Faculty Survey Results 2001 and 2006
Executive Summary

2001:   **Surveys sent = 348**   **Response = 151**   **Return rate = 43.4%**
2006:   **Surveys sent = 534**   **Response = 346**   **Return rate = 64.8%**

1: Are you in favor of SFA joining a system?

Answer	% 2001	%2006
Yes/Probably Yes:	**49.6%**	**52%**
No/Probably No:	25.6%	28.1%
No opinion:	23.2%	19.9%

2: Which system would best serve SFA?

	2001		2006	
System	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**
U Texas:	25	16.6	15	12.1
Texas A&M	20	13.5	34	19.7
Texas Tech	**40**	**26.5**	**69**	**39.9**
Texas State	31	20.5	27	15.6
U Houston	4	2.7	4	2.3
U North Texas	5	3.3	*	*

*None indicated in 2006, but may be other category that did not pull out U North Texas.

Spring 2001 Survey of Tenure/Tenure-track faculty asking if SFA should join a system

Surveys mailed= 348   N = 151   Return rate = 43.4%

1: Are you in favor of SFA joining a system?

Yes/Probably Yes:	**49.6%**
No/Probably No:	25.6%
No opinion:	23.2%

2: Which system would best serve SFA? (note: some respondents endorsed more than 1 option; N = 143).

System	#	%
UTexas:	25	16.6
Texas A&M	20	13.5
Texas Tech	**40**	**26.5**
Texas State	31	20.5
U Houston	4	2.7
UN Texas	5	3.3

3: Please provide your opinion regarding the following statements.

	Agree %	Disagree %	No opinion %
Salaries will increase relative to other institutions	**51.0%**	18.5%	26.5%
Salaries will continue to improve across time	**47.0%**	19.2%	30.5%
Funds for travel will improve	**35.1%**	26.5%	33.8%
Research funding will improve	**43.1%**	25.8%	27.2%
Enrollment will increase initially	28.5%	33.1%	**34.4%**
Enrollment will increase across time	**47.7%**	24.5%	23.8%
Admission standards will improve	**49.0%**	20.5%	25.8%
SFA will lose instructional programs	**50.3%**	24.5%	21.9%
Athletics will suffer	17.9%	35.8%	**43.1%**

Spring 2006 Survey of SFA faculty asking if SFA should join a system

Response: 346 Sent out: 534 Response rate: 64.8%
Some faculty skipped questions throughout the survey, resulting in inconsistent total responses across questions

1: Do you hold a degree or degrees from a school in Texas?

Answer	Number	%
Yes	**201**	**58.9**
No	140	41.1

2: Which school(s) ?

School	Number	%	School	Number	%
Abilene Christian	2	1	Texas Lutheran	1	0.5
Angelo State	3	1.5	Texas State	5	2.5
Baylor	5	2.5	Texas Tech	12	5.9
Dallas Baptist	1	0.5	Texas Woman's	12	5.9
East Texas Baptist	1	0.5	UT-Arlington	4	2
Lamar	3	1.5	UT-Austin	25	12.3
Sam Houston	6	2.9	UT-Dallas	4	2
S. Texas College of Law	2	1	UT-Tyler	4	2
Southern Methodist	4	2	UT-Health Sci. Center	1	0.5
SW Baptist Theo. Sem.	1	0.5	UT-Medical Branch	7	3.4
SFA	**94**	**46.1**	UT-Permian Basin	2	1
Sul Ross	1	1	Trinity	2	1
Texas A&M	29	14.2	U H- University Park	9	4.4
Texas A&M-Commerce	5	2.5	U North Texas	23	11.3
Texas A&M-Kingsville	1	0.5	West Texas A&M	3	1.5
Texas Christian	6	2.9	Other	9	4.4

3: Where are you employed at SFA?

College	Number Responses	Number in College*	% of total Responses	% Responses in college
Applied Arts and Science	28	36	8.3	78
Business	42	59	12.5	72
Education	59	114	17.5	52
Fine Arts	39	60	11.6	65
Forestry and Agriculture	25	29	7.4	86
Liberal Arts	58	97	17.2	60
Science and Mathematics	**63**	**63**	**18.7**	**100**
Steen Library	21	24	6.2	88
Other	2		2	
Skipped	7		9	
Total	346			

* Includes adjuncts teaching at least 6 credit hours.

4: What is your rank?

Rank	Number of Responses	% of response total	Number in Rank	% in rank
Professor	**90**	**26.9**	142	63
Associate Professor	63	18.8	83	76
Assistant Professor	83	24.8	139	60
Instructor	30	9.0	33	91
Lecturer	22	6.6	?	?
Librarian	17	5.1	17	**100**
Adjunct/Other	30	9.0	**193***	16
Skipped	11			
Total	346			

* Includes all adjunct, not just those teaching above 6 credit hours

5: Please provide your opinion regarding the following statements.
323 responses to standard questions below. Numbers in ( ) represent actual responses.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
Salaries will improve	3% (9)	13% (41)	20% (66)	**45% (146)**	19% (61)
Fringe benefits, travel funds will improve	3% (10)	15% (47)	28% (90)	**42% (135)**	13% (41)
Research funding will improve	2% (5)	12% (40)	20% (66)	**48% (154)**	18% (58)
Enrollment will initially increase	2% (6)	17% (56)	**37% (120)**	**32% (104)**	11% (36)
Enrollment will increase over time	1% (4)	11% (35)	31% (99)	**44% (141)**	13% (41)
Admission standards will improve	2% (6)	13% (42)	28% (90)	**43% (139)**	14% (45)
SFA could lose some instructional programs	4% (13)	16% (51)	27% (86)	**46% (147)**	8% (26)
Athletics will benefit	5% (15)	16% (53)	**56% (180)**	19% (61)	4% (14)
SFA will be a better place to work	6% (19)	18% (58)	**31% (97)**	25% (81)	20% (63)
SFA would have more say in directing its future	19% (61)	**36% (117)**	22% (71)	14% (46)	8% (26)
Faculty would have more freedom to pursue research topics than now	4% (13)	12% (40)	25% (81)	**40% (130)**	18% (24)
Easier to implement new academic programs	10% (33)	29% (92)	**36% (116)**	17% (55)	8% (24)

6: Do you have personal experience as faculty in a Texas system?

Yes: 42 (12.4%)   No: 297 (87.6%)

7: In which system?

System	%	Number
Texas A&M University	22.7	10
Texas State University	18.2	8
Texas Tech University	6.8	3
University of Texas	**31.8**	**14**
University of Houston	4.5	2
Other	15.9	7

8: Should SFA join a system?

Category	Total #	Yes	No	No opinion
Overall	336	**52% (170)**	28.1% (92)	19.9% (65)

SFA Graduate	86	**43% (37)**	32.6% (28)	24.4% (21)

Work Experience

Worked at UT	13	**84.6% (11)**	15.4% (2)	0
Worked at TX Tech	3	**100% (3)**	0	0
Worked at TX State	8	37.5% (3)	**62.5% (5)**	0
Worked at TX A&M	9	**100% (9)**	0	0

Rank at SFA

Professor	89	**61.8% (55)**	27% (24)	11.2% (10)
Associate Professor	62	**66.1% (41)**	16.1% (10)	17.7% (11)
Assistant Professor	80	**48.8% (39)**	28.8% (23)	22.5% (18)
Librarians	15	40% (6)	13.3% (2)	**46.7% (7)**
Instructors	19	36.8% (7)	**42.1% (8)**	21.1% (4)
Clinical Instructors	9	**44.4% (4)**	33.3% (3)	22.2% (2)
Lecturer	21	28.6% (6)	**47.6% (10)**	23.8% (5)
Adjunct	12	**58.3% (7)**	33.3% (4)	8.3% (1)

College at SFA

Applied Arts and Sciences	26	**42.3% (11)**	**42.3% (11)**	15.4% (4)
Business	39	**69.2% (27)**	7.7% (3)	23.1% (9)
Education	58	34.4% (20)	**39.7% (23)**	25.9% (15)
Fine Arts	38	**39.5% (15)**	**39.5% (15)**	21.1% (8)
Forestry and Agriculture	24	**58.3% (14)**	16.7% (4)	25% (6)
Liberal Arts	55	**72.7% (40)**	21.8% (12)	5.5% (3)
Science and Math	62	**58.1% (36)**	29% (18)	12.9% (8)
Library	20	35% (7)	15% (3)	**50% (10)**

9: If yes, which system should SFA join? Any suggestions other than the systems below are not listed. Counts of those who skipped this question are also not included.

Category	Texas A&M	U Texas	Texas Tech	Texas State	No Op.
Overall	19.7% (34)	12.1% (15)	**39.9% (69**)	15.6% (27)	8.7%

SFA Graduate	21.1% (8)	21.1% (8)	**28.9% (11)**	21.1% (8)	2.6%

Work Experience

	Texas A&M	U Texas	Texas Tech	Texas State	No Op.
Worked at UT	**41.7% (5)**	25% (3)	33.3% (4)	0	0
Worked at TX Tech	50% (1)	0	**50% (1)**	0	0
Worked at TX State	0	0	25% (1)	**75% (3)**	0
Worked at TX A&M	16.7% (1)	0	**50% (3)**	16.7% (1)	0

Rank at SFA

	Texas A&M	U Texas	Texas Tech	Texas State	No Op.
Professor	23.3% (13)	14.3% (8)	**42.9% (24)**	12.5% (7)	3.6%
Associate Professor	12.2% (5)	9.8% (4)	**43.9% (18)**	14.6% (6)	9.8%
Assistant Professor	20% (8)	7.5% (3)	**35% (14)**	22.5% (9)	15%
Librarians	16.7% (1)	0	**66.7% (4)**	16.7% (1)	0
Instructors	25% (2)	**50% (4)**	25% (2)	0	0
Clinical Instructors	**50% (2)**	25% (2)	0	0	25%
Lecturer	16.7% (1)	0	**50% (3)**	16.7% (1)	16.7%
Adjunct	28.6% (2)	0	42.9% (3)	28.6% (2)	0

College at SFA

	Texas A&M	U Texas	Texas Tech	Texas State	No Op.
Applied Arts and Sciences	**45.5% (5)**	0	27.3% (3)	27.3% (3)	0
Business	**39.3% (11)**	7.1% (2)	17.9% (5)	14.3% (4)	10.7%
Education	4.8% (1)	19% (4)	**42.9% (9)**	19% (4)	9.5%
Fine Arts	0	**43.8% (7)**	31.2% (5)	6.2% (1)	12.5%
Forestry and Agriculture	7.1% (1)	0	**92.9% (13)**	0	0
Liberal Arts	20% (8)	7.5% (3)	**37.5% (15)**	22.5% (9)	12.5%
Science and Math	19.4% (7)	13.9% (5)	**41.7% (15)**	13.9% (5)	8.3%
Library	14.3% (1)	0	**57.1% (4)**	14.3% (1)	**0**

10: Narrative Answers to Open-ended Questions on Survey

Three faculty members with professional training and expertise in analysis of qualitative data individually identified common themes among the responses. They then met as a group to reach agreement on the common themes.

Reasons to Join a System

We identified 11 themes related to reasons for joining a university system. A total of 141 faculty responded to the open-ended question on why SFA should join a system. These 141 faculty gave collectively 239 responses, yielding a total of 1.70 per faculty member. The frequencies and percentages are listed in the table below in descending order. By far, the most common response was the perception of mismanagement of the Board of Regents. The second most common response was that joining a system would increase salaries while another indicated that joining a system would provide SFA more money generally. Other responses emphasized the presumed benefits of joining a system, which included monetary benefits and social benefits such as more prestige.

Reasons for Joining a System

Item	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses N= 239	Percentage of Responses based on Number of Faculty N= 141
Mismanagement of Board	64	26.8%	45.3%
Higher Salaries	32	13.4%	22.7%
More Money	25	10.5%	17.7%
Athletics	24	10.0%	17.0%
Better Recruiting	20	8.4%	14.2%
Better Management	19	7.9%	13.5%
Better Outlook/Vision	16	6.7%	11.4%
Greater Stature	15	6.3%	10.6%
Better Students	14	5.9%	10%
Better Faculty	8	3.3%	5.7%
Declining Trend	2	0.8%	1.0%
Total	**239**	**100.0%**	**100%**

Five randomly selected quotes are listed verbatim below to illustrate some types of words, language, and sentiments noted among those favoring SFA joining a system.

"My primary reason for supporting SFA becoming part of a system is simply to eliminate the micromanaging role of the Board of Regents. Their style of governance is hindering progress in terms of technology and expansion of services. I also believe that SFA could benefit in terms of increased enrollment numbers, positive PR, more visibility, financial gain, etc. by becoming part of a collaborative system. At present, SFA and Nacogdoches is akin to a close community. The unique aspects about SFA and Nacogdoches are not viewed positive by outsiders, but rather barriers or hindrances. It is my opinion that a term or system environment will help secure a brighter future for SFA. As an alumnus, this issue is far more important than the issue of losing the name SFA."

"I have been on record as supporting SFA joining a system. I was quoted in length about 5 years ago in an issue of the Daily Sentinel as supporting the joining of a system. Largest problem SFA has is the continuous micro-management of a basically incompetent board. I had a lot of personal experience with the development of the A&M system at East Texas State. They were proactive in placing the university into a system. From a practical matter SFA is probably going to be in a system at some point in the future. It's much better to be proactive about it rather than be drug kicking and screaming into a system that would not be the best for SFA. I support strongly SFA taking a proactive stance to join the Texas State University System. In this system you can maintain your own identity. You get the benefits of a system without losing your individuality, e.g., Sam Houston, Texas State (SWTSU), Lamar, etc. The sooner the better. I definitely do not want SFA to become Texas A&M University @ Nacogdoches."

"I think the president and the faculty need more freedom to set the university's priorities. There have been some worthwhile improvements to the university over the last few years, but our priorities have not been set wisely. Faculty salaries continue to be an embarrassment, our library's collections has been in a free-fall ever since I came here and probably before."

"More direction and leadership."

"Faculty research and salary take a back seat to athletics and building cathedrals – it doesn't seem like the current board of regents priority is developing an academic environment."

Not Joining a System

Seventy faculty members wrote responses on why SFA should not join a university system. Of these 70 faculty members, 108 responses were identified, yielding an average of 1.54 responses per faculty member. A summary of the frequencies and percentages is given below with themes listed in descending order of frequency. The most common reason given for not joining a system was that SFA would lose autonomy and independence if we joined a system. The next two reasons for not joining a system are that SFA would be a small fish in a big pond and salaries for employees would not increase.

Reasons Not To Join System

Item	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses N=108	Percentage of Responses based on Number of Faculty N= 70
Independence/Autonomy	25	23.1%	35.7%
Small Fish in Big Pond	19	17.6%	27.1%
Salary	18	16.7%	25.7%
Increase Bureaucracy	13	12.0%	18.6%
Tradition/Identity	13	12.0%	18.6%
Local Control	13	12.0%	18.6%
Teaching	7	6.5%	10.0%
Total	**108**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Five randomly selected quotes are listed verbatim below to illustrate some types of words, language, and sentiments noted among those favoring SFA joining a system.

"The autonomy issue is critical. As a small university, we may get lost in the shuffle of a larger system."

"To save dollars, more services like payroll and purchasing would be provided by parent system which means calls to the central parent system rather than local contacts. There would also be more polices that would have to be followed. If the system was one of the major research institutions, we could expect more emphasis on research and less of a focus on teaching. In the grants area, we could expect more emphasis upon research grants rather than training grants because of the major differences in the indirect cost formulas. I do not think we could expect the parent system to support us even during "hard" times. I also think we would have sort of a "branch bank" status…not valued as much as the lead institution, e.g., The University of Texas AT AUSTIN."

"The more layers of bureaucracy present, the more cumbersome most activities and actions on campus would become. We would probably have to call around to multiple offices in different areas to solve simple problems. Paperwork would most likely become more convoluted as multiple systems were merged and changed. SFASU would be less unique. Did I mention more convoluted bureaucracy? More money would probably be diverted to administration…elsewhere instead of with our current employee system."

"Joining a system is no quick fix to the problems at SFA. More than likely after a year to look over the campus, whatever system would clean house. That will not be the positive house cleaning that everyone wants—programs and people will be deleted. A system is no promise of more money at any level."

"While SFA currently has a terrible Board of Regents (the new baseball complex), still, self-governance is generally preferable, and a new governor would hopefully appoint some better regents????? I also think that rural programs in general suffer when governed from urban centers."

Conclusion

What we observed was a strong response by a substantial percentage of the faculty concerning the presumed mismanagement or micro-management by the Board of Regents. However, once this is accounted for, there was an indication and dedication to meeting the three broad missions of SFA concerning teaching, research, and service. Faculty on both sides repeatedly used these reasons for joining and not joining a system. Both sides gave anecdotal evidence and both made unsubstantiated claims. The feelings appear to be focused and strong on the side for joining a system with nearly as many faculty citing management by the current board as a reason for joining as system as the total number of responses for not joining a system. However, statements made by those not wanting joining a system were well constructed and sincere and based on a strong feeling of identity with SFASU as an independent institution. A few faculty noted personal knowledge and experience, again on both sides. The faculty salary issue was divided fairly evenly percentage wise between those who supported joining a system to increase faculty salary and by those who indicated that they did not feel that joining a system would substantially improve the current salary dilemma at SFA.