

**Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
#443
Wednesday, March 8, 2017**

I. Call to order

The regular meeting of the Stephen F. Austin State University Faculty Senate was held on March 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, Carlos Cuadra, Sharon Eaves, Dennis Gravatt, Paula Griffin, Candace Hicks, I-Kuai Hung, Kyle Jones, Ginger Kelso, Stephen Kosovich, John Mehaffey, Bradley Meyer, Herbert Midgley, Olga Minich, Mark Montgomery, James Morris, Jason Reese, Kerry Roberts, Chris Ryan, J.D. Salas, Paul Sandul, Le'Ann Solmonson, Louise Stoehr, Steve Taaffe, Todd Whitehead

Senators not in attendance: Janice Hensarling, Kefa Onchoke, Carolyn Conn

II. Presentations

A. Dr. Judy Abbott, Dean – James I. Perkins College of Education

- a. Dr. Judy Abbott provided a description of the Digital Measures tool and explained how it is used for accreditation, annual faculty performance evaluation, and documentation of credentials. The Digital Measures program is being modified to improve functionality. Improvements may include standardized data entry, user friendly summary reports, and the ability to produce faculty profiles. A Digital Measures consulting visit is scheduled for April 26. Prior to this date a committee will be formed to evaluate the current functionality of the program. Time was provided for questions.

B. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson, Associate Provost

- a. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson was not in attendance. Dr. Steve Bullard, Provost thanked all those who participated in reading the book *Undergraduate Experience*. The next discussion about *Undergraduate Experience* and the SFA Strategic Plan is scheduled for March 29.

C. Dr. Janet Tareilo, Associate Provost

- a. Dr. Janet Tareilo reported that some of the promotion and tenure policies have been submitted to the Provost's office. She asked that all others submit the promotion and tenure policies so that they may be reviewed.

III. Approval of minutes from Meeting #442

Chair Salas requested approval of the minutes from meeting #442.

Senator Roberts moved that the minutes from meeting #442 be approved as written, Senator Gravatt seconded. Motion carried to accept Minutes #442 as written.

IV. Officer Reports

A. Chair – Dr. J.D. Salas

- a. Chair Salas reported that the statement of support for international students and faculty has been reviewed and voted on by all senators. The statement was approved by a supermajority of senators. The Provost and University President approved the statement and it was sent out to the SFA community. The statement was received by the SFA community with positive feedback.
- b. Chair Salas and Chair-Elect Solmonson attended Nac/SFA days at the Texas legislative session in Austin. They heard presentations by representatives and commissioners. Incoming Regent David Alders expressed interest in meeting with the SFA faculty senate.
- c. Chair Salas attended the meeting of the Texas Council of Faculty Senates. This group is working on creating a set of guidelines for faculty shared governance.

B. Chair-Elect – Dr. Le'Ann Solmonson

- a. Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that the Nac/SFA days at the Texas legislative session in Austin was a good experience. She was unable to attend the Texas Council of Faculty Senates.
- b. Chair-Elect Solmonson is continuing to work with the faculty senate committees to align committee goals with the strategic plan for SFA.

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

The treasury report for February has been amended due to incorrect balances reported last month. Faculty senate had a previous balance from February 8, 2017 of \$2,378.92 in O&M and \$560.22 in Travel. Total expenditures from February 2017 to March 2017 are \$344.04 for O&M and \$0 for Travel. Expenditures from O&M include food and multimedia charges, registration fee for Texas Council of Faculty Senate, BPSC for senate meeting, and food at Maklemore's Ale House for faculty senate social. Account balances as of March 8, 2017 are \$2,034.88 in O&M and \$560.22 in Travel.

V. Committee Reports

A. External (University) Committees

- a. **Academic Affairs:** Chair Salas reported that the hiring freeze was discussed in the Academic Affairs committee. The hiring freeze will not prevent offering courses in the summer semesters. The hiring freeze only affects positions that start before Sept. 1. Concerns about post-tenure review were also discussed

including concerns about who should develop the standards. The senate representatives requested that the implementation of the post-tenure review plan of development be phased in with time to remediate.

- b. **Core Curriculum Assessment:** Senator Minich reported that they are continuing to work on methods to score core curriculum assessments as well as looking into software tools to use in this process.
- c. **Distance Education:** Senator Midgley reported that the distance education committee is evaluating the utility of various technologies such as ProctorU. They are also beginning evaluate whether another learning management system is needed.
- d. **Graduate Council:** Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that they have not met.
- e. **Policy:** Senator Taaffe stated that the policy committee reviewed two policies – final grades and role of council of deans. The faculty senate has been encouraged to draft a policy to document the role of the faculty senate. This will be drafted and shared for review during a future senate meeting.

B. Internal (FS) Committees

- a. **Academic Affairs:** Senator Stoehr stated that faculty have expressed concerns about the proposal in Iowa recommending the use of political affiliation in the hiring process of faculty. The state of Texas has no policies concerning this issue. The University Assessment Steering Council has been asked to attend presentations for various assessment software programs. LiveText is being used successfully by the James I. Perkins College of Education and TracDat has more functionality than is currently being used. This committee has the goal of considering how to do quality assessment without unduly increasing the burden on faculty and students.
- b. **Administration and Finance:** Senator Gravatt reported the committee hasn't met. This committee is working to determine future goals such as seeking information concerning the distribution of funds at SFA. Chair Salas suggested that working to increase professional development funds would be an appropriate goal since post-tenure review will require more professional development for tenured faculty.
- c. **Communications:** Senator Chapman reported that the committee met with the Webmaster to improve the process of updating the streaming on the website. Streaming of the current senate meeting was disrupted due to outdated software on the computer system.
- d. **Elections:** Senator Jones reported that changes are proposed to the constitution. In Article I, Section 6 the proposed changes would increase the term for adjunct faculty senators from one to three years. In Article I, Section 7 proposed changes include revisions to increase clarity concerning the limit of two senators from an academic unit. A vote on changes to the constitution requires a secret ballot. In April a final version will be distributed at least seven days prior to the April faculty senate meeting. The faculty senate will vote on proposed changes during that meeting. Faculty senators with terms expiring at the end of the current semester were informed that their terms were ending. New senators will be elected in April.

- e. **Ethics:** Senator Kosovich reported that the ethic committee reached out to the Provost about the ombuds position. He will consult with Dr. Gallant who is responsible for Human Resources to determine the status of that position.
- f. **Faculty Government and Involvement:** Senator Meyer reported no new business
- g. **Professional Welfare:** Senator Eaves reported that the professional welfare committee reviewed candidates for the non-tenure track teaching award and selected a recipient for this academic year. The recipient will be recognized at the May meeting of the faculty senate. There is currently no honorarium provided for this award. Chair Salas will inquire about providing an honorarium. The proposed name change for this award will be reviewed at the April Board of Regents meeting. The proposed name change has already received approval from the Provost and University President. Joe and Mary Devine will be invited to the May faculty senate meeting.
- h. **Strategic Planning:** Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that the committee hasn't met. However, the committee will work on the draft policy to document the role of the faculty senate.

VI. Old Business

A. Post Tenure Review

- a. Chair Salas asked senators to report any discussions that are occurring within the colleges and academic units. Senator Gravatt reported that the College of Science and Mathematics used a yes/no vote for post-tenure review. Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that the Department of Human Services is including a list of products that must be completed over a five year period. Senator Stoehr reported that unsatisfactory in service does not trigger a plan of development for Department of Languages, Cultures, and Communication. Discussion ensued concerning the role of untenured faculty in the review process.

B. Resolutions

- a. The resolution concerning the use of course evaluation response rates in tenure and promotion decisions was reviewed. Discussion ensued concerning whether a requirement to complete course evaluations creates a quid pro quo expectation. Discussion included ideas for how incentives could be used to increase participation in course evaluations and whether faculty or students are responsible for response rates. Validity and reliability of evaluations was questioned. A statement was added to the resolution concerning the quid pro quo expectation. Senator Stoehr moved that the resolution be approved as amended. Senator Mehaffey seconded the motion. Motion carries and the resolution was approved.
- b. The resolution for use of grade distributions in tenure and promotion decisions was reviewed. A statement was added to extend the resolution to post-tenure review decisions. Grade deflation was also addressed. Senator Stoehr moved that the resolution be approved as amended. Senator Eaves seconded the motion. Motion carries and the resolution was approved.

VII. New Business

A. Policy Review and Endorsement Additions

- a. The Final Grade Appeals by Students policy was reviewed. Senator Stoehr asked who determines what is irrelevant to the subject matter. Discussion ensued. Senator Brewer questioned how the appeal must be made. The appeal will require a written document from the student to initiate the process. The policy committee will continue revising this policy.
- b. Policy 12.9 Family and Medical Leave additional language was reviewed. The faculty senate professional welfare committee requested to add language to the existing policy to allow for modified work assignments. A request will be made for the policy committee to review this policy with the suggestion to add the new language. Senator Brewer questioned the language concerning those eligible for modified work assignments. The suggestion was made to remove “due to their own or a close family member’s illness.” Senator Brewer moved that the policy 12.9 with additional language be move to the Provost’s office with the request that the policy committee consider the additional language. Senator Eaves seconded the motion. Motion carries.

VIII. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

J. D. Salas, Chair

Ginger Kelso, Secretary