



Faculty Senate

Newsletter

March 1997

The 1996-97 Faculty Senate officers and membership:

Chair: Jeter Basden (Arts and Sciences)

Chair-elect: Chris Buddo (Music)

Secretary: Karen Johnson (Business)

Publicity: Jay Losey (Arts & Sciences)

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| <i>Arts and Sciences:</i> | | <i>Engineering and Computer Science:</i> |
| <i>Dawn Adams</i> | | <i>Don Farris</i> |
| <i>Linda Adams</i> | <i>Business:</i> | |
| <i>Robert "Bob" Baird</i> | <i>Elizabeth Davis</i> | |
| <i>Lewis "Bud" Barker</i> | <i>Don Edwards</i> | <i>Law:</i> |
| <i>Nancy Chinn</i> | <i>Michael Robinson</i> | <i>Elizabeth Youngsdale</i> |
| <i>John Fox</i> | <i>Chet Miller</i> | <i>Libraries:</i> |
| <i>William Jensen</i> | <i>G. W. Willis</i> | <i>Kathy Hillman</i> |
| <i>Phillip Johnson</i> | | <i>Music:</i> |
| <i>David Longfellow</i> | <i>Education:</i> | <i>Jerry Gordon</i> |
| <i>Dan McGee</i> | <i>Duane Knudson</i> | <i>Nursing:</i> |
| <i>Howard Rolf</i> | <i>Grover "Rusty" Pippin</i> | <i>Linda Garner</i> |
| <i>Sara Stone</i> | <i>Jim Wiley</i> | <i>Truett Seminary:</i> |
| <i>Patricia Wallace</i> | | <i>A. J. "Chip" Conyers</i> |
| <i>Joe Yelderman</i> | | |

Notes from Senate Chair Basden:

The Spring semester has found the Faculty Senate working with the administration to bring closure to some unfinished projects. Among those unfinished projects under active review are the following:

o Core Courses, Transfer Credit, Summer School Program Recommendations

Two reports are being reviewed by the administration. One is from a Joint Task Force-University Curriculum Committee and Enrollment Management Committee (co-chairs Kathy Whipple and Dennis Myers). The second is from the Enrollment Incentives Task Force (chair Jim Truitt). The Curriculum Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences has been asked to give attention to these matters.

o Faculty Handbook (and revised policies included therein)

The proposed Handbook, with revisions as acted upon by the Senate, is now in the office of the Senior Counsel for review.

o Tenure Study

The Tenure Policy Review Task Force (Greg Benesh, chair), is at work. Three senators (Kathy Hillman, Jay Losey, Dan McGee) are members of the Task Force.

o Faculty Grievance Procedure (BU-PPM 712)

A revised policy, as proposed by the Senate, is under review by the office of the Senior Counsel.

o Faculty Dismissal Policy (BU-PPM 705)

A revised policy, as proposed by the Senate, is under review by the office of the Senior Counsel. The Senate Executive Committee and the Chair, Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Environment, met with the Provost and the Senior Counsel on February 12 to review further this proposal.

o Study of Student Evaluation of Faculty/Course Process

The Senate has raised some concerns about the current process. The Provost has taken the concerns to the Council of Deans for review. The Provost is in the process of naming a committee to study the evaluation instrument and the procedures for its use.

o Concerns about student absences from class for university-related activities

The Senate has raised concerns about student absences from class for university-related activities. The Council of Deans has appointed a study group to address these concerns.

The work of the Senate has continued to focus on issues that are of concern to faculty. One of our goals is to provide an appropriate forum for issues to be addressed and to be resolved in ways that benefit the common good of the university.

Spring is also the time for Senate elections. If your academic unit is filling a vacancy for next year, please be sure to cast your ballot by Friday, March 7. If the Senate is to be most effective, it needs to be fully representative. To be representative, the Senate needs your vote!

Our remaining Spring meetings are set for March 25, April 15, and May 13. Please let us hear from you as you have matters needful of attention by the Faculty Senate. Thank you for giving us this opportunity of service to our university.

Jeter Basden, Chair

Faculty Senate

Administration Matters

Comments from Vice President for University Marketing Madden

Better Students Result from a Partnership Between Faculty and Recruiting Staff

Coffeepot conversation among the faculty frequently goes along the lines of, "If we had better students, then we could . . ." and then it goes to, "If we had fewer poor students, then we wouldn't have to . . ." and it frequently ends with, "I don't mind helping students who are not the best and the brightest fulfill their potential, but it sure would be great to have a whole class of National Merit Scholars . . ." Everyone has taken part in a similar conversation and it is of two minds that many of us live our lives as teachers. We think of how much better our classes could be if all of our students were the very best and the very brightest; but at other times we recognize that some of our favorite contributions have come in the form of average students who had weaknesses that we were able to help them overcome.

We constantly try to balance quality and quantity in admitting students to Baylor. Consider the following:

Fact: To support our present size and structure as a university, we need about 2,500 freshmen and about 500 undergraduate transfers each fall. Too few and we fail to meet our budget, too many and our quality suffers.

Fact: We have historically chosen to be a non-elitist institution which means we generally try to admit students who are children of graduates, dependents of faculty and staff, children of historic constituencies of Baylor, and disadvantaged minorities as long as we feel they have any chance of succeeding at Baylor. Our legacy and our diversity depend on this non-elitist attitude.

Fact: If we reduce the freshman class, some programs are likely to drop below critical mass and be difficult to sustain economically or pedagogically.

Fact: There is a limit to the capacity of our freshman class. This results from housing, laboratories, classroom space, and the number of faculty teaching freshman courses.

Fact: The Freshman Challenge Program offers a chance for some students to earn the right to continue at Baylor who might not qualify unconditionally. Some of our most successful graduates have entered conditionally through the FCP.

We admit a certain number of students each year (5,951 in the summer and fall of 1996) but we have no guarantees of how many of them will ultimately enroll. We do know that approximately 37% of our applicants only apply to Baylor and that the average Baylor applicant only applies to 2.3 schools. The average private school throughout the United States admits students who have applied to an average 6.7 schools. This is an indicator of both the loyalty that our historical constituencies have to Baylor and also the potential

difficulty in forecasting what we will encounter as we continue to broaden the pool of applicants.

The bottom line is that we could truncate the least qualified students and avoid some difficulties in the classroom, but the same friends who send us these students also send us some of our best because of their historical relationships to our campus. We can drop the total number admitted and choose only the very best applicants but that may result in a serious downsizing of our faculty as well as the elimination of a number of programs as they would be unable to maintain viability. The upshot of this situation is that we can gradually raise academic standards and get students who will perform well in our system. If we are to be a comprehensive institution, we cannot make rapid, drastic changes in the quality of students admitted without suffering other consequences.

Faculty, Department Chairs, and Deans presently help by working with recruiters and admissions counselors to impress highly-qualified students of their opportunities at Baylor. Faculty, staff, and students can help by passing along names of outstanding students to Recruiting and Admissions so that we will continue to have a flow of highly-qualified applicants in our admission pool. Further, faculty can help by simply holding high grade standards, demanding the best of their students. Grade inflation continues to undermine the reputation of Baylor as it does other institutions of higher education.

By working together, faculty, staff, and administration can have a significantly positive effect on the quality of students admitted to Baylor.

Stan Madden

Vice President for University Marketing

Publicity notes:

Faculty, Karen Johnson, Faculty Senate Secretary, has mailed Faculty Senate election ballots and would like to remind you all to vote and return ballots to her by Friday, March 7. No ballots received after Friday will be counted.

Dates of Senate meetings for 1997:

(All meetings are scheduled for the Conference Room of the Blume Conference Center. Refreshments will be served at 3:15 p.m. Meetings begin promptly at 3:30 p.m.)

March 25

April 15

May 13

All academic areas of Baylor schools have elected members on the Senate. Thirty-two members serve staggered, three-year terms. No more than two faculty members may serve from a single department. Members may serve two consecutive three-year terms, after which they cannot be re-elected for one year.

I encourage all faculty to contact any senator and let him/her know your views. We represent you, but cannot present your views on pressing matters unless you communicate with us. One possibility is through e-mail. All senators have e-mail addresses and would like to hear from you.

John Thorburn, Classics, has been extremely helpful in updating the Faculty Senate website. You can access it at the following address:
<http://www3.baylor.edu/departments/Fac_Senate/senatehome.html>.

The Faculty Senate would like to thank John publicly for his contribution.

Finally, I would like to thank Leigh Ann Marshall, CCIS, for her expertise in preparing this attractive newsletter. She used pagemaker to create a "book-like" format and used Designer Club clipart to create the border.

Jay Losey

Publicity Officer

Faculty Senate Website

http://www3.baylor.edu/~Fac_Senate/senatehome.html

Please send suggestions to buddy_gilchrest@Baylor.edu.