiting, retaining and making the transition smoother for transfer students. Goals will include increasing the number of transfer students at SFA as well as strengthening relationships with advisors for community colleges.
- b. Dr. David Laude Senior Vice Provost for Strategic Initiative at the University of Texas at Austin will be on campus to talk about student success on Friday Feb. 17.

**D. Heather Catton, Director International Studies & Programs**

Heather Catton provided an overview of how the international students at SFA have been affected by the travel ban. Currently two SFA students are from the seven countries involved in the travel ban. However, international students from other countries are concerned about how they may be affected. Six potential students have been accepted from banned countries for Fall 2017 enrollment. Senator Stoehr read an email from a faculty member expressing concerns about the announcements from SFA administration that have been provided for SFA faculty concerning the travel ban.

**E. Dr. Judy Abbott, Dean James I. Perkins College of Education**

Dr. Judy Abbott will be rescheduled for the March faculty senate meeting.

**III. Approval of minutes from Meeting #441**

Chair Salas requested approval of the minutes from meeting #441.

Senator Roberts moved that the minutes from meeting #441 be approved as written, Senator Whitehead seconded. Motion carried to accept Minutes #441 as written.

**IV. Officer Reports**

**A. Chair – Dr. J.D. Salas**

- a. Chair Salas reported that the financial forum in December was effective. However, the attendance was not as high as hoped. The forum was recorded and is archived. The reestablishment of the professional development funds was a success of the discussion with administration about finance. Senators are encouraged to make their voices heard by attending events and expressing concerns.
- b. Chair Salas attended the Board of Regents meeting in January. Marketing videos for SFA will focus on faculty members. Six faculty were selected as participants (profiles) in these videos (including 2 senators). The board also

discussed changes to course fees. The fee for exceeding the credit hour limit will be lowered. However the fee for taking a course three or more times will be increased. Chair Salas shared with the board the faculty request to return to the original summer salary scale. The Dr. Patillo is anticipating funding cuts based on state budget shortfalls. Chair Salas also shared faculty concerns about post tenure review with the board.

- c. Chair Salas reported that the name change for the adjunct teaching award will need to follow procedures in the university name change policy because a stipend is attached to that award. Information has been submitted to justify the name change. The Board of Regents will be asked to approve the change.
- d. Chair Salas and Chair Elect Solmonson will attend the Nac/SFA Day in Austin during the Texas Legislative Summit. Plans include meeting with representatives. They will also attend the Texas Council of Faculty Senates.

**B. Chair-Elect – Dr. Le’Ann Solmonson**

- a. Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that the Provost and Board of Regents will continue to be updated on the faculty’s request to return to the original summer pay scale.
- b. The Faculty Senate Social will be held on Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> at Maklemores from 4:00 – 7:00. Senators are asked to encourage faculty to attend senate sponsored events.

**C. Secretary – Dr. Ginger Kelso**

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**

Faculty senate had a previous balance from November 9, 2016 of \$4,246.54 in O&M and \$567.20 in Travel. Total expenditures from November 2016 to February 2017 are \$215.08 for O&M and \$0 for Travel. Expenditures from O&M include food and multimedia charges for BPSC for senate meetings and food at Maklemores Ale House for faculty senate social. Account balances as of February 8, 2017 are \$4,018.24 in O&M and \$560.22 in Travel.

**V. Committee Reports**

**A. External (University) Committees**

- a. **Academic Affairs:** Chair Salas reported that they have not met since September. However, Chair Salas and Chair Elect Solmonson have had regular meetings with the Provost. Chair Salas also reported that the hiring freeze won’t affect Graduate Assistants. Discussion ensued concerning how the hiring freeze will affect student workers and summer pay.
- b. **Core Curriculum Assessment:** Senator Minich reported that they are considering different providers to replace LiveText. The Core Curriculum Assessment committee is moving forward with the original plan to collect data for upper level courses.

- c. **Distance Education:** Senator Onchoke reported that the committee hasn't met since October. They will meet next during February.
- d. **Graduate Council:** Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that the Graduate Council is reviewing curriculum proposals. The Graduate Dean is working toward making a timeline for thesis and dissertation proposals and defenses. Next year, thesis and dissertation proposals will need to be submitted to the graduate office by the end of the semester before the semester graduation is planned. Other deadlines will be added. The Graduate Council also approved the revised/updated bylaws.
- e. **Policy:** Senator Taaffe stated that there is nothing to report.

## **B. Internal (FS) Committees**

- a. **Academic Affairs:** Senator Stoehr stated that the academic affairs committee has not met as a group. They plan to discuss the teaching effectiveness document following senate input. The University Assessment Steering Council is reviewing assessment software programs for adoption. This committee will also serve as the search committee for the Director of Institutional Assessment position. Debbie Pace is chair of this committee.
- b. **Administration and Finance:** No report
- c. **Communications:** Senator Chapman reported that the recording is offline due to equipment malfunction.
- d. **Elections:** Senator Jones reported that the elections committee is working on the wording of the constitution to clarify the election process. This will be complete by the March senate meeting. Senator Onchoke reported that goals of the committee include carrying out elections for the upcoming year as well as considering changing the term for adjuncts.
- e. **Ethics:** Senator Kosovich reported that the ethics committee will be considering topics including grade distribution and post tenure review. The ombudsman is still in the process of being established.
- f. **Faculty Government and Involvement:** No report
- g. **Professional Welfare:** Senator Eaves reported that the professional welfare committee is reviewing portfolios for the adjunct teaching award. Nine non-tenure track portfolios were received. They plan to select the recipient by early March. They are also working on policy updates for FMLA and sick leave policies to include modified duties. They plan to present proposed changes to the senate by the next meeting.
- h. **Strategic Planning:** Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that the committees have been asked to connect committee goals to the SFA strategic plan. The faculty senate socials are for the purpose of increasing connections across campus.

## **VI. Old Business**

### **A. Post Tenure Review**

At the last meeting it was announced that Dr. Tareilo would head a committee to develop procedures for post tenure review. This committee is discussing faculty reactions to the new policy and procedures. Although the senate representatives of

this committee requested that implementation of the post tenure review policy be delayed until after departmental standards are developed, the request was denied. Reviews must move forward without finalized departmental standards. The senate plans to request that the Provost's office collect all departmental standards for comparison. Discussion ensued addressing concerns about faculty being reviewed prior to establishment of standards.

**A. Teaching Effectiveness Forum**

Teaching effectiveness document was provided during the November faculty senate meeting. Motion to reject teaching effectiveness document by Senator Taaffe. Seconded by Senator Brewer. Motion carries.

**VII. New Business**

**A. Committee Report on Grade Distribution and Course Evaluation Response**

Discussions with Provost are planned to ask that grade distribution and course evaluation response rates not be considered when making tenure and promotion decisions for faculty.

**B. Resolutions**

Resolutions concerning the use of grade distributions and course evaluation response rates were provided to the faculty senate for review. Feedback on these resolutions should be sent to Chair Elect Solmonson. A vote on these resolutions will be held during the March faculty senate meeting. If passed, the senate will ask for the Provost's support on these resolutions.

**C. Executive Order Travel Ban**

Senators discussed the need for a statement announcing support of international students. Senator Stoehr recommended that the statement be sent to senators through email and an email vote be conducted in order to expedite distribution of this statement to faculty.

**VIII. Adjournment**

Senator Stoehr moved to adjourn the meeting, Senator Eaves seconded. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

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J. D. Salas, Chair

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Ginger Kelso, Secretary