

Baylor University Faculty Senate Minutes
11 December 2012 • 2:00 p.m. • Cashion 110

- I. Call to Order: Dr. Todd Still, Chair.
- II. Absent: Dwight Allman, Mary Margaret Shoaf
Attending as a substitute: Claudia Beal (for Lori Spies)
- III. Invocation: Dr. Hope Johnston
- IV. Approval of Minutes from the 13 November 2012 Meeting: Joe Coker and Mark Taylor noted that they were actually here for that meeting, and the minutes have since been amended.
- V. Old Business
 - A. Master Teacher Policy
 - 1. Dr. Still noted that the Executive Council has considered it, and it went to the Council of Deans for suggestions, and it is now being re-tooled by Dr. Bennighof. The policy will probably become effective in 2013.
 - B. Plus/Minus Grades
 - 1. The Provost has passed on our document to the Deans' Council, where a committee has been constituted to consider it; the Provost expects action soon.
 - C. BU-PP 705: Dr. Baird's revisions have gone to Drs. Bennighof and Davis.
 - D. Staff Grievance/University Grievance Policy: Ditto above.
 - E. Electronic Course Evaluations During the Summer
 - 1. "In the works," reported Dr. Still.
 - F. Selection Committee for Outstanding Theses and Dissertations
 - 1. Regarding Senator Lori Spies's suggestion that the M.A. level study document be considered for this award: Chris Rios, chair of the Committee, responded that this concern, and others that Dr. Still raised with him, will be taken into consider by the committee.
 - 2. Dr. Still asked for a motion and second, then a vote, after reviewing the committee's report to date. No success: to Dr. McGlashan's query about the involvement of M.A. programs, and responding to Sen. Barry Harvey's reinforcement of needing to involve M.A. programs, Dr. Still suggested that this concern, as well as Senator Thies's concern, would be taken up by the committee. Considerable discussion followed; concerns included "Will the sciences compete with the humanities? Will outside evaluators be involved? How will that affect the time frame? How will

outside evaluators be involved?” Other questions arose, from several quarters; the one which met most approval was “Why do we want one more committee to eat faculty time?” Another: “Could we have an analysis of cost-benefit?”

Clearly, the Senate was not immediately taken with this idea. No vote was taken; Dr. Still will take the proposal back to the committee with our reservations. Sen. Barry Harvey suggested the formation of a study committee: Dr. Still was favorable.

Dr. Still sought the sense of the Senate: “As a Senate as a whole, we might not be wholly opposed to this proposal.” Even that met with a less-than-lukewarm reception.

Dr. Still added that if we do not approve this committee, it will not be formed; ours is the decision in this area. One Senator added a comment that expressed many Senators’ views: “We ought not be trying to settle details of this committee’s proposal; they should do their homework.” The sense of the Senate was one of complete approval.

VI. New Business

Final Exam Schedule: Senate Walter first raised this concern; she again noted it, further developing the issue as below:

1. Why do we take so long to do final exams?
2. Why do final grades for seniors have to be turned in during finals, some of which seniors are still taking finals from 4-6 on that day?
3. Why do departmental exams have to take up a daylight exam time, when so many universities give departmental finals in the evening?
4. Another Senator noted that some faculty are giving their finals on the last day of class: the Senate as a whole deplored that fact, but did not think it was related to the issues Dr. Walter raised. Another senator later added a comment to the effect that this policy on the part of some of our faculty makes the remainder of us look like villains. He protested the practice.

Discussion of issues 1-3—often distinctly irate—followed. Many Senators noted that the three issues are all calendar issues, and are interrelated.

Dr. Still asked Senator David Hurtt, who chairs the committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility, who had said that he could easily review final exam practices in other Big 12 schools, to do so.

Dr. Beck suggested that the Registrar should notify chairs when faculty leave town without posting senior grades. The registrar should simply report such

lapses to chairs. One senator, admitting that he had once transgressed in that way, noted that the Registrar DOES make contact with chairs when a faculty member neglects to send in the senior grades. So there seems little need to pursue that measure.

Dr. Still, trying to move the Senate on, suggested moving the January 2013 Senate meeting from the 15th Jan to the 22nd Jan (the 15th is the second day of classes). His suggestion was approved all 'round.

VII. Reports

A. Chair Report (Dr. Still): Omitted in order to save time.

B. Student Life (Dr. Wood): He reported that enrollment is the highest in history, and the retention rate is 86.6 percent. We are at 102% residence hall population; we're beginning a 10-year renovation of the residence halls, so we are losing ground, even though we will have a growth of 102 hall spaces. Sen. Wood said of the October parent-student-faculty gathering that 3,250 families attended—a fine experience for Baylor, Dr. Wood suggested.

1. Safety: Dr. Wood noted that Diadeloso has become a safety problem, esp. on Tenth St.; Student Government is trying to remedy the problem. The problem, one Senator suggested, is that the “shadow Dia” on Tenth St. contains alcohol, and many students wish to retain that element of their celebration.

2. Dr. Barry Harvey noted that motorized vehicles are not only moving on pedestrian walkways where they are prohibited, they are also entering sidewalks and even the pedestrian tunnel at one of the residence halls. A discussion followed about illicit motorized usage of many areas of campus.

3. Dr. Still raised two more concerns:

1. The Senate needs to respond on two proposals from the Student Government:

a. Student Senate desires to allow more than one correspondence course to be taken at a time, so that students on medical leave or on family leave can take more than one correspondence course at a time. Dr. Still clarified the nature of correspondence courses. He added that the Student Government would like for students to be able to take up to three correspondence courses at a time, while remaining fully enrolled. One can only take non-Baylor correspondence courses while NOT enrolled at Baylor.

A Senator suggested that the Senate needs further information concerning correspondence courses, and that we ask that Student Government provide it to the Senate. Dr. Still will relay this to them.

The second issue from Student Government: students who miss classes for University-sponsored events are finding themselves docked points in "participation" owing to their absences. Dr. Still suggested that this issue is a syllabus issue. Dr. Still suggested that we simply send this back to the Student Senate: "we are not inclined to respond since the issue is under each faculty member's purview."

C. Enrollment Management/Staff Council (Patton)

1. Senator Patton noted that the Staff Council voted on its bylaws and constitution, an important issue. Sue Koehler added her assenting voice to Jim's comments.
2. No report on Enrollment Management.

D. Athletic Council (Neubert): The meeting reflected a general satisfaction with the athletes' performance on and off the field. A concern for pluses and minuses was voiced; does a C- reduce or prohibit a student's entitlement to participate in sports? A frustrating conversation, said Sen. Neubert, because the policy had been approved by the Senate and passed on before the athletics people ever heard of it.

The Council noted that they would have to give up two weeks of an athletic season if the finals continued to last for so long, coupled with dead week and some faculty members' persistence in giving finals on the last class day. The conversation ended, inconclusively.

E. Admissions (Dr. Debra Burleson): No report; the committee is handling individual issues as they arise. Otherwise, Senator Burleson would like to postpone her report until the January Meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

Submitted by Tom Hanks, Secretary, Faculty Senate