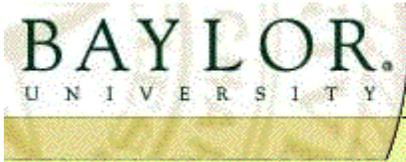


2002



Faculty Senate

Newsletter

March, 2002

The 2001-02 Faculty Senate officers and membership:

Chair: David Longfellow (Arts and Sciences)
Chair-elect: Charles Weaver (Arts and Sciences)
Secretary: Eric C. Rust (Arts and Sciences)
Publicity: Pat Sharp (Education)

Arts and Sciences:

Robert Baldrige
Rosalie Beck
Anne-Marie Bowery
Raymond J. Cannon
William F. Cooper
Tom Hanks

Business:

Joe A. Cox
Mark G. Dunn
Kent Gilbreath
Van Gray
Charles W. Stanley
Jane G. Williams

David L. Longfellow	<i>Education:</i>
Jay B. Losey	K. Fred Curtis
Ann McGlashan	Eric L. Robinson
Linda McManness	Pat T. Sharp
Jim Patton	<i>Engineering and Computer Science:</i>
Richard B. Riley	Don Farris
Eric C. Rust	<i>Law:</i>
Charles Weaver	Marianne Auld
F. Ray Wilson II	<i>Libraries:</i>
Joe C. Yelderman, Jr.	Kathy Sparkman
David Young	<i>Music:</i>
	Jane Abbott-Kirk
	Michael Jacobson
	<i>Nursing:</i>
	Linda Haynes
	<i>Truett Seminary:</i>
	Liz Ngan

Comments by David Longfellow, Faculty Senate Chair

The Faculty Senate and the Baylor chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) sponsored a workshop on Monday, March 13, by Mary Burgan, the General Secretary of AAUP. Preparations for the workshop began in October, when we first learned that Dr. Burgan would be in Houston on March 11-12 for the Texas AAUP meeting. Turnout was respectable for the first class day after Spring Break, and 40-50 Baylor faculty shared their concerns and opinions on the topic of Shared Governance. It was also a valuable opportunity to

learn (or recall) how AAUP sees its role, and what tasks and responsibilities it undertakes (and which ones it doesn't), as well as how its personnel perceive the shape and direction of contemporary American higher education. Faculty who care about university governance, academic freedom and tenure, changes in the financing of colleges and universities, faculty hiring and firing, salaries, student recruitment and retention, and college athletics cannot find a better forum in which to familiarize themselves with these issues than AAUP. Several Baylor faculty members over the years, including Paula Woods [ENG], and Lynn Tatum [REL] have played an active role in the state and national organization.

Individual professors or groups of faculty tend to turn to AAUP (and the Faculty Senate) when they encounter difficulties, which is natural enough, or when they check the annual salary reports in the Chronicle of Higher Education, but they (and these bodies) would also benefit from a regular and continuing relationship, particularly one that fosters ongoing communication between administrators and faculty as a means of lessening misunderstandings and contributing the governance of their schools. Let me urge you as faculty members to join AAUP at both the local and national levels, if you haven't already done so. While the national membership fee is not insignificant (\$146 for full-time faculty in Texas), it helps to fund Association activities and research that benefit university faculty generally. As we seek to fulfill Vision 2012, each of the areas of University life I listed above will be a major topic of discussion and debate within the Baylor community, and informed faculty input is indispensable to the successful achievement of our goals. As Senate chair this year, I've been impressed by the number of our colleagues who seriously investigate and gather information on particular issues, without that work necessarily gaining the wider audience in the Baylor community it deserves.

The AAUP website (<http://www.aaup.org>) has more information.

Senate Elections

About 40% of Baylor faculty voted in the March Senate elections, choosing new senators from Arts and Sciences (Greg Benesh [PHY], Larry Lehr [ENV], Kevin Pinney [CHE]), Engineering and Computer Sciences (Henry Walbesser), Education (Dale Connally [HHPR]) and the Libraries (Ellen Brown). In its role as the representative voice of Baylor's faculty, the Senate benefits immensely from the regular addition of new viewpoints and personnel, and it welcomes these senators-elect to its deliberations, beginning in the fall. At its May meeting, the Senate will select its officers for the 2002-2003 school year.

Tenure Decisions

At a time of the semester when tenure candidates in various schools and departments are receiving good, or bad, news about their futures at Baylor, the primary concern of the Faculty Senate remains the effectiveness and reliability of the system of evaluation for tenure. In recent years, the Senate was instrumental

in refining the current system of annual reviews and letters, meetings with deans (or their representatives), and submission of final evaluations and recommendations to the Tenure Committee. While it is sometimes said that no tenure candidate should be “absolutely certain” of receiving tenure, basic fairness requires that candidates who fulfill the expectations of their departments and schools (as these were explained to them), and receive the regular and publicly expressed support of their colleagues, have a reasonable expectation of tenure. Certainly no candidate should be denied tenure for reasons that are not fully and clearly explained to him or her, and those reasons should reflect ongoing and repeated concerns expressed (and not resolved) during the evaluation process.

Senate Activity to Date

The Faculty Senate’s work this year has focused on a variety of issues and projects. Some proposals these have secured Senate approval and been sent to the Administration for consideration. Others are still subject to Senate debate. The principal ones include:

1. Implementation of the Senate Resolution on Cheating. Last spring, the Senate affirmed its support for the University Honor Code while urging the organizers of Welcome Week to devote a session to the challenges of academic integrity. It also recommended that faculty be encouraged to devote time at the beginning to each semester to emphasizing the importance of honesty in class work. This fall, the Provost created a Committee on Academic Integrity to provide ongoing attention to these issues, and to implement Senate recommendations.
2. After consultation with Baylor faculty and at universities and colleges, the Senate passed a resolution recommending that Baylor adopt a thirteen-point, plus/minus grading scale (A+,A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F). Baylor is the only university in the Big Twelve, and one of a steadily declining number of universities nationwide, which continues to use a plus-only (B+ and C+) system. This proposal is currently awaiting action by the Council of Deans.
3. The Senate is completing a survey of department heads to gather data on faculty hiring. The survey is intended to identify factors that attracted (or ultimately failed to attract) candidates to Baylor, percentages of successful and unsuccessful searches, the time required to fill vacancies, possible problems with the current hiring procedure, and changes that might lead to improvements in it.
4. In the fall semester, expressions of concern regarding perceived disparities in salaries and raises, particularly in regard to long-serving members of the faculty, led to the creation of a Senate Ad hoc Committee on Faculty Equity. The recent Faculty Classification system appears to address some of these concerns. Although the Senate was not invited to participate in the development and adoption of that plan, we are hopeful that anxiety that the changing profile of the Baylor faculty lead to inequitable treatment of any group of professors within it

will be allayed as the plan is put into operation. The Senate has directed its Faculty Equity Committee to monitor the implementation of the classification system.

5. The Senate is currently considering the recommendations of the Tenured Faculty Development Task Force. That body was charged with developing a framework (beyond the annual reviews carried out by department heads) for supporting and evaluating the work of tenured members of the faculty. The subsequent announcement of the Faculty Classification system, and the clear need for a more reliable and uniform means of assessing and improving faculty teaching skills, methods, and results (particularly in the case of A-profile faculty) than the current system of student evaluations, have made this task more urgent. We hope the Senate will be able to make its recommendations to the Administration by the end of the semester.

6. The Senate is revising proposals for making treatment of part-time faculty across the campus more uniform, with the aim of integrating them as much as possible into the wider Baylor community.

7. The Senate is discussing the possibility of reviving faculty evaluations of administrators. The Division of Human Resources, in cooperation with the Senate, initiated such a system a number of years ago. It was subsequently abandoned, after one round of evaluations, when the low return rate deprived the results of statistical reliability. This is surely a problem that can be overcome. A system that provides administrators with more than anecdotal evidence of the reception and effectiveness of their work should help to improve both. Giving faculty the opportunity to regularly assess the work of administrators should improve communication and focus faculty attention on the concerns and problems facing major academic and administrative units and the University as a whole.

David Longfellow, Faculty Chair

Faculty Senate Committees

Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Environment
Joe Cox, Chair

Faculty Committee on Enrollment Management
Ray Cannon, Chair

Faculty Committee on Physical Facilities
Joe Yelderman, Chair

Faculty Committee on Student Life and Services
Ray Wilson, Chair

Senate Liaison to the Athletic Council
Mark Dunn

Senate Liaison and Appointee to Staff Council
Jane Abbott-Kirk

Senate Liaison to Personnel, Benefits and Compensation Committee
Fred Curtis

Senate Liaison to Santa's Workshop
Van Gray

Faculty Senate Meeting Dates
All meetings scheduled for Cashion 303 at 3:30 p.m.

April 16, 2002
May 7, 2002

President's State of the University Address

3:30 - 5:00p.m.

April 18, Barfield Room (BDSC)

Faculty Senate Website:

http://www.baylor.edu/~Fac_Senate/senatehome.html

The Senate website has minutes, meeting dates, membership, and other important information. Please send suggestions to: Pat_Sharpe@Baylor.edu.

The Senate wishes to thank:

Dan Williamson for assistance with the Faculty Senate web page.
Rona Stefka for assistance with the Faculty Senate Newsletter.