

Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Agenda – Meeting #483
Wednesday, October 12, 2022
2:30 pm CST

I. Call to Order / Roll Call (McKenna)

- a. Present: Jeremy Becnel, Julie Bloxson, Burt Brent (proxy for Jason Bruck), Donna Fickes (proxy for Gina Fe Causin), Arye Chakravartty, Rebecca Davis, George Day (Secretary), Sarah Drake, Erika Hoagland, Lindsey Kennon, Michelle Klein (Treasurer), CC Conn (Chair-Elect), Wenjing, Li, Daniel McCleary, Rob McDermand, Darrel McDonald, Chris McKenna (Chair; non-voting), Herbet Midgley (Parliamentarian), Rajat Mishra, Johnathan Mitchell, Perry Moon, Tina Oswald, Gretchen Patterson, Emily Payne, Bidisha Sengupta, Jose Neftali Recinos (proxy for Louise Stoehr), Sarah Straub, Bailey Thompson, Leland Thompson, Chirs Turner, Victoria Wagner-Green, Jeremy Stovall (proxy for Yanli Zhang), Jake Walburn

II. Presentations

- a. Dr. Steve Westbrook, University President.
- i. The Board of Regents (BoR) committee met with representatives from each system before the systems responded to our questions. The BoR is scheduled to meet with the system representative the following week
1. each stakeholder group on campus is asked to review responses & develop a report expressing their perceptions of each system's strengths & weaknesses with a report due to the BoR due 10/21
 2. The BoR meets on Oct. 30 & 31; Reports will be provided online & presented to BoR during the public part of the meeting. No action by BoR is planned at that meeting, but a special called meeting will occur later with the system issue as the only item on the agenda;
 3. other notes on this topic:
 - a. UT – sent a delegation to tour the campus and meet with College of Forestry leadership & faculty on 10/10
 - b. Presidential search might have to begin before the legislature can act to join us to a system in order to get a new president in place by June 1; may have to be hired by our BoR (if the BoR votes to join a system, that system's BoR is expected to provide input into the search)
 - c. Expectation of how stakeholders will communicate with BoR: Dr. smith would present each group's reports; President Westbrook is leaving the format of that communication up to the Provost.
- ii. Status of finalization of budget for AY23/close of budget for AY22. Target 11/20 for the close of AY22
- iii. Legislative appropriation process
1. Amended LAR for salary support "institutional enhancement" increase of \$23.4M over the bi-annual; will not know until the end of the session (May); this is in addition to changes discussed in mtg 482

- iv. President Westbrook is to host a picnic for faculty and staff on 11/4 in the backyard of the president's house
- b. Dr. Lorenzo Smith, Provost/Exec. VP for Academic Affairs. Expected discussion topics:
 - i. Space utilization (rationale, activities, questions). Faculty are expected to teach where they are scheduled, but the system would allow for modifications based on teaching needs.
 - ii. State system analysis (status of responses to question set; ideas/discussion re: rationale for assessing).
 - 1. Letter is just a draft; survey with rubrics/Likert-type items
 - 2. The goal is for a singular statement from Academic Affairs, but the Provost is willing to present each stakeholder's position separately.
 - 3. Quote, "SFA does not have a money problem, SFA has a priorities problem."
 - 4. Motion made to accept the Provost's list of items on the survey; Moved: Wagner-Green Second: Tina Oswald; motion carried
 - 5. Provost will share his presentation in advance before presenting it to the BoR

III. Session Break, inc. transition to Senate Business Segment (Faculty members only¹).

IV. Recognition of additional Senate member

- a. Emily Payne (NTT rep from the ATCOFA)

V. Approval of Minutes from meeting #482

- a. Requested Changes: correction to the spelling of names; Moon - #8 new business b1 (underrepresented);
 - i. Motion to accept by Tina Oswald; Seconded by: Rebecca Davis; Motion carried

VI. Officer Reports

- a. Chair (Chris McKenna) – no additional report
- b. Chair-Elect (CC Conn) – no additional report
- c. Secretary (George Day) – video and minutes updated on the website
- d. Treasurer (Michelle Klein) - \$16.08 (bottled water); \$1983.92 (total)
 - i. May need to ask for more funds if we move to a system; more funds can be obtained if the Provost can be convinced of the need

VII. Committee Reports

- a. Academic Affairs: (Herb Midgley/Sarah Straub).
 - i. Policies addressed:
 - 1. 16.33 Use of University Facilities (tabled)
 - 2. 5.17 Stone Fort Museum (approved)
 - 3. 6.13 Graduate Student Advising (approved)
 - 4. 7.3 Academic Freedom & Responsibility (tabled)
 - 5. 7.10 Emeritus (approved)
 - ii. Policies for October 13 meeting
 - 1. 7.12 Faculty Search
 - 2. 7.3 Academic Freedom & Responsibility
 - 3. 5.1 Academic Program Review

¹ Video record of the meeting suspended at this point

- 4. 7.26 Course Enrollment
- iii. Class size policy
 - 1. 1000/2000 class min of 20; request that approved small classes not be paid based on class size
 - 2. Introduce max class size
- b. Core Curriculum Assessment: (CC Conn, *ex officio*).
 - i. Faculty trust model being considered
- c. Others (internal committees) upon request (see **bolded** committee names):
 - 1. **Professional Welfare** (Michelle Klein / Jeremy Becnel). Issue: support for foreign national faculty members.
 - 1. Sponsoring foreign national faculty; piloting process to help with that from Provost, which will be discussed in a future town hall.
 - 2. The issue needs to be given priority with Provost and administration; Chris will address it with Provost to express the faculty's support for this program & offer our support

VIII. Old Business

- a. Elections committee proposal on unused NTT seats (Mishra, etc.).
 - i. Issue sidelined by the filling of the Forestry seat
 - ii. Committee: no consensus on committee & faculty; are the seats for representation of the college or the NTT; proposal on a rotation basis to the other colleges to avoid disadvantage the NTT;
 - iii. Task the committee to make a motion for a permanent solution in the next Senate meeting.

IX. New Business

- a. Discussion and vote on preferred calendar options (Day).
 - i. "Choice 1" (15 vs. 16-week semesters) vote. – Senate votes for the 15-week option
 - ii. "Choice 2" (short Fall break v. full Thanksgiving week) vote. – Senate votes for a full Thanksgiving break
- b. Considerations re: how to assess system responses and make a Board recommendation re: option strengths and weaknesses (Full Senate).
 - i. Our charge from Dr. Smith (response due to him by Friday, October 21):
- c. Statement/proposal from Senate Chair
 - i. Chris proposed that we consider proposing that SFA choose to slow down the process; stated reasons:
 - 1. Financial figures indicating SFA is in financial trouble are inaccurate; SFA may be in better financial position than previously believed
 - 2. Salary setting is a local rather than a system decision
 - 3. possibility that SFA could afford to raise salaries without joining a system out of \$90M untouched funds
 - 4. PUFF funds – will we be better off with this than HEAF funds? HEAF is automatic funding; PUFF funding from A&M and UT is less flexible and may be less money
 - 5. Potential savings in software licensing & other processes? No current analysis of real savings.
 - 6. No proposed budget on what our financial outlook would be after the acquisition;
 - 7. Chris proposed the question: does this need to be done quickly? And why?

- ii. Membership responds to the Chair:
 - 1. Uncertainty about the source of the information and want to talk to our faculty before responding to Chris' position
 - 2. The current BoR is not getting the job done, and a change is needed
 - 3. If we slow the process down, the senate could lose credibility
- iii. Motion: Chris Turner (call a special session to discuss this issue; hybrid mtg; 48 hours)
Second: George Day; motion: failed
 - 1. Discussion: others have said this is happening too fast; they think the faculty believe that we want change; there is a danger of spreading rumors about this
- d. Chair admonished for cutting off Senator Chakravartty's discussion of the Professional Welfare Committee's report to save time for his lengthy statement.

X. Adjournment

- a. Motion by: Victoria Wagner-Green Seconded by: Lindsey Kennon