

MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING

January 18, 2005, at 3:30 PM in Rogers 109

Present: Senators Baldrige, Boyd, Brown, Chonko, Cloud, Cox, Diaz-Granados, Green, Hanks, Lehr, Mathis, McGee, McGlashan, McManness, Miner, Ngan, Norman, O'Brien, Patton (Chair), Pennington, Pinney, Purdy, Robinson, Rosenbaum, Rust, Spain, Stanley, Sturgill, Vitanza, Wallace, Williams.

Absent with notification: Senators Connally, Cordon, Garner.

- I. The meeting was called to order at 3:33 PM. Following the Chair's welcome Senator Ngan offered the invocation.
- II. The minutes of the Senate's December 2004 meeting, distributed earlier by e-mail, were unanimously approved.

III. Announcements:

A. Letter to Senator Norman. The Senate acknowledged, without comment, receiving a letter from a student supervisor at the Development Calling Center to Senator Norman to the effect that several alumni donors "request that Baylor Professors focus their time on teaching and let proper officials handle administrative responsibilities."

B. Termination of Internet Dial-up Service. The Senate has received several faculty complaints about the university's unilateral termination of telephone dial-up service for computer connections. Dr. Reagan Ramsower has been invited to a future Senate meeting and is expected to answer questions regarding the matter.

C. Spring Calendar. While bemoaning the proximity of this year's Spring and Easter breaks and the likelihood of considerable student absenteeism, Senators felt little could be done about the situation at this juncture.

IV. Old Business.

A. Resolution on Professional Classroom Conduct. Proposed by Senator Rosenbaum and seconded by Senator Cloud, the Senate voted unanimously, after minor text modifications to the original version, to adopt the following resolution:

"Baylor University Faculty Senate Resolution on Professional Classroom Behavior, January 18, 2005:

Because of Baylor University's long-standing commitment to academic freedom and responsibility; because of Baylor University's historical prominence in the Texas State Conference of the American Association of University Professors;

and in sympathy with the recent resolution of the 52nd Legislative Session of Student Congress requesting that Baylor University faculty members avoid classroom discussion of their personal views of the presidency of Robert Sloan; the 2004-05 Baylor Faculty Senate respectfully reminds Baylor University faculty members of their professional responsibility "not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject" (*AAUP Policy Documents and Reports*, 1990 edition, p. 3). This professional responsibility includes avoiding classroom discussions of personalities or controversies not academically relevant to course content."

B. Open Senate Meetings. After debate, the Senate voted without dissent (one abstention) to adopt a motion introduced by Senator Hanks and seconded by Senator Baldrige to form an ad hoc committee to study the feasibility of open Senate meetings. The committee will be chaired by Senator Stanley and have Senators Baldrige, Chonko, Diaz-Granados, Lehr and Sturgill as additional members. It was the sense of the Senate that new procedures, if adopted, would not take effect before the Fall 2005 semester.

V. Committee/Liaison Reports

A. Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Environment (Senator McGlashan, chair): Senator McGlashan, both on behalf of her committee and the "Disciplines Committee" under Dr. Garland, presented a one-paragraph statement (below in italics) and accompanying instructions for deans and department chairs to be transmitted to the Provost for inclusion in forthcoming academic catalogues. Pending the expected endorsement by the committees involved of minor editorial changes, the Senate approved unanimously on a voice vote the following statements:

"At Baylor University, we strive to prepare leaders for our world who are knowledgeable, can think critically, and are wise and compassionate. We prepare graduates who will lead their fields in practice and relevant research. This preparation may require inclusion of sensitive and controversial realities and human behavior, but such inclusion does not constitute endorsement by the university."

Individual programs and departments may provide specific examples of areas of study, research, and exposure to human diversity, experiences, and life courses particularly relevant, necessary and appropriate in their discipline. These examples may be provided in various published venues such as catalogues and student handbooks in order to guide students in their selection of courses, majors, and professional disciplines."

B. Faculty Committee on Enrollment Management (Senator Stanley, chair): Freshmen applications, acceptances and deposits are running considerably ahead of last year's pace. No official retention figures are yet available for the spring semester, nor is the anticipated discount rate known for the incoming freshman class.

C. Faculty Committee on Physical Facilities (Senator Brown, chair): A town hall meeting to discuss the renovation of the bookstore will be held on January 26. Several Senators commented on the very high prices the bookstore charges for used textbooks.

D. Faculty Committee on Student Life and Services (Senator Chonko, chair): The committee is in the process of being constituted at this time.

E. Liaison Reports. No reports.

VI. New Business. After obtaining unanimous consent to discuss agenda items out of order, the Chair proceeded with the following New Business items:

A. SACS Committee Report. Senator Cloud indicated the SACS ad hoc committee has not met recently and its report remains in the form in which it was originally concluded (confidential; controlled Senator access only because of its sensitive nature). Certain recent incidents may be added to the documentation as warranted. The Senate Executive will meet to recommend what should be done with the report in the future. Such a recommendation would be presented to the Senate at its March or April meeting. The general sense of the Senate remains that the document should not be shared with anyone unless circumstances emerge that would suggest the desirability of limited or general disclosure.

B. Elizabeth Davis Document. Discussion of Vive-Povost Davis' report about extension of the tenure clock was postponed because of time restraints.

C. Summer Contracts Revision. Senators discussed the insertion of a clause into faculty summer teaching contracts that renders the contract null and void if faculty do not meet unspecified enrollment targets in one or more of their classes. To all appearances, no elected representatives of the faculty were involved in the decision to revise the contracts. Upon a motion by Senator Robinson, seconded by Senator Baldrige, the Senate adopted overwhelmingly on a voice vote the following resolution and asked the chair to present it to the Provost:

"The Faculty Senate requests to be informed in writing by the administration how the faculty were involved in the decision to make a significant change to summer teaching contracts."

D. Senate Elections Commission. The Senate appointed Senators Mathis and Wallace to the newly created Senate Elections Commission. Besides Senator Rust (*ex officio*), Drs. Fred Curtis and Steve Gardner will be invited to serve as representatives from outside the College of Arts and Sciences.

E. BU-PP 708, 714. After discussing the recommendations of the joint Provost Office/Senate Committee to reconcile provisions in the faculty handbook with the personnel manual, the Senate voted to postpone a decision on the revised BU-PP 708 document over unclear wording, while adopting BU-PP 714 (revised) without dissent on a voice vote after minor wording changes.

F. Other Business. Regarding Baylor documents on financial exigency, it was suggested that former Senate chair Chris Buddo may be in possession of such documents.-- Apparently tenure decisions have already been made and communicated to the faculty members involved. Senator McGlashan inquired whether colleagues have a right to know when and whether candidates were awarded tenure.-- The tenure appeals policy approved by the Senate has been sent on to the Provost but apparently awaits further action there.

VII. The meeting was adjourned at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric C. Rust
Secretary, Faculty Senate