

Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Minutes- Meeting #460
Wednesday, May 8, 2019
McGee 121 2:30 p.m.

Voting Senators in Attendance: K. Ainsworth, C. Allen, T. Barrios, W. Berg, Y. Castillo, D. Cegelka, C. Conn, P. Dutra, A. Greule, P. Griffin, G. Hardin, A. Jones, S. Josephsen, D. Joubert, A. Lannen, C. McKenna, J. Mehaffey, M. Montgomery, P. Ogale, K. Onchoke,, J. Reese, L. Rogers, K. Sheriff, S. Sosebee, L. Stoehr, J. Stovall, B. Uriegas, J. Weaver

Excused Senators: D. Gooch, J. Morris

Guests: Interim President Steve Westbrook, Provost Steve Bullard, Associate Provost Mark Guidry, VP for University Advancement Jill Still, Executive Director of Development Trey Turner, Associate Director of Development April Smith, Electronic Accessibility Leader Anthony Espinoza

I. Call to order:

Faculty Senate Chair Jason Reese called the meeting to order at 2:32 P.M.. He welcomed the senators and introduced Trey Turner for an update on the Capital Campaign.

I. Presentations:

- A. Trey Turner, Executive Director of Development
- B. Electronic Accessibility Team Leader Anthony Espinoza
- C. Interim President Steve Westbrook
- D. VPAA Steve Bullard

Trey Turner updated the senators on the status of the university capital campaign. Turner reminded the senators that the capital campaign remains in the “silent phase,” and the goal is to raise \$100 million by 2023, the 100th anniversary of SFASU. Presently, the campaign is at the 50% mark. The funds raised all over the campus, although some will be designated, will be counted in the campaign. The University employed Vince, Whaley, Flesner to assist in the campaign, after an earlier feasibility study. After meeting with various constituents, as well as asking all Deans to submit priorities for their respective colleges, priorities were set for the campaign. Turner then asked for questions. Senator McKenna asked what steps are being put in place to make sure that student scholarships are adequately and appropriately funded. Turner replied that during the last several years the SFASU Foundation took over from the SFA Alumni Foundation, who had managed the mentioned scholarships. The Alumni Foundation operated under a different set of policies, and efforts were made to merge the two. Turner asked VPUA Jill Still to offer specifics. She asked April Smith to provide an answer. Smith explained that a poor market caused a significant drop in returns in last half of 2018, first part of 2019. Federal law prohibits distributing funds when instruments such as scholarship endowments are “under water.” 2018 was the first year this affected SFA. There was a contingency fund for anything in the SFASU Foundation, which allowed those awards to be distributed. But, there was no such exigency account for those that had been with the Alumni Foundation. One has now been established, but it was not adequately funded. McKenna asked about the nature of the

investments, and why they were not protected by swings in the market? Smith explained that the Foundation makes very conservative investments, and all disbursements are made based on returns. The losses in 2018 caused those returns to drop. Trey Turner added that the SFASU Foundation is at “60% equity,” and Jill Still again explained about the lack of contingency funds for former Alumni Foundation accounts, and that is being monitored and corrected. McKenna further asked if any Business College faculty members are involved in making the investment decisions. Dr. John Lewis, Emeritus Faculty is on the advisory board, according to Trey Turner. McKenna questioned the wisdom of the fund being 60% equity, and Smith and Still advised him to reach out to the members of the Advisory Board for a more complete answer on policy.

Anthony Espinoza of the Electronic Accessibility Team gave the next presentation. (Much of this recording was of poor quality, so this is a “best guess” summary): There will be coming changes in the electronic accessibility systems, with opportunities to improve performance. A review board made recommendations to “close holes” within the old system, and there are now efforts to implement those recommendations. Faculty should receive notice of the new features shortly. One decision that has been made is that P-cards will no longer be authorized to purchase software, and there will be a new “software PO” in place soon.

Interim President Steve Westbrook. Dr. Westbrook’s presentation began with a legislative update. While the session will continue until May 26, so nothing is decided, Westbrook could provide the following summation: the legislature will not finalize all budget funding until they decide on the direction they will take concerning property taxes and public education. Everything is in conference committee, so final bills are in flux. The final bills will impact the final funding on higher education, but he could provide an update. Both House and Senate did increase higher ed formula funding by 6%, but not sure if it will actually translate to greater funding because it will be subject to higher enrollment and an increase in inflation. He is optimistic that there will be an increase, but adjustments could reduce some formula funding, especially when it comes to “distance education” allotment. The University will not know the final outcome until the session is finished. Also, Higher Education Group Insurance (HEGI) is currently funded at 80.6% by the state. But, if the funding is not increased that percentage will decline. Institutions will have to make up the shortfall. SFA received notification of the Coordinating Board’s potential allocation for Texas Grants. SFA’s projected portion is rejected by \$1,000,000. The University has challenged that decision. Westbrook is optimistic that, overall, the University’s state funding will increase, and the primary goal, in 2019-2020, will be to increase faculty salaries.

Dr. Steve Bullard expressed thanks to retiring senators, as well as congrats to the incoming senators. He announced that “The Bright Spots in Teaching” highlighted a number of faculty on campus, an event that will continue. Bullard continued with an update on initiatives that would roll out in the fall semester, including another campus-wide book reading activity. He spoke about the continued focus on the Strategic Plan, and the impetuses toward making sure it is fulfilled.

- II. Break – Committee Breakout Session (if needed)
- III. Approval of Minutes #459

Chair Reese asked for any changes to the minutes of the last meeting. There being none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes, which was made by Senator Dutra. It was seconded by Senator Stoehr and was approved unanimously by voice vote affirmation.

IV. Officer Reports

A. Chair Dr. Jason Reese.

Chair Reese offered reports on the following:

Presidential Search: The Board would name a finalist in July/August so that the new president will be able to take office in the fall. Each member of the screening committee is reviewing the 75 applicants, and in next couple of weeks they will send comments to the committee. They will meet with each candidate selected, then the board will select a finalist that will be named publicly. Senator McKenna asked if the 75 candidates are the total applicant pool. Reese answered that those are the total applicants for the position.

Board of Regents Meeting: Reese was not able to attend the entire meeting, but reported that Regents have approved two new parking lots on Starr Avenue. Policy revisions: Campus programs for Minors has nothing to do with Children in the Workplace; it included language on abuse and neglect. Summer budget was approved and included a \$2.28 million fund already designated for summer use. An additional \$1.2 million was added to it for a total of \$3.38 million summer budget. Marketing campaign update was given to the board, as well as an enrollment management report. Admissions process at SFA was certified to follow all laws and procedures or admission. Projections for enrollment for fall semester were given 13,182. But, freshmen applications were down 2.8%. Projected enrollment increases would come from transfer and re-entry classifications. Reese reviewed the four goals for the senate for the year with the Regents, and highlighted how the Faculty Senate had met those goals.

B. Chair-Elect Dr. Jeremy Stovall

The Chair-elect reported on the following:

He attended a meeting in quality-enhancement, and the committee agreed to revise the first draft of their potential report by October 1.

He reported to the senate that 90% of the senators have completed the internal survey, and since that will be used to form senate committees, he urged anyone who had not completed the survey to do so.

Forestry 117 will be the location of Senate Meetings for the 2019-2020 academic year.

C. Secretary Dr. Scott Sosebee: No substantive report

D. Treasurer Dr. Paula Griffin

The Treasurer reported that the Senate account balance as of May 8, 2019 was \$4,391.28

VII. Committee Reports

A. External (University) Committees

- a. Academic Affairs (Reese)
- b. Core Curriculum Assessment & Advisory Committees (Sosebee)
- c. University Assessment Steering Council (Stoehr)
- d. Distance Education (Montgomery, Onchoke, Griffin, Sheriff)
- e. Graduate Council (Stovall)
- f. Policy (Jones, Barrios, Lannen)

B. Ad Hoc Committees

- a. SACS-COC (Griffin)
- b. Student Retention (Mehaffey)
- c. Chosen Name Committee (Conn)
- d. TCCNS Committee (Reese)

C. Internal (FS) Committees

- a. Academic Affairs (Stoehr)
- b. Administration and Finance (Griffin)
- c. Communications (Conn)
- d. Elections (Jones)
- e. Ethics (Morris)
- f. Faculty Government and Involvement (Mehaffey)
- g. Professional Welfare (Dutra)

VIII. New Business

- A. Pass the Gavel
- B. Officer Elections

C. Recognition of outgoing senators (the recording did not record this portion)

Faculty Senate Chair Stovall adjourned the meeting at 4:22 P.M.