Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Agenda – Meeting #485
Wednesday, November 30, 2022
2:30 pm CST

I. **Call to Order (McKenna)**
   a. Present: Jeremy Becnel, Julie Bloxson, Brent Burt (proxy for Jason Bruck), 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, Darrel McDonald, Rob McDermand, Chris McKenna (Chair, non-voting), Herbert Midgley, Rajat Mishra, Johnathan Mitchell, Perry Moon, Tina Oswald, Gretchen Patterson, Emily Payne, Bidisha Sengupta, Louise Stoehr, Sarah Straub, Bailey Thompson, Leland Thompson, Samantha Inman (proxy – Chris Turner), Victoria Wagner-Green, Jake Walburn, Yanli Zhang

II. **Presentations**
   a. Dr. Steve Westbrook, Interim President.
      i. Status of state system deliberations and expected next steps. The university accepted the invitation from the University of Texas System, which was perceived as the best fit for SFA and matched the preference of campus groups.
      ii. Next step in the process will involve the Texas Legislature drafting a bill to dissolve SFA and reinstitute it as a part of the UT System.
      iii. While awaiting legislative approval, SFA and the UT System will create a plan and transition team to facilitate the process. We expect autonomy regarding curricula development and tenure and promotion criteria, while some processes or policies will be revised to coincide with the UT System.
      iv. Status of Presidential Search: anticipated next steps & timeframe.
         1. The normal presidential search rules have been suspended by the Board of Regents (BoR) who have agreed to follow UT system BoR rules and regulations regarding presidential searches
         2. A presidential search committee will be formed consisting of (no search firm):
            a. Two members of the SFA BoR
            b. UT System Chancellor of Academic Affairs (Chair); two UT System presidents;
            c. From SFA: one dean; three faculty members, a staff member, a student; President of the Alumni Association
            d. Two Nacogdoches community members
         3. A target date of May 31 has been set for the investment of a new president (possible that the legislation that makes up part of UT might not happen by then).
         4. The timing of a new president is important for AY 24 budget planning; UT Board budget approval happens in August
      v. $5.5 million to salaries per year – for a total of four consecutive years. To help SFA jump-start the process of raising salaries, the President has approved using reserves to address salary issues at SFA before it becomes part of the UT system. The administration will create a salary proposal for the BoR sometime during the spring semester.
   b. Dr. Lorenzo Smith, Provost/Exec. VP for Academic Affairs

     i. Stressed the importance of enrollment trends while pointing out that the support for salary increases from the UT System is temporary. SFA's student-faculty ratios are 'under the microscope, and we should expect them to be increased.

     ii. Dr. Smith referred to challenges to enrollment growth included in his 12/15/22 message to the faculty.

     iii. Recap of the close of 4SP cycle for the Ombudsman proposal.
1. Department chairs did not support the proposal and the 4SP process has been terminated on this issue
2. Senators noted that the UT System uses staff, faculty, and student ombudsman and suggested that further progress on this issue may be possible after SFA joins with UT.
3. Senate Chair made a 2nd request for a copy of the proposal submitted to the chair's council (see minutes from meeting #484).

     iv. Updates on the PERM Special Handling pilot program.
1. UT changes everything – they may have the infrastructure to help
2. There is help from the provost's office for those that have a need

     v. Comments re: recent salary increases in some colleges.
1. Centralized action would help many people less significantly;
2. delay could help many people more significantly; at a much later date
3. decentralized action – would help only a few people more significantly

     vi. AA budget and budget preparations for AY 24: Provost reviewed the content of his 12/15/22 message to the faculty, with no new information presented.

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

IV. Approval of Minutes from meeting #484
  a. Requested Changes: corrections required regarding membership of the committee looking into PERM
  b. Motion to accept by Gina Fe Causin; Seconded by: Tina Oswald; Motion carried

V. Officer Reports
  a. Chair (Chris McKenna) – BoR meeting –
     i. meetings of AA policy committee – issues with scheduling for the committee because of course scheduling issues; the committee chair is looking for consistency in faculty on the committee (same four regularly; w/allowance for proxies); Senate members will try to do so, but feel it is more important to staff the meeting than to meet the chair's desire
     ii. Expressed that the Senate needs to decide what to do with the ombudsman proposal;
     iii. Faculty need representation in discussions regarding the upcoming salary increases, and this issue is of higher priority than the ombudsman discussion
     iv. Faculty marshals needed…Senators volunteered, and positions were filled.
     v. Nominations for teaching excellence awards. It was noted that the Senate sponsors a 7th award for a non-tenured track faculty winner;
       1. deadlines – submission to the committee by February 17; Chair McKenna recommended a standing committee (professional welfare) make a recommendation to the Faculty Senate by February 21.
  b. Chair-Elect (CC Conn) – No report
  c. Secretary (George Day) – FS minutes page up to date

d. Treasurer (Michelle Klein) - $2000 balance; outstanding debt of water bottles; will have $750 debit for non-tenured teaching excellence award winner

VI. Committee Reports
    a. Academic Affairs: (Herb Midgley/Sarah Straub).
        i. 7.26 – course enrollment (tabled)
        ii. 6.10 add/drop– tabled – sent to the registrar for comment
        iii. 4.1 – minor wording changes
        iv. 5.14 – oral English was revised last year and is being reviewed by legal
        v. 7.2 – minor changes
        vi. 12.7 – faculty dev leave – no changes
        vii. Student media – updated by mass comm chair
        viii. Program reviews for deans (and others reporting to provost) – discussion of results shared w/faculty; provost preference is to share summary, not a full review
        ix. Substantive changes (reporting to SACCS) re-approved after being put into accord with current SACCS policy; back to the policy committee
    b. Staff Council update (Thompson/Patterson). The staff council runs an efficient meeting which included a major discussion for visibility on campus
    c. Others (internal committees) upon request:
        i. Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Immigration Processes (Stoehr et al.).
            1. Discussed differences between special handling and non-international faculty experience.
            2. Special handling is available for university-sponsored faculty – a less expensive process.
            3. Have the provost reach out and meet with every international faculty member to see who needs sponsorship (been here less than 18 months) and see what can be done to help those here more than 18 months.

VII. Old Business
    a. Elections committee update on discussions re: unused non-tenure track seats (Mishra et al.). – no recommendation from the committee at this time; the committee asked for input from senators

VIII. New Business
    a. Note re: status of the Ombudsman proposal.
        i. Ad hoc committee: motion: Wagner-green; 2nd- Moon; motion carried
        ii. Jonathan Mitchell; Rebecca Davis, Bailey Thompson; Rob McDermand
    b. Possible Compensation subcommittee proposal from the PCOE.
        i. Two requests – draft resolution; create an ad-hoc committee to examine and be the point of contact on salary issues
        ii. Motion – not issue resolution and amended resolution for seven faculty members to be allowed to participate in salary discussions– Wagner-Green; 2nd McDermand; vote to be facilitated by email.

IX. Adjournment
    a. Motion by: Senator Wagner-Green Seconded by: Senator McCleary; Motion carried