

**Stephen F. Austin State University**  
**Faculty Senate Agenda – Meeting #486**  
**Wednesday, February 9, 2023, 2:30 CST**

**I. Call to order (McKenna)**

- a. Present: Jeremy Becnel, Kevin Stafford (proxy: Julie Bloxson), Matt Kwiatkowski (proxy: Jason Bruck), Gina Fe Causin, Court Carney (proxy: Arye Chakravartty), Rebecca Davis, George Day (Secretary), Sarah Drake, Erika Hoagland, Lindsey Kennon, Michelle Klein (Treasurer), CC Conn (Chair-elect), Li Wenjing, Andrew Southerland (proxy: Daniel McCleary), Chris McKenna (Chair), Herbert Midgley (Parliamentarian), Rajat Mishra, Jonathan Mitchell, Perry Moon, Tina Oswald, Gretchen Patterson, Emily Payne, Bidisha Sengupta, Louise Stoehr, Bailey Thompson, Leland Thompson, Chris Turner, Victoria Wagner-Green, Jake Welburn, Yanli Zhang
- b. absent (no proxy): Rob McDermand, Darrel McDonald

**II. Presentations**

- a. Dr. Lorenzo Smith, Provost/Exec. VP for Academic Affairs
  - i. PERM updates to include possible meetings between affected faculty, Provost, and human resources
    - 1. Starting February 7, the Provost's office began a new approach to assist faculty seeking financial support for PERM processing from the comptroller's officer & legal; faculty needing assistance should contact the Provost's office
  - ii. Academic Affairs budget and preparation for AY 2024 budget
    - 1. deans/chairs working are on requests for capital support items to be followed by decision-making for what will/will not be funded
    - 2. deans asked to provide the Provost with STARs requests; see <https://www.utsystem.edu/offices/academic-affairs/research/stars-program> for more on STARs; the purpose is to attract and retain faculty (\$800K earmarked for attracting & retaining faculty that might be influenced by the purchase of capital items; approval not needed from the UT system, expenditures are a local decision; faculty should go through their chairs to discuss proposals for STARs funding.
  - iii. Clarification of Faculty Workload procedure
    - 1. All policies will be dissolved and converted to a 'handbook of procedure' to coincide with UT system methods; some policies may need to be tweaked if they conflict with system-level policies (essentially a new presentation/organization of SFA's current policies)
    - 2. Several policies are being examined/revised by the policy committee ahead of SFA's entrance into the UT system (a new mechanism for policy change will likely be put in place afterward)
  - iv. Honors program (Tkacik, Honors program coordinator)
    - 1. SFA is not able to provide enough honors classes for the number of honors students; honors contracts between students & faculty are used to address shortfall; Tkacik asked the senate for ideas to recognize/incentivize faculty to supervise honors projects; s
    - 2. Tkacik suggested providing him a 'voice' on the workload procedure committee

3. Suggestions: clearer placement in the FAR so it can be recognized by merit committees; course release for taking on a predetermined number of honors contracts; make faculty more aware of the possibilities of honors contracts (but some limits need to be in place)

**III. Session Break & transition to Senate business session (faculty only)<sup>1</sup>**

**IV. Approval of minutes from meeting #485**

- a. Requested changes: several made and noted by Day and McKinna
- b. Motion to accept by: [Senator Oswald]; 2<sup>nd</sup>: [Senator Causin]; approved with changes

**V. Officer Reports**

- a. Chair (McKenna)
  - i. Reminded deans/chairs in Academic Affairs (AA) committee that proposed changes to policies/procedures will not be approved that affect faculty workload until there is a plan that addresses faculty compensation; COLA increase does not constitute a plan for addressing compensation
  - ii. No clear updates have been provided on the progress of the search committee or if it has been fully formed
  - iii. Board of Regents (BoR) mtg: addressed the issue of students who both work full-time & are full-time students; McKenna challenged them to provide a scholarship to help these students, donated funds, and pledged future donations.
  - iv. SFA is significantly down on the number of trees on campus; there is a plan to plant 100 trees on campus; faculty senate (FS) asked for tree #70 since FS started in 1970
- b. Chair-Elect (Conn)
  - i. Ordered material for the end of the year recognitions & will get with the treasurer on costs
- c. Secretary (Day)
  - i. Faculty senate webpage updated with the most recent recordings and minutes
- d. Treasurer (Klein)
  - i. current balance: \$1983.92
  - ii. outstanding debits/credits: debt \$750 NTT award
  - iii. available balance: \$1239.92

**VI. Committee Reports**

- a. Academic Affairs (Midgley/Straub)
  - i. Policies reviewed:
    1. 7.62 Course Enrollment – FS representatives repeated our request for a rationale for changes
    2. 4.1 Code of Student Conduct – compared SFA policy with current UT System policy; discussed including language in the policy to address the use of AI (e.g., Chat GPT) by students; policy is also under review by ad hoc committee of associate deans
    3. 2.14 Consensual Relations – questions about singling out student athlete-coach/trainer relationship singled out; nepotism not part of the policy; expect a draft policy to committee via email for approval
  - ii. FS unanimously votes against raising class minimums to 10-15 for 1000-2000 level courses.

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<sup>1</sup> public recording to be terminated during break

- b. Grad Council: (Conn, *ex officio*) – reviewed courses submitted; all expected to be approved
- c. Core Curriculum Assessment (Conn, *ex officio*) – discussed findings of graduating students; decided to continue to evaluate using current measurements
- d. Staff Council update (Thompson/Patterson) – Staff Council to meet February 13, 2023
- e. Internal committees
  - i. Elections (Mishra) – the process has begun for this year's elections in the FS; email was sent to admins of each college (and the Library) needing replacements; asked for interested faculty to send nominations to Senator Mishra to facilitate the voting process with a request to submit nominees by the end of February
  - ii. Faculty Immigration Processes (Ad hoc; Stoehr et al.) – did meet and are waiting for interested faculty

**VII. Old Business**

- a. Ad hoc committee on Faculty salaries report (Straub et al.)
  - i. 6% does not address the last four years w/o raise, and faculty lacked representation when the increase was decided upon
  - ii. FS to hold firm on not approving policies that increase faculty work until compensation is addressed

**VIII. New Business**

- a. Historical recognition: Bill Clark, Professor emeritus, Math & Statistics. 1<sup>st</sup> Senate Chair (1970-71)
- b. Ad hoc committee on Ombudsman analysis/potential proposal report
  - i. No chair has been chosen; the committee has not met
- c. Report from Professional Welfare committee; re: Senate sponsored non-tenure track Teaching Excellence Award nominee; Jennifer Malmberg was chosen and informed following the meeting

**IX. Adjournment**

- a. Motion: Senator Causin 2<sup>nd</sup>: Senator Wagner-Green