

**Baylor University Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
Cashion 506**

**Senate Reception  
February 14, 2023  
3:00 pm.  
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**Senate Meeting  
February 14, 2023  
3:30pm-5:00pm**

Present: Holly Collins, Gia Chevis, Coretta Pittman, Ann Theriot, George Cobb, Sam Perry, Karena Malavanti, Derek Dodson, Ann Shoemaker, Sara Alexander (Heidi Marcum), Dwight Allman, Erica Ancira, Brad Bolen, Jeremy Counsellor, Gerald Cleaver, Adrienne Duvall, Tisha Emerson, Bruce Evans, Sarah Ford, LesLee Funderburk, Christy Gantt, Brian Garner, Chris Hansen, Julie Holcomb, Tamara Hodges, Kristi Humphreys, Karon LeCompte, Michael Long, Elissa Madden, Ann McGlashan, Lourenço Paz, Matthew Piech, Denyse Rodgers, Cindy Riemenschneider (Carolyn Turner), Keith Schubert, Lynn Tatum, Jamie Van Eyck, Anzhong Wang, Lauren Weber, Mariah Humphries, Kevin Tankersley, Kimberly Black, Bob Kane, Scott Gibson

Absent: Anzhong Wong

- I. Call to Order: 3:30 p.m.
- II. Invocation: (Senator Evans) 3:32 p.m.
- III. Approval of January Minutes (Senator Perry): 3:35 p.m.
  - a. McGlashan and Rodgers corrections
  - b. Minutes approved with Senator Chevis making motion and Senator Pittman seconding
- IV. Approval of substitute senator from LHSON – Dr. Meagan Soltwisch
  - a. Moved, Seconded, Motion Carries
- V. Guests: 3:40 p.m.
  - a. Board Chair – Mark Rountree, University President – Linda Livingstone, Provost – Nancy Brickhouse

Senator Collins- What are your top priorities for the Spring Semester  
President Livingstone- Focusing on the ongoing sustainability of R1 status, Illuminate, and creating sustainable models for continuing to develop and grow Baylor. We are also thinking about access and affordability. Student mental health

continues to be a high priority for us. We are asking how we can lean into the students' needs, as well as address the resources you all need.

Chair Rountree- Our priorities typically align with the administration's priorities. We are concerned with long term affordability and will be approving tuition and financial aid for the coming year. We will continue to focus on mental healthcare and initiatives. We are also set to approve the Board of Regents initiatives and leaders and welcoming new regents to include a new faculty regent as Sarah Dolan rotates off of the BoR. We are also continuing to look at Baylor telling its full history. We are looking at the representations on campus and following the work set forth by the commission. We are moving through with the newly commissioned statues.

Provost Brickhouse- We are in faculty hiring season. We are making 150 new hires and this is fun, but it's also a lot of work. We are also in the strategic enrollment implementation plan and working to increase student retention and graduation rates. We know that faculty play a huge role in that and we are building the class for Fall of 23. It looks like it will be a great class and we continue to recruit well and at a high level. We are also growing our graduate student profile.

Senator Collins- Recently in the news in Texas, we have seen state officials at odds with DEI and inclusion issues. Can you tell us about your approaches to that?

Chairman- Some of this is noise around the infringement of academic freedom. We are committed to academic freedom and remain committed to those principles. We are meeting Senator Creighton who is the chair of the education committee. We stressed the importance to Baylor and higher education of tenure and DEI and we made the case why those things are important. We also emphasized our role as a private institution to maintain autonomy with these issues in relation to tenure, DEI, and these lightning rod issues. We have emphasized that some of the things that are being proposed do not make sense for our university, state, country... We continue to advocate for academic freedom and think tenure is vital to the university.

President Livingstone- We are involved in these conversations particularly at the Big 12 level given that we are comprised of schools in Texas, Florida, West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Utah. Some of these states are much farther down the line in these conversations. We are in conversation with ICA and pushing on the ways in which these schools need to be able to make their own priorities. In Oklahoma the state legislature is pushing for 10 years of budgets on DEI spending. In conversation with Senator Creighton and he wanted to know, while qualifying that Baylor is a private institution, why tenure is important. I emphasized how

important the concept of tenure is for the structure of high ed. I also make clear to our public school colleagues that we emphasize the protection of tenure.

Provost Brickhouse- We do get state funding and including tuition equalization grants. So we cannot be cavalier about this. We brought in the most diverse class we of faculty and students that we ever have last year. We also know that we will continue to recruit students and that student populations will become more Black and Brown in the coming generations and we need to be able to recruit. Right now our DEI issues are concerned with recruitment and graduation rates. We will continue to focus on ways to enhance the Baylor experience for everyone.

Senator Collins- We do not hire on the basis of race and gender. How do we make sure that we are not running afoul of the law?

Provost Brickhouse- Here's the ticket. We need to attract the most diverse pool. Then we hire the best person. We cannot hire on the basis of race or any protected class.

President Livingstone - There is a case coming before the Supreme Court that will likely overturn Affirmative Action. We have been working

Senator Collins- How does the BoR approach diversity on the board?

Chairmen Rountree- I have been on the board for 7 years and we have worked continuously on this. We have increased diversity over that time and the board is now made up of over 40% women and 18% of ethnic minorities. We have continued to work on this in the same way as the administration to work on bringing and building in diverse pools to bring in candidates for Regents. We engaged a Board search firm and tasked and resourced them with creating a diverse pool for Regents. That firm has built a pool of over 20 candidates, some without ties to Baylor, but who are in alignment with mission fit.

Senator Collins- Strategic Enrollment Management Plan: Can you discuss the doom and gloom of the enrollment cliff? How do we plan to grow the university?

Provost Brickhouse- The Strategic Enrollment Management Plan is largely to do with undergraduate enrollment. We continue to build out the marketing plan. We are looking at the ways in which, and Jason Cook and his team is building marketing materials that emphasize undergraduate research. WE are also looking at way to increase the completion rates of applications from minority applicants. There tends to be a larger incompleteness rates of applications among these

population. We are continuing to work on growing graduate programs, particularly our strong professional programs.

President Livingstone- We are continuing to look at the enrollment cliff and there is hope that the original projections concerning the drop in enrollment are not going to be as severe as thought. However, we just have to see which students decide not to come to college. However, we do know that the more prestigious a university is, the more academically prominent it is, the less they are affected by these changes. We know that we need to emphasize R1 and how we have positioned ourselves as R1. We know that mission, as a Christian university positions us uniquely. We know that Power 5 athletics are attractive. Notre Dame is the only other school with a similar profile.

Provost Brickhouse- We know that the enrollment cliff is hitting in different ways in different spaces. I am on calls with the other Provosts in the Big 12 here and many are located in the Midwest. Places like Nebraska, Oklahoma, Kansas are hurting. We know that in Texas we are in a good place. It's place where the population of 18-year-olds is actually growing, especially in Houston, where we know that we also draw diverse students. We also know that international students provide room for growth.

Senator Collins- Continuing to look at the undergraduate education, can you talk about the place of our non-tenure track faculty in our plans and int the future?

Provost Brickhouse- We were again looking at marketing materials and these big grand materials being put together. We know that bringing in students is going to be about bringing in undergraduate students. We know that we are a university that cannot choose between research and serving our undergraduate students. WE know that our teaching faculty are important. It is like staffing a baseball team. Not everyone does the same thing, btu they are all vitally important.

Chair Rountree- Our priorities have not changed. Even prior to the approval of the Illuminate plan, we knew that we could not choose between research and teaching. We knew that we did not want to choose between research and our undergraduates. We talk about almost every quarter, the push and pull, it's almost like a seesaw.

President Livingstone- You cannot be strong research institution without good teaching and having faculty that service undergraduates. We know that with research and with people in labs and producing research that we need dedicated teaching faculty. People want to think that teaching and research are distinct from one another, but the more research we see we know that undergraduates view

research as part of the teaching experience. In US News & World Report we were one of the only universities that was top 25 in both teaching and research.

Senator Collins- We as regular faculty meetings can feel like Board Meetings are mystical or mysterious. In particular, could you clarify or maybe demystify the budget approval process.

Chair Rountree- The meeting takes place in this room so it's not that mystical! We have committees that are broken down into 7 divisions (listed) and a lot of the heavy lifting takes place in these committees and is done through their work. A lot of these things are happening with committees, but with the full board interacting, on Friday after the meetings on Wednesday and Thursday, we already into a well informed and in-depth place. As per the budget, the top 3 priorities are

- 1) Strategy- Our budget has to be a monetary reflection of our strategy. When we look at development or hiring researchers, we need to look at whether our actions are on message and in alignment with the fulfilment of our strategies.
- 2) We know that when you say yes to one thing, you have to say no to another. We want to make sure that we are prioritizing the correct things and know that we a
- 3) If something that comes along that changes our budget or circumstance in an episodic way- 3 years ago we did not see Covid coming as a line item. We then had millions and millions of dollars to change and move around our plans.

President Livingstone- We also now put together a 5-year comprehensive budget plan. We had that approved through the board. We review that plan every year in the context of a five-year plan and then try to adjust. So for example, inflation is higher than we expected. WE have to think about how that changes budgets and things we are trying to accomplish.

Senator- With all of the new hires what kind of financial considerations are being given to improving facilities?

Provost Brickhouse- Yes, there is capital planning starting. We are already planning what we need to do in these areas. It's very much top of mind.

President Livingstone- If I may add, for a long time we did not maintain appropriate strategic capital reserves. So, for many years we did not do the repairs and do capital repairs that ended up costing even more. We are now planning for projects that are modeling, remodeling, and what we may need.

Senator- What are some of the most critical aspects of address student mental health? Feel free to address faculty mental health, too.

President Livingstone- We integrated many of the facilities and the resources to bring them into the same places where they used to be spread out. WE are seeing more students with mental health issues both with regard to severity and frequency. We are seeing more issues with students already coming to us with diagnoses. We are seeing students coming in with more issues post-Covid and with social media, etc... We during Covid began including telehealth. We are keeping these resources because we know that students are getting more access to these resources and using them. There are students that would never go to in person counseling who may. Now be getting help this way. We are well resourced in terms of crisis care and we are trying to figure out how to get to students quickly.

Provost Brickhouse- The interesting thing here is that we have faculty who are doing research on these issues in terms of well-being and mental health in Robbins and Psychology. We are doing interesting work on sleep. Jim Marsh said if there was one thing he could fix it would be sleep. That sleeping and sleep issues could prevent many things. I don't know where this will go, but we know that sleep is a huge factor. As President Livingstone emphasizes, we need to catch these students earlier. Sleep can keep these students out of crisis. We are also looking at the ways in which dorms can be configured.

#### Q&A section

Senator- Is there any thought of increasing religious diversity on the board? We don't have any Jewish people on the BoR, is that right? Is there any talk of adding Muslims? They're a sister religion.

Chair Rountree- We have talked about potentially revising the proportions of Baptists vs non-Baptists. However, we have not talked about adding other religions.

I want to thank you for what you do here. You do in your day job- teaching and research- we are very thankful to you. You make the possibility of an enrollment cliff less likely because you provide a uniqueness to the school.

On personal level, as a parent I want to thank you at that level. Having had two sons gone through Baylor or come to Baylor, I want to thank you.

- b. Professor Carson Mencken, Faculty Athletic Representative for Baylor and the Big 12 Conference

I am here to talk about our attendance policy at Baylor. I am here to talk about it in terms of the ever-expanding landscape of college athletics. We are looking at the geographic distribution of events being expanded. We are looking at scheduling games in Provo, Utah or Orlando, Florida. We are figuring out the logistics of expanding travel into places when we

already know that trips like the one to Morgantown add an extra travel day. We know that these things create logistic concerns when we are talking about even expanding farther and even to the West Coast.

We are looking at a new proposed paragraph to the attendance policy that moves beyond the 25% rule, some faculty are flexible with others, while others are not. We are looking that ways in which actual practical examples- cites inflexibility with tennis players and volleyball students. The in-season travel creates the biggest problems with Olympic sports. We are looking at changes about competition excused absences. We are the only Big 12 school without an exemption for competition-based absences. We would not allow students to take total days, but instead would emphasize these are only competition related absences.

Senator Collins- For clarification, if students miss 4 days outside of a number of travel days for a total of 10. How does this effect students' attendance in this regard if they have ten.

Carson Mencken- The exemptions only apply to the travel days. Other days they miss are their issue.

Senator Shoemaker- Is there an effect on music students? We have had issues with pep band students traveling.

Mencken-

Senator Cleaver- Are there exemptions if there is travel for things other than athletics? Like the debate team?

Mencken- There have been conversations about this. Should there be exemptions for things other than athletics. My contact at Duke has talked about their approach to this. However, these students traveling for these sorts of issues or for medical students generally are not at risk of failing.

Senator- I am not a stickler for absences. I am wondering about how my students, I make accommodations for them without reaching out, I am wondering if there is any expectation of athletes to reach out to the professors to make sure that we know that they are missing.

Senator- I think this is an unfortunate situation for these students to be put in because they are providing a tremendous service to Baylor.

Mencken- I don't want to over stress this, there are not 10 or 15 students in this situation every semester.

VI. Reports: 4:20 p.m.

a. Executive Committee Meetings (Senate Chair)

Continuing to reach out to Brett Dalton and Susan Ans, they are not responding to me concerning a number of issues.

The travel policy issues are going through the President's Council. Peter Granick is responsive to these issues. If you have specific questions concerning Air BnB, contact Peter or OGC. The roll out of the roll out of the travel policies has been paused.

Still working on making sure that there is plenty of faculty representation in administration level meetings. We want to make sure that faculty are being put into the conversations should policies changes take place.

We are looking at getting concrete numbers on the effect of lecturer name changes would have on our US and News World Report rankings.

March 14<sup>th</sup> there is a reception honoring women faculty.

Continue to work on Student Government relations.

We had a conversation about the Student Baylor Family Food Fund and tying it to giving day and to start a campaign for \$23 in 23.

b. Provost/EC Meeting (Senate Chair)

Discussed some of the above issues.

We prepared for the conversation that we have today.

We continued to talk about the business transactions.

We talked about more faculty presence on the outside interest committee meeting.

c. HR Meeting (Senate Chair)

There is not a gym membership program for UMR. Some of us miss this. There is a money program that UMR has where they will give money for gym memberships.

Senator- URM does have a discount for Baylor faculty.

Senator Collins- There are gym discounts around town.

Senator Collins- TIAA is giving us more options to manage our own retirement contributions.

We need BGCT Baptists for the retirement and healthcare committees.

Prescription issues are supply chain issues and not insurance issues. The insurance will offer name brand prescriptions at lower prices



d. Wintermester Taskforce (Senator Ford)

We are going to have a Qualtrics survey to go through the 3 options and the pros and cons of them.

- 1) Status quo
- 2) Option 2 is the option that triggered this task force. We already have lots of feedback on this. No entity at Baylor thinks this will work.
- 3) A 5-week mini-mester. Online and travel abroad models. We are calling it the Miami plan because its already in place there.

Senator- Would it effect the Spring semester start date?

Senator Ford- No.

Senator- Any consideration of the Maymester.

Senator Ford- No.

VII. Unfinished Business: 4:30 p.m.

- a. Vote on Teaching Professor Committee documents (Senators Malavanti and Tatum)

Moves to approve, Cobb

Moves to second, Duvall

Zero oppose, zero abstain

- b. Associate Professor Committee/Phase II: Associate Professor Outreach Committee (Senator Collins)

EC is now moving to Phase II of the outreach that is needed to get data on Associate Professor Promotion.

- c. Faculty Regent Nominations (Senator Chevis)

Provost has chosen the 4, we don't know who they are.

- d. Senate Elections Commission (Senator Perry)

VIII. New Business: 4:50 p.m.

- a. Poll on Role of Associate/Assistant/Divisional Deans in Faculty Senate

IX. Announcements: 4:55 p.m.

We need a faculty senate rep to attend staff council meetings.

Awesome announcement- A faculty member has donated \$10,000 to the endowed fund as a jump start on the \$23 for '23. We will get matching amounts for donations up to \$10,000.

X. Adjourn

Chevis moves to adjourn

Weber seconds.