

Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
#445
Wednesday, May 10, 2017

I. Call to order

The regular meeting of the Stephen F. Austin State University Faculty Senate was held on May 10, 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, Derek Cegelka, Erica Chapman, Carolyn Conn, Paulo Dutra (proxy for Carlos Cuadra), Sharon Eaves, Dennis Gravatt, Paula Griffin, Janice Hensarling, Candace Hicks, I-Kuai Hung, Angela Jones (proxy for Chris Ryan), Kyle Jones, Ginger Kelso, Stephen Kosovich, John Mehaffey, Bradley Meyer, Herbert Midgley, Olga Minich, Mark Montgomery, James Morris, Kefa Onchoke, Jason Reese, J.D. Salas, Paul Sandul, Le'Ann Solmonson, Louise Stoehr, Steve Taaffe, Todd Whitehead

Senators not in attendance: Carlos Cuadra (with proxy), Kerry Roberts, Chris Ryan (with proxy)

II. Presentations

A. Dr. Steve Bullard, Provost -VPAA

- a. Dr. Bullard acknowledged that some faculty and staff positions have not been filled due to uncertainty about expected budget cuts. However, it is expected that contracts will be offered in the coming weeks. Professional development funding is not being targeted for budget cuts.
- b. Senator Taaffe asked about the new rules for advising students. Dr. Bullard explained that the financial aid requirements indicate that financial aid is not provided for coursework outside of the degree plan.
- c. Dr. Bullard expressed his appreciation to Chair Salas for leadership in the senate.

B. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson, Associate Provost

- a. Dr. Brunson provided an update on Reimagining the First Year. Three projects are ongoing: 1) Early Alert – Data for early alert is being reviewed to find ways to improve the system. One planned improvement is to provide progress reports similar to those completed for athletes prior to midterm for freshman and gateway courses. 2) Multi-Term Advising and Registration – The first phase of implementation is ongoing in two programs. 3) Block Scheduling – Three programs are developing block schedules for incoming freshmen groups.

C. Dr. Janet Tareilo, Associate Provost

- a. Dr. Tareilo described the commencement ceremony that took place this week for athletes who were going to be at games during the regular graduation ceremony. Dr. Tareilo reported that Dr. Patillo would like to continue this event for seniors who are out of town at university sponsored events during future graduation ceremonies.

D. Adjunct Teaching Excellence Award Winner – Marie Kelly, Lecturer

- a. Chair Salas introduced Marie Kelly from Accounting who was the recipient of the adjunct teaching excellence award. She was presented with an SFA axe handle.

E. Megan Weatherly, Envisioned Progress Report

- a. Megan Weatherly provided a report on the status of SFA Envisioned. She presented a summary of initiatives for each of the four pillars of the strategic plan.

III. Approval of minutes from Meeting #444

Chair Salas requested approval of the minutes from meeting #444.

Senator Gravatt moved that the minutes from meeting #444 be approved as written, Senator Whitehead seconded. Motion carried to accept Minutes #444 as written.

IV. Officer Reports

A. Chair – Dr. J.D. Salas

- a. Chair Salas reported that he had the honor of introducing the adjunct teaching excellence award recipient at the teaching excellence awards ceremony. He also represented the faculty senate at the reception honoring years of service to SFA.
- b. Chair Salas attended the April Board of Regents meeting. The Regents were supportive of the resolution to decrease focus on response rates for tenure and promotion. Chair Salas expressed the faculty's concern about the budget and how it will affect faculty. Regent Alders indicated that he understood that the faculty is the heartbeat of the university.
- c. Chair Salas met with the provost concerning the budget. Several faculty positions are not being offered due to budget concerns even though interviews have been complete. Contracts may be offered for these positions depending on budget decisions.
- d. Chair Salas expressed his appreciation to the faculty senators for their work during this year.

B. Chair-Elect – Dr. Le'Ann Solmonson

- a. Chair-Elect Solmonson served on Digital Measures committee. They worked to identify ways to streamline Digital Measures and make it more user friendly. One recommendation is to separate the current user's guide into sections to make information easier to locate. The committee also identified several ways to reduce redundancy in the system.
- b. Chair-Elect Solmonson and Chair Salas represented the faculty senate at the naming ceremony for the chemistry building.

- c. Chair Elect Solmonson presented a table of the projected senator terms for the next three years. The term ending dates are not currently balanced across the three years. She recommended adjusting the terms to balance term expirations across years. The two adjunct senator terms should be staggered so that both do not expire in the same year. The senators considered whether one senate term set to expire in 2019 should expire in 2018 in order to balance the number of term expirations across the three years. Senators Kosovich and Conn recommended that the balance be left as is with nine senate terms expiring in 2018, eleven expiring in 2019, and ten expiring in 2020. Senator Chapman motioned to adopt the senate term plan for the next three years. Senator Stoehr seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- d. Chair-Elect Solmonson informed the senators that the senate meetings will move to a room in the College Sciences and Mathematics next year. The exact room will be announced later. This will save approximately \$150 per meeting.
- e. A list of meeting dates and a directory of senators were provided for all senators serving next year. Committee assignments and goals will be established prior to the beginning of the fall semester.
- f. Chair-Elect Solmonson also informed the senators that the New Faculty Orientation has requested that the senate engage with the new faculty during orientation in the fall to inform them about the faculty senate. Senators were encouraged to attend the new faculty social event on Aug. 23.

C. Secretary – Dr. Ginger Kelso

Secretary Kelso reminded senators to please sign in. Visitors as well as new senators should sign the visitor log. Proxies should sign the visitor log and write the name of the senator they are representing.

D. Treasurer - Dr. Dennis Gravatt

Faculty senate had a previous balance from April 12, 2017 of \$3,599.20 in O&M and \$168.71 in Travel. Total expenditures from April 2017 to May 2017 are \$1,046.47 for O&M and \$0 for Travel. Expenditures include room charges, food for faculty senate meetings, and adjunct excellence award. Account balances as of May 10, 2017 are \$2,552.73 in O&M and \$168.71 in Travel.

V. Committee Reports

A. External (University) Committees

- a. **Academic Affairs:** Chair Salas reported that the academic affairs committee met concerning the budget. The largest portion of the budget cuts will affect academic affairs, but other areas are receiving cuts as well.
- b. **Core Curriculum Assessment:** Senator Minich reported that the core curriculum assessment committee created two different possible methods to approach the assessment of the core curriculum. These should become available in the fall semester.
- c. **Distance Education:** Senator Midgley reported the distance education committee has not met.
- d. **Graduate Council:** Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that the final meeting involved wrapping up old business.

e. **Policy:** Senator Taaffe stated that the policy committee has nothing to report.

B. Internal (FS) Committees

- a. **Academic Affairs:** Senator Stoehr reported that the academic affairs committee had previously created the draft of the teaching effectiveness proposal. After the faculty reviewed the document, the draft was not recommended to be used.
- b. **Administration and Finance:** Senator Gravatt stated that the administration and finance committee has nothing to report. This committee will address professional development in the coming year.
- c. **Communication:** Senator Chapman reported that the bulletin has been distributed and the communications committee will continue to work on dissemination of information. The website is being reviewed in order to improve user friendliness. However, the website has not yet been migrated to the new SFA platform. So, changes to the website should wait until after it has been moved. Livestreaming of the faculty senate meetings was piloted this year, but there were several technical problems. The new room next year may be more conducive to livestreaming.
- d. **Elections:** Senator Onchoke reported that the elections committee held successful elections this year. It is recommended that elections should begin earlier in coming years. While the constitution specified that elections will take place in April, that leaves little time for run-off elections prior to the May senate meeting. The constitution was amended to address senate representation across colleges. The elections committee recommends that the full constitution be reviewed in the future. Chair Salas introduced new senators for next year.
- e. **Ethics:** Senator Kosovich reported that the ethics committee met about the ombuds position. Senators met with the general council and other administrators about issues in moving forward with this position. They expressed concerns about logistics, legal issues, and whether the position is needed. The ethics committee will continue to work on this by seeking information from other universities on how they use ombudsmen.
- f. **Faculty Government and Involvement:** Senator Meyer stated that the faculty government and involvement committee has no news to report.
- g. **Professional Welfare:** Senator Eaves reported that the professional welfare committee was unable to rename the adjunct teaching excellence award. However other names are being considered and this issue will be taken up again in the next year. This committee received nine nominations for the adjunct teaching excellence award and they reviewed documentation to select the recipient for this current academic year. The professional welfare committee also created new language that will be proposed to the policy committee concerning the family and medical leave policy.
- h. **Strategic Planning:** Chair-Elect Solmonson reported that the strategic planning committee hosted one coffee in fall and two socials in spring. The committee is working on helping senate subcommittees to align their goals to the SFA strategic plan.

VI. Old Business

A. Post-Tenure Review – Summer 2017

- a. Post-tenure review will be occurring at the end of this semester. Chair Salas expressed is hope that this review will be used to support improvements for faculty.

VII. New Business

A. Pass the Gavel

- a. Chair Salas passed the gavel to Chair-Elect Solmonson. He expressed appreciation to the senators.
- b. Chair-Elect Solmonson presented a commemorative gavel to Chair Salas and thanked him for his service.

B. 2017-2018 Officer Selection

- a. Elections for Chair-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian for the 2017-2018 academic year were held.
- b. Two senators were nominated for Chair-Elect: Senator Breen and Senator Reese. Elections were conducted by secret ballot. The Chair-Elect for 2017-2018 will be Senator Reese.
- c. One Senator was nominated for Secretary for the 2017-2018 academic year. The Secretary for 2017-2018 will be Senator Conn.
- d. One Senator was nominated for Treasurer for the 2017-2018 academic year. The Treasurer for 2017-2018 will be Senator Gravatt.
- e. One Senator was nominated for Parliamentarian for the 2017-2018 academic year. The Parliamentarian for 2017-2018 will be Senator Brewer.

C. Outgoing Senator Axe Presentation

- a. Chair-Elect Solmonson presented SFA axe handles to all outgoing senators.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

J. D. Salas, Chair

Ginger Kelso, Secretary