

Stephen F. Austin State University Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Meeting #402

April 11, 2012

Subject to approval at the #403 meeting.

Senators present: Norjuan Austin (1), Treasurer, Brian Beavers (2), Christine Bergan (3), Chair-Elect, Linda Bobo (4), David Campo (5), Theresa Coble (6), David Cook (7), Secretary, Dana Cooper (8), David Cox (9), 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), Emmerentie Oliphant (23), Rose Powell (24), Cindy Pressley (25), Deb Scott (26), Parliamentarian, Sandra Stewart (27), Janet Tareilo (28), Juan Carlos Ureña (29)

Excused/Sent Representative:

Dianne Dentice (10), Greg Bailey for Ann Ellis (11), Dottie Gottshall (13), Susan Nelson (21)

Not present:

Jason Fritzier (12)

I. Call to order:

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

II. Presentations:

- A. Dr. Baker Patillo, President, did not attend the meeting.
- B. Dr. Ric Berry, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
 1. Discussed the Undergraduate Research Conference (URC), which was very successful; a great event because it raises our profile, is a tremendous opportunity for our students, helps to meet HIP and QEP protocol, and overall strategic plan
 2. Bright Ideas Conference today, awards presented from each college
 3. Tomorrow, Sec. State James Baker will be the guest for the Archie McDonald Speaker Series
 4. Next week, quarterly meeting with Board of Regents on Monday and Tuesday, various issues will be considered such as the decision to set designated tuition fees, potential increase room and board rates, course fees, and so forth; do not expect controversy on any issues; optimistic that an increase will be approved so that we can provide a true merit pool for the next year; great support on the board for increased faculty and staff salaries
 5. Two policy discussions in progress—repeat grades and faculty workload—but will not be on the Regents agenda in April but hopefully in July; Policies in the works—will NOT come up at this meeting; repeat grades could not be finalized
 6. Discussion of a new or alteration of current policies concerning mid-semester grades for some students; distribution of mid-semester grades is of great help in retention of students

7. In response to the final paragraph of the Resolution Related to Faculty Pay and Summer Salary Reductions, objected to wording regarding notifying “the faculty of future budgetary developments, especially related to pending changes in compensation so as to allow timely adjustments to family budgets;” stressed the fact that we are still in trouble financially in this state, thus, we at SFA are in trouble; this is not business as usual; it is impossible to simply absorb a \$16 million hit without serious repercussions; we are still suffering under it and will continue to do so for at least the next year; the outlook for next session is not any better, and the projection for the state is another \$16 billion shortfall; understand that our problems are not solved; the university will continue to try to do what we can and when we can; is supportive of the resolution save the last paragraph
 8. Senator Jacobi emphasized the fact that faculty salary is a very personal issue as it hits the work place and thus the home and questioned the nature of where the cut was made; regardless of rhetoric, the perception remains that salaries were cut and income was decreased; Dr. Berry replied that he understood the concern but that salaries were not cut and stressed the need to be clear on the facts
 9. Senator Austin asked just how much trouble and how long will this situation go on for the state, and thus, for SFA; Dr. Berry replied that he did not know how to predict the situation; rising sales tax revenues indicate that the state is on a comeback, but how fast the economy improves waits to be seen but that the university will find ways to deal with these obstacles
 10. Senator Tareilo inquired as to where other cuts were made across campus. Dr. Berry answered that cuts were spread around the campus from Athletics to the Physical Plant to Finance and Administration. Some 37 positions were not filled by people taking on additional responsibilities without additional compensation; at this time, no one has lost their job to save money, and no one has been terminated for that motivation in force reduction; however, that may not be the case if we are asked to take another \$16 million hit
- C. Dr. Mary Nelle Brunson, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School
1. Presented an update on low producing programs; currently, the thresholds are five bachelor’s degrees per year over a five year period; three master’s per year over a five year period, and 2 doctorate’s per year over a five year period; the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) wants to increase those numbers to 8, 5, and 3, respectively;
 2. Scheduled for a vote in April but has been pulled; SFA and other peer institutions are concerned with a “one size fits all” rule and stress the fact that the program of study, region issues and numbers must be considered
- D. Dr. Randy McDonald, Director, Office of Instructional Technology
1. Discussed the Intellectual Policy for online courses and recent conversations with the Distance Education Committee regarding a potential need to update the policy; currently, 95% of faculty choose category 2 but do so reluctantly; potential change to offer more flexibility

for faculty and online instructors based on ownership of materials, maintenance of class, and compensation of teaching

2. Senator Jacobi asked why she teaches 133 students in the classroom but a colleague limits his class to 25 students and is paid additionally for teaching online; Dr. McDonald replied that enrollment should be comparable for face-to-face and online courses

3. Senator Scott asked if \$300 a realistic payment for the continual updating and maintenance of a course. Dr. McDonald clarified that faculty would be paid \$300 per section

4. Senator Stewart asked who made the ownership/compensation decisions. Dr. McDonald said that options would be available to choose from; however, a faculty member can move “up” the chart but not back; Senator Stewart asked if the new plan would penalize certain professors based on state-standard caps; Dr. McDonald explained that this was based on university numbers

5. Chair-Elect Bobo asked if new certification was necessary. Dr. McDonald said additional certification was not necessary but that OIT was following a program of once certified, always certified

E. Jourdan Dukes, Student Government Association, Academic Affairs Chairwoman

1. During a retreat in January, retention rates were brought to her attention, and it was clear that more community events were needed to retain students; suggesting a program whereby junior and seniors advise freshman and sophomores for classes and scheduling; would be purely under Academic Affairs; want students to feel at home here and return; they need to know they can talk to someone to help them out, and requested the “blessing” of the Senate

2. Chair Howard expressed the collective opinion of the Senate that we will be supportive of efforts designed to promote student success.

III. Officers’ Reports:

A. Chair, David Howard

1. The Constitution dictates that the nominating committee, which will consist of all outgoing senators (Brian Beavers, Emmerentie Oliphant, Mikhail Kouliavtsev, Matthew Lindsey, Linda Bobo, Christine Bergan, Dianne Dentice, Dottie Gottshall, and Susan Nelson) are charged by standing rules to nominate individuals for the 2012-13 officer positions
2. Will formulate a ballot for the next meeting, which will be held on May 9th

B. Chair-Elect, Linda Bobo

1. Two policies—Discontinuance of Program or Academic Unit (A-76) and Financial Exigency (C-63) have been approved by university and the Board of Regents, but has been returned by Legal Counsel for review; policies will be discussed at the next University Policy Committee meeting, schedule for April 27th ; Senator Jannah Nerren, Senator Emmerentie Oliphant, and Chair-Elect Bobo are on the committee; please read and provide your comments to them or contact Steve Bullard, chair of committee, at bullardsh@sfasu.edu with any questions, comments, or concerns you may have

2. Senator Kouliavtsev asked what influence can we have, and Chair-Elect Bobo explained that we have the ability to put recommendations into the policies; this is a chance to be involved as these are important changes to existing policy; Senator Beavers stressed that this was a chance to insert Faculty Senate into an ongoing conversation
 3. Senator Coble what are other universities doing in this situation and what are the definitions of such terms?
 4. Secretary Cooper offered a recent development at Macalester College in St. Paul, MN, in which the Faculty Senate overturned the discontinuance of Russians Studies by petition and vote; she emphasized that we, as faculty and senators, will not get what we do not ask for
- C. Treasurer, Brian Beavers
1. Balance is \$4,777.78
- D. Secretary, Dana Cooper
1. Verified that the #401 minutes has been received by senators
 2. Invited comments for corrections/edits

IV. Approval of minutes from Meetings #401

- A. Chair Howard invited a motion to approve the minutes
1. Senator Austin moved to approve, Senator Cook seconded
 2. Minutes passed unanimously

V. Committee Assignments:

- A. Ethics Committee—Dianne Dentice, chair
1. On behalf of Senator Dentice, Secretary Cooper presented information regarding recent conversations related to social media and the issues it presents for faculty
 2. Distributed the Ethics Committee report in addition to two articles concerning social media issues within academia and faculty management on Facebook
 3. As per Damon Derrick's suggestion, SFA should consider the University of Michigan's Guidelines for the Use of Social Media as a model *should* Faculty Senate chose to adopt some sort of plan for social media concerns
 4. Please read, think, and consider social media handouts
- B. Elections/Constitution Committee
1. Senator Jacobi announced that elections are open and will run through April 17th with run-offs slated for April 18-24; encourage your constituents to vote
 2. Issue with Emmerentie Oliphant rolling off of Senate will be handled
- C. Administration and Finance Committee
1. Senator Hasbun reported on the committee's research regarding enrollment issues under alternative admission via transfer, Pathways, and so on; please review and provide feedback to Tracey via campus mail
 2. Discussion of graduate assistantships, allocation of money, and why programs have certain monies as opposed to others; Chair Howard thanked the committee for their valuable and important work

VI. Old Business:

A. Resolution on Commencement

1. Senator Tareilo announced that the seating in the university coliseum is capped at 5,838, which does not include people on the floor; over 1,200 graduates in May; if every graduate brings 3 people, we are in trouble; state level fire marshal can use a clicker to monitor attendees and close the door at 5,837
2. Turner and Kennedy auditoriums are available; the committee recommends ceremonies at 9am and 2pm; losing graduation decorum with larger ceremonies
3. Senator Coble moved to pass the commencement resolution; Secretary Cooper seconded the motion; brief discussion about numbers and maintain pomp for smaller colleges with fewer graduates; vague wording is better for now, but likely pairing between smaller and larger colleges to achieve decorum while maintaining circumstance
4. Motion passed unanimously

B. Resolution on Student Evaluations

1. Senator Jacobi moved to approve resolution on student evaluations; seconded by Senator Cook
2. Chair-Elect Bobo asked who created the core questions for evaluations. Chair Howard relayed a conversation in which “someone” created and implemented the questions but noted that there is no uniformity across departments, colleges on student evaluations
3. Senator Jacobi stressed the need to remove open-ended questions; Chair Howard emphasized the need to be on the front side of this
4. Resolution passes unanimously

C. Resolution on Summer Pay

1. Motion made to pass the resolution by Senator Kouliavtsev, seconded by Senator Cook
2. Senator Austin noted the need to understand constituent anger and need to reshape this resolution rhetorically; Chair Howard asserted that the senate should maintain a consistent track record of requesting better salaries.
3. Secretary Cooper repeated earlier sentiment of “we will never get what we do not ask for;” Senator Coble suggested a different title over the issue of summer salary reduction; Senator Scott offered Faculty Salary and Summer Pay; Senator Kouliavtsev stressed the difference between 9 month versus 12 month contracts; decision made to leave title it as is
4. Resolution passes unanimously

VII. New Business:

A. Old laptop

1. What do we do with the old laptop?
2. Senator Pressley suggested donating it to a service learning project. Senator Cook stressed the need to wipe the hard drive
3. Chair Howard suggested keeping it as a backup, which the remaining senators supported

B. Senate Leadership Lunch

1. Chair Howard emphasized the need for previous chairs to share their knowledge, experience, and expertise with incoming and current chair and chair-elects
2. Suggested having lunch with incoming chair-elect, chair, and five of the previous Senate chairs, which will be paid for by the Senate
3. Chair Howard made the motion that the Senate provide a Leadership Lunch; Senator Cook seconded
4. Motion passes unanimously

VIII. Adjournment:

- A. Chair Howard moved to adjourn the meeting
 1. The motion was made by Senator Jacobi and seconded by Senator Cook.
 2. The meeting adjourned at 4:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Cooper
Secretary