

Stephen F. Austin State University
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Meeting #398
November 9, 2011

Subject to approval at the #399 meeting.

Senators present: Norjuan Austin (1), Treasurer, Brian Beavers (2), Christine Bergan (3), Chair-Elect, Linda Bobo (4), David Cook (7), Secretary, Dana Cooper (8), Neal Cox (9), Ann Ellis (11), Jason Fritzler (12), Dottie Gottshall (13), Tracey Hasbun (14), Chair, David Howard (15), Lora Jacobi (16), Mikhail Kouliavtsev (17), Matthew Lindsey (18), Michael Maurer (19), Karen Migl (20), Jannah Nerren (22), Rose Powell (24), Cindy Pressley (25), Parliamentarian, Sandra Stewart (27), Janet Tareilo (28)

Excused/Sent Representative: Theresa Coble (6), Dianne Dentice (10), Susan Nelson (21), Emmerentie Oliphant (23), Deb Scott (26), Juan Carlos Ureña (29)

Not present: David Campo (5), David Cox (9)

I. Call to order:

- A. Chair Howard called the meeting to order at 2:33 pm.

II. Presentations:

- A. Dr. Baker Patillo, President, was unavailable due to university business.
- B. Dr. Ric Berry, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
1. Attended the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) conference last month and conveyed highlights of the meeting
 2. Presentation via video conference by Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa, authors of *Academically Adrift*, which argues that college students do not learn at universities
 3. THECB formally adopted the Core Curriculum Guidelines for Texas; more revisions are coming with a new timetable to follow
 4. Texas colleges and universities were given chance to appeal low producing programs decisions though SFA did not appeal any; approximately 20 appeals filed with roughly 1/3 of them granted, which were recorded and posted on THECB web for record; many state physics programs have been terminated, which are clearly important to the state; anticipation that the thresholds for low producing are going to be raised and likely to double in the near future; possibly looking at 10 undergraduate degrees per year over 5 years, 6/year for master's degrees, and 5/year for doctoral degrees
 5. Chief Academic Officers are planning an extended meeting/retreat in January; invited guest will be Jeff Sandefer, author of *Seven Breakthrough Solutions*

6. THECB conference was very encouraging at a time when much in higher education is not; Vincent Tinto, author of *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*, argued that what happens in the classroom really does determine whether or not students will return in the spring; Tinto's new book presents data from a variety of studies that tracks entering freshman through college and after the fourth year; concludes that student retention increases 30% when certain teaching practices are in place

C. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School

1. Recently attended "Reinventing Learning and Instruction in Higher Education" as part of the THECB conference; guests included Dr. Stephen Brookfield, author of *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* and *The Skillful Teacher* and Dr. Vincent Tinto, author of *Leaving College* and co-author of *Moving Beyond Access*
2. Conference focused on the tremendous push in what goes on in the classroom and the concept of incorporating the best practices into each and every classroom; focus on current trends in higher education and how professors can work with college students to be success as the state works toward a more educated populace
3. Dr. Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education, discussed movement toward goals for 2012, emphasized need to help students become successful and becoming a critical reflective teacher and professor
4. Tinto discussed learning communities and the importance of what happens in interactions on campus; new research is beginning to focus on retention and classroom matters; newest publication focuses on what happens in the classroom; stressed the fact that "Access without Support is not an Opportunity"
5. Breakout sessions included SFA's Tara Newman, who presented on the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) program, which was well received; also had STAR Award for Peer Involvement program, former recipient M.E. McWilliams was invited, as a previous winner, to present at the conference
6. NextGen (Next Generation Course Redesign™) program from the University of North Texas larger classes (125-300 students) typically offered in History and Government classes to get experiential learning, very good presentation
7. Reinventing Instruction and Learning has posted information on their website at <http://txcollegeteaching.org/>
8. Norm Markworth from SFA Teaching Excellence Center was there and has ideas to incorporate ideas at SFA

D. Dr. Larry King, Director of Student Learning and Institutional Assessment

1. The Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee (UEAC) has recently focused on the question of "What should the core look like?"

2. Leap Project settled on by UEAC, which determined the skills and objectives the average college student should be able to do, which are reflected in SFA's core curriculum assessment
3. Foundational component areas line up very well with the SFA core as it exists now, which is very important as the skills are agreed upon by the Association of American Colleges (AAC&U) and the UEAC
4. For example, Texas colleges and universities are currently mandated by state legislature to have American history in the core as are 6 hours of government; a subsequent discussion followed that pondered whether or not there was a desire to change those mandates; the UEAC staff was very reluctant to go to legislature and open discussion on this issue; notable that Texas is dissimilar with rest of country as 3 hours of history and 3 hours of government are generally required across the board
5. This structure of the core aligns with assessment, which are required to be assessed holistically, not course-by-course
6. Courses in the core will need to be recertified back into the core, not an automatic, and reviewed by the Coordinating Board that we are satisfying the rules as laid out by the THECB as full implementation will occur by fall 2014
7. Senator Jacobi asked for greater clarity for categories such as "personal responsibility," and Dr. King said that such definitions could be retrieved from the THECB website
8. State core has shrunk to 42 hours, which is a decrease from 46-48 hours; significant discussion of shrinking it even further to 36 hours, likely to shrink in the future
9. Senator Pressley asked about implementation by 2014 and whether or not all courses are expected to be up and running by 2014; Dr. King answered that students who enroll in 2014 will fall under the new core
10. There was a recommendation by UEAC that no special use courses will be used in the core; THECB staff felt that there were too many courses in the core; Dr. King felt that given the new categories (i.e., social responsibility) many profs would not be anxious to be included in the core; crux of the problem is an issue of transferability as a student should be able to transfer between institutions easily
11. Senator Tareilo asked about 3 hours required for the core for math; Dr. King answered that some institutions have a special use institutional option for additional hours, and Dr. Berry clarified that core does not hold us to a maximum of 3 hours of math, but rather that is the minimum core requirement and that specific majors can require more hours
12. Senator Stewart asked about 6 hours of component area option; Dr. King replied that the SFA Core Curriculum Assessment Committee (CCAC) will decide what goes into the core based on a course application that demonstrates that the class meets the Critical Thinking—Personal Responsibility categories
13. Senator Bergan asked why have there not been initiatives increasing math in education as the need is significant; thus, why is math so low? Dr.

King responded that based on research by AAC&U and Leap Project and priorities based on research with employers and what do college graduates need out there determines required hours

14. Dr. King explained that this is a game of where do you put requirements based on THECB requirements while balancing the state legislation requirements of no more than 120 hours

III. Officers' Reports:

A. Chair, David Howard

1. Chair Howard attended the Texas Council Faculty Senates (TCFS) meeting in Austin last month
2. Gun bill did not pass but likely to be brought up in the near future
3. TCFS noted that higher education was disproportionately effected in last state legislative budget and will likely be the case as appropriations in the upcoming legislative session will be tough again as there is an approximate \$12 billion shortfall; the joint oversight committee, report due January 2012
4. No tuition revenue bonds passed this past legislative session
5. On a bright note, Texas state sales tax generates 55% of the state budget, and there have been 17 straight months of sales tax revenue
6. THECB is very compliance-oriented
7. Future undergraduate success rates will be tied to new doctoral programs in that field
8. Student evaluations are a significant topic presently as they, too, will potentially determine funding and compliance for Texas colleges and universities
9. The next TCFS meeting is in February, which the Chair-elect will try to attend
10. Howard distributed the 82nd Legislative Interim Charges and encouraged senators to read it
11. State Representative Chuck Hopson will be here in December to talk to the SFA faculty and Faculty Senate; Chair Howard has reserved Kennedy Auditorium for that visit
12. Senator Robert Nichols will be on-campus in February for the Faculty Senate meeting
13. Please submit questions to Chair-Elect Bobo for collection, and come prepared with questions for discussion

B. Treasurer, Brian Beavers

1. Current balance is \$3,745.94
2. Included previous balance rolling over from last year brings total balance to \$6,303.66

C. Secretary, Dana Cooper

1. Verified that the #397 meeting minutes has been received by senators
2. Invited comments for corrections/edits

3. Chair Howard moved to approved minutes; Senator Bobo so moved, and Senator Stewart seconded
4. Meeting #397 minutes were unanimously approved

V. Committee Assignments:

A. Academic Affairs Committee

1. Committee Chair Hasbun announced that the committee met on October 24; nothing finalized but in the process; investigating alternative admission to SFA, graduate assistantships, other duties of Senate
2. How many students being admitted to SFA under alternative means? Freshman can appeal the decision, attend fall and spring, and receive full admission based on GPA; other alternative admission program is the summer Pathways Program, in which a student takes one class and can stay if they earn a specific GPA
3. Transfer students can appeal, attend one semester, meet certain requirements and receive full admission
4. Survey going out to faculty to regarding admission and appeal matters
5. Goal is to retrieve information from 2007-2011 regarding traditional admission versus alternative admission
6. Senator Jacobi asked about retention regarding admission students, which was echoed by Nerren who maintained that “Access without Opportunity is not Success”
7. Senator Nerren relayed that academic deans rotate service in terms of decided who is admitted under alternative means
8. Senator Tareilo inquired as to where SFA was on a student’s “wish list”—first, second, third, etc.
9. Dr. Berry replied that approximately 25% of SFA applicants are turned down, while approximately 35% of freshmen leave after first year and 19% of them complete degree somewhere else

B. Administration and Finance Committee

1. No report

C. Communication Committee

1. What is Faculty Senate doing?
2. Updating Faculty Perks on FS website, please let us know any additions
3. Faculty Senate Blog? Multiple people could post with comments from faculty
4. Chair Howard answered that faculty appreciates knowing what we are doing, once a month email from him is very nice and yet not email overload
5. Senator Austin commented that openness is good, but just how open do we want to be, especially within the comment section
6. Chair Howard stressed the importance for faculty to discuss issues with their college senator(s)

7. Senator Bergan replied that many faculty members do not know who their senator(s) are
8. Senator Beavers questioned how easy is it to visit with your senator
9. Senator Cox suggested that the Senate minutes be published as an addition to SFA Online
10. Senator Gottsall asked about an adjunct email list, to which Chair Howard replied that all adjuncts should be included within faculty email list

D. Elections/Constitution Committee

1. No report

E. Ethics Committee

1. No report

F. Faculty Government and Involvement

1. Committee Chair Stewart announced that the committee met to review textbooks and Senate power
2. Senator Stewart will meet with SFA bookstore manager
3. Senator Ellis has drafted a brief survey for administrative assistants regarding textbook ordering procedure and process
4. Bookstore website needs updating in order to facilitate stronger communication between faculty and bookstore
5. Regarding the Senate Constitution issues of power and visibility, Senator Stewart suggested that the Constitution be altered to move the function/mission statement description of the Senate to the beginning of the constitution; currently, the wording is very vague and needs to be more specific to include purpose and goals at the beginning rather than bury it so far into the document
6. Chair Howard suggested that the Senate Chair would benefit from an additional year of relationship building with the Regents; consecutive terms is the option that Howard was considering; Mikhail stressed that term limits would not affect interest in number for senator elections
7. Concerning titles, Chair Howard encouraged senators to review the TCFS Round Up Report for variety of titles across the state
8. Concerning the idea of executive session, Senator Stewart explained that many faculty members have expressed a desire for greater transparency at the university; thus, executive session may not be a route for this objective; Chair Howard stressed that we may want to have this option at some point in the future as this is currently not an option.
9. Senator Stewart felt the need to stress positive aspects and highlights of being a senator and suggested the idea of hosting an event/reception with refreshments to talk to interested parties who may want to be a senator and perhaps at the December or February meeting with state politicians
10. Senator Cooper suggested that one senator attend all New Faculty Orientation Events in order to facilitate familiarity and a open line of communication

G. Professional Welfare Committee

1. No report

H. Strategic Planning

1. No report

VI. Old Business:

A. Professional Welfare

1. Chair Howard presented on behalf of Committee Chair Ureña on student evaluations
2. Currently, the university is not required to post student evaluations, but the state is making plans to do so
3. Proposed a university-wide committee/taskforce to discuss evaluations
4. Senator Jacobi stressed the need to be proactive, rather than reactive, on student evaluations and has drafted a survey for faculty
5. According to Senator Jacobi, extra credit is “crack” . . . really David, you’ve got to let me leave this line in here! ☺
6. Chair-Elect Bobo suggested that quantitative results, not comments, be posted online
7. Senator Tareilo commented that many of the questions on evaluations, such as the student’s interest in the course, is a reflection of the student, not the professor, but has the ability to reflect poorly on the professor
8. Collective desire for evaluation questions to start from scratch
9. Senator Cooper noted frustration with students who do not attend or complete the class being able to complete evaluations
10. Chair Howard sees this as a real opportunity to get ahead of the issue and do something now, as a leader, rather than respond later
11. Committee will continue to work on this; please send email comments, questions, concerns to Senators Jacobi, Ureña, Powell, and/or Campo; goal is approve in December and implement in January

VII. New Business:

A. Leave Reporting

1. Senator Cox stressed need to eliminate needless work; never had to report that I did not spend money; should not have to report that I came to work and did my job
2. Senator Tareilo explained that if this is a Banner issue, it will be difficult to correct
3. Senator Fritzler expressed frustration with a similar safety issue as he must now document all hazardous liquids amounts every 15 days
4. Chair Howard and Chair-Elect Bobo will discuss this as a workload issue with Dr. Berry as part of the ever increasing clerical work that faculty is taking on

B. Personal Information Release—

1. Faculty is very upset regarding personal information being released unless we opted out; exactly backward—should be a decision of opting in, not out
2. Chair Howard and Chair-Elect Bobo will bring this up to Dr. Berry at their next meeting

IX. Adjournment:

- A. Chair Howard moved to adjourn, so moved by Senator Cook, which was seconded by Senator Cox.
- B. Meeting adjourned at 4:51pm

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Cooper
Secretary