

MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING

January 21, 2003, 3:30 p.m., in Cashion 303

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

Absent with notification: Senators Auld, Hanks

- I. The meeting was called to order at 3:33 p.m.
- II. The minutes of the December meeting, distributed earlier by e-mail, were unanimously approved.
- III. **Old Business**

A: Curriculum Changes Regarding MFL/REL/GTX. Senator Jacobson (chair of the ad hoc committee studying the proposed curriculum changes involving REL, MFL and Great Texts) elaborated on his report which had been distributed earlier by e-mail. The report and its appendices demonstrate how and to what extent the proposed additional curricular requirements, especially with regard to foreign languages (no comparable school has a Great Texts program), stand to increase degree requirements in numerous professional degree programs, would move some programs from four-year to five-year programs, and generally place Baylor at a disadvantage when compared to universities with whom it is competing for students. While agreeing with the findings of the report and thanking Senator Jacobson and the committee for their work, Senators also expressed concern over administrative moves in conflict with the Baylor University tradition that specific degree requirements be determined and voted on by the full faculty of the various academic units concerned.

The Jacobson report will be shared with the Provost and accompanied by the following unanimously approved Senate resolution (introduced by Senator Gilbreath and seconded by Senator Beck):

"Whereas the content of Baylor University's academic curriculum and modifications in that curriculum have historically been determined by the faculty of Baylor University:

The Baylor Faculty Senate requests that the Baylor administration affirm that this tradition remains the current policy of the university and will continue to be the university's policy in the future, and that any proposed changes in the core curriculum or degree requirements of Baylor University and its individual academic units—the Colleges and Schools—will be brought before the whole faculty of the relevant academic units for their approval or disapproval."

B: Enrollment/Class Size. Senator Cox continues to work with Dr. Bohannon's office to assemble data on university-wide enrollment figures, information on instructors of record and their ranks, and other matters relevantly related to enrollment and instructors in all undergraduate courses, so as to give the Senate a clear picture of adherence to, and movement toward, the norms projected in Vision 2012.

C: Supplemental Pay Guidelines. New guidelines are being worked out with emphasis on the proper administration of grants. This situation affects primarily the sciences.

D: Small-Group Meeting with President Sloan. The second small-group meeting of Senators with President Sloan is scheduled for 1 PM on February 5, 2003 (Room TBA).

E: Departmental Tenure Guidelines. Deans have returned to individual departments under their jurisdiction the departmental tenure guidelines submitted by the November 1 deadline. Most guidelines appear in good shape and require only minor modifications.

F: Student Congress Requests. The Student Congress requests that faculty (a) post final exam grades separately from course grades, and (b) maintain more elaborate personal websites that include pictures, e-mail addresses, past syllabi, etc. It is the sense of the Senate to let individual faculty members decide whether or not to accommodate the students' requests.

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): While freshmen applications are up, the acceptance rate lags behind last year's figures. The university will try to raise the retention rate, which went down recently.

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

D. Faculty Committee on Student Life and Services (Senator Wilson, chair): No report.

E. Liaison Reports

A: Athletic Council (Senator Dunn): No report.

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

C: Personnel Benefits and Compensation (Senators Ngan/Williams): Senator Williams shared the following information: (a) a new in-system dermatologist is taking patients in Temple; (b) new health plan cards will be distributed shortly; (c) a form exists for reimbursement of medical expenses incurred out of state; and

(d) formulary information about generic drugs is available on line, but sometimes is out-to-date.

The Senate also decided to create an ad hoc Medical Benefits Task Force for the study of matters related to medical benefits at Baylor. The Senate chair welcomes (a) nominations of faculty who might be interested in serving on the committee; (b) the submission of names of administrators and staff who may likewise become a part of the committee and/or provide valuable information; and (c) suggestions as to which specific issues the task force should include in its study. He hopes to make known the membership of the task force at the next Senate meeting.

V. New Business

A: Senate Elections. Senator Rust provided a preview of, and schedule for, the upcoming Senate elections. Two motions of his (both seconded by Senator Longfellow) were unanimously approved: (a) that Senator Tatum's term as the Honor's College first representative be extended to run through the year 2005, and (b) that the individual achieving seventh place in the election in the College of Arts and Sciences will be offered the opportunity to serve out the remaining year in Senator Cooper's term, who is retiring.

B: Recent E-mail Problems. The Senate adopted unanimously the following resolution (proposed by Senator Beck and seconded by Senator Baldrige) and asked the Senate chair to communicate it to the Provost:

"The Faculty Senate encourages the Provost, as the chief faculty advocate, to authorize a team of external consultants to evaluate the technological infrastructure of Baylor University. Specifically, the consultants would assess the stability and adequacy of the communications system, including e-mail, and make recommendations the university can implement to insure against future e-mail failures."

C: Possible Visits by the Provost and the Provost-Designate. The Senate chair will extend an invitation to the Provost and the Provost-designate to address the Senate at its March and April meetings, respectively.

D: Announcements. Senator Tatum advised that the AAUP will sponsor a National Conference on Academic Freedom at Religious Institutions, to be held at the University of San Diego, March 13-15, 2003. President Sloan's State of the University Address is scheduled for April 16, 2003.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Eric C. Rust
Secretary