

MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING

February 18, 2003, 3:30 p.m., in Cashion 303

Present: Senators Abbott-Kirk, Baldrige, Benesh, Bowery, Brown, Cannon, Connally, Cooper, Matthew Cordon (for Auld), Cox, Dunn, Gilbreath, Haynes, Jacobson, Lehr, Longfellow, McGlashan, McManness, Ngan, Norman, Patton, Pinney, Robinson, Rust, Spain, Stanley, Tatum, Weaver (Chair), Williams, Wilson, Young

Absent with notification: Senators Beck, Sharp, Walbesser

I. The meeting was called to order at 3:33 p.m.

II. The minutes of the January meeting, distributed earlier by e-mail, were unanimously approved.

III. Old Business

A: Great Texts. In response to last month's Senate resolution, the Council of Deans assures the Senate that curriculum changes will be processed through the appropriate curriculum committees and will be voted on by the faculty of the relevant academic units. The Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Environment (Senator McGlashan, Chair) will seek to clarify whether this policy has been properly applied to recent curriculum modifications in the School of Music, especially with regard to Great Texts requirements. Concerns surfaced that a similar situation may have developed in the School of Education.

B: E-Mail Problems. Senator Patton, former chair of the Technology Planning Council, has agreed to undertake an investigation into Baylor's recent e-mail crashes. If necessary, he will involve external consultants in his inquiry.

C: Spring 2003 Enrollment. Senator Cannon reported that spring enrollment is down, paced by an unusually high number of freshmen who did not return for their second semester. Applications and admissions for the fall 2003 semester, as well as mean SAT scores, run ahead of last year's figures at this time, while deposits are down. Staff officials point to a nationwide trend, the new tuition structure and the sluggish economy to explain the present situation and expect more encouraging figures later this year.

D: Hiring Report. The Council of Deans discussed the Senate's Hiring Report (Stanley Committee) at its February meeting. As suggested in the report, Dr. Truell Hyde will now be sitting in on administrative interviews involving candidates in the natural sciences. Given conflicting interpretations of administration guidelines, for instance in Modern Foreign Languages, the Senate chair will ask the Provost to clarify whether

applicants for faculty positions are required to comment both on the Baylor Mission Statement and the 2012 Vision Statement, or only on the former.

E: Provost Invitations. The Provost and the Provost-Designate have agreed to address the Senate at its March and April meetings, respectively.

F: Medical Benefits Task Force. Based on a document circulated earlier by e-mail, the Senate approved in principle the proposed composition and charge of the Medical Benefits Task Force. Its chair is yet to be determined.

G: Senate Elections. Senator Rust reported that the current round of Senate elections is proceeding on schedule with remarkably high numbers of candidates running for office. Results will be available in early March.

IV. Committee/Liaison Reports

A. Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Environment (Senator McGlashan, chair): No report.

B. Faculty Committee on Enrollment Management (Senator Cannon, chair): See item III. C. above.

C. Faculty Committee on Physical Facilities (Senator Beck, chair): No report.

D. Faculty Committee on Student Life and Services (Senator Wilson, chair): The class schedule will no longer be available in a printed version, only on-line. It was suggested that a PDF file version be made available for faculty and students who may wish to print out a partial or complete schedule for themselves.

E. Liaison Reports

A: Athletic Council (Senator Dunn): The current deficit of the Athletic Department remains sizable. It may appear larger than it actually is because Baylor does include tuition charges for student-athletes in the budget, while some other schools do not. An important but intangible factor is the attention and recognition college sports bring to Baylor for recruitment and other purposes.

B: Staff Council (Senator Abbott-Kirk): No report.

C: Personnel Benefits and Compensation (Senators Ngan/Williams): Senator Ngan encourages faculty to supply feedback to Richard Amos regarding recent changes in medical benefits, including dental.

V. New Business

A: Deficiency Reports. The administration encourages full participation by faculty in returning student deficiency reports. The current compliance level is about 75 per cent. The data, particularly with regard to attendance and expected grades, are important for student advisement, student retention, as well as compliance with INS requirements.

B: Colloquy. The colloquy organized by the Law School to honor the Provost upon his retirement will be held as scheduled April 10-11. The Provost welcomes the prospect of seeing a number of controversial issues raised in the proceedings.

C: Small Group Meeting with President Sloan. Besides taking note of a number of faculty concerns, President Sloan anticipates a continuation and even extension of present summer school teaching and is confident about Baylor's financial outlook despite the depressed state of the economy.

D: Non Tenure-Track Assistant Professors. The administration is proposing a new faculty classification of non tenure-track assistant professors who would be hired on three-year contracts (once renewable). Senators voiced a variety of concerns about the measure, not least its implication for the status of lecturers and senior lecturers, hiring procedures, benefits, scholarly expectations, the integrity of the tenure process, etc. Upon a motion by Senator Cooper, seconded by Senator Baldrige, the Senate voted unanimously to form a joint Senate/AAUP ad hoc committee (Senators Cooper, Tatum, Weaver) to investigate the nature of the dilemma that apparently has led to the administration's proposal and to see if there is a better way to address this problem.

In a related matter, Senators once more expressed concern as well as consternation over the quality and quantity of scholarly expectations for "A" and "B" profile faculty, especially since representatives of the higher administration themselves appear unclear or inconsistent when it comes to formulating standards and guidelines. The Senate chair has agreed to put together a straightforward document that summarizes expectations for the two faculty profiles and will seek to have it approved and signed by the Provost.

Further discussion centered on the retroactive pay raises, purportedly up to 10 percent, that some faculty received in October 2002 while most others did not. No clear principle emerged in the discussion to pinpoint which specific group of beneficiaries was targeted and why, nor an answer to the question why the measure was enacted in a secretive way.

E: Committee on Committees. The committee is in the process of finalizing university-wide committee assignments for 2003-2004. Two Senate meetings are constitutionally required to discuss and then vote on the report.

F: Other Business:

- (1) Senator Cannon reminded the Senate of the need communicate better and more frequently with the rest of the faculty to exchange information and suggestions.
- (2) Senator Gilbreath raised the issue of allowing visitors attend the meetings of the Senate. Upon a motion by Senator Tatum, seconded by Senator Gilbreath, the matter was tabled and will be taken up at the next meeting.

(3) Senator Gilbreath reported on the circulation of, and response to, the essays he has composed as a basis for a discussion of matters affecting Baylor's future.

(4) Senator Tatum reiterated information about the National Conference on Academic Freedom at Religious Institutions, to be held at the University of San Diego, March 13-15, 2003.

(5) Senator Cox advised that information about the third small group meeting of Senators with President Sloan will be available soon.

(6) The Senate chair announced that President Sloan's State of the University Address is scheduled for April 16, 2003.

(7) Senator Baldrige pointed out that the personal information requested on the latest faculty survey unnecessarily compromises confidentiality assurances and likely will lead to a low return rate.

VI. The meeting was adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric C. Rust
Secretary