

MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING

November 19, 2002, 3:30 p.m., in Cashion 303

Present: Senators Abbott-Kirk, Baldrige, Beck, Benesh, Bowery, Brown, Cannon, Cooper, Matthew Cordon (for Auld), Cox, Dunn, Gilbreath, Hanks, Haynes (through remote link-up), Jacobson, Lehr, Longfellow, McGlashan, McManness, Ngan, Norman, Patton, Pinney, Robinson, Rust, Sharp, Spain, Stanley, Tatum, Walbesser, Weaver (Chair), Williams, Wilson, Young

Absent with notification: Senator Connally

Present for part of the time: Dr. David Lyle Jeffrey, Senior Vice Provost and Provost-designate

I. The meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m. At the chair's invitation, Dr. David Lyle Jeffrey, Senior Vice Provost and freshly appointed Provost-designate, addressed the Senate for about ten minutes. The Senate acknowledged Dr. Jeffrey's remarks with a round of applause. The chair then welcomed Drs. Rufus Spain (non-voting representative of the retired faculty) and Lynn Tatum (Honors College) as new members of the Senate.

II. The minutes of the October meeting, distributed earlier by e-mail, were unanimously approved.

III. Old Business

A: Hiring Committee Report. The chair indicated that he had not received enough electronic votes to feel justified in forwarding the report, as amended, to the Provost. Further discussion led to two friendly amendments which (a) changed the introductory sentence preceding the recommendations to: "We offer the following points for further discussion between the faculty and the administration;" and (b) substituted the word "consider" for the word "adopt" in the first sentence of Recommendation 1. Upon a motion by Senator Tatum (seconded by Senator Walbesser) the Senate decided by a narrow majority to consider each recommendation in a separate vote. Recommendations 1 and 4 carried by comfortable margins, while the remaining ones were adopted unanimously. Senator Weaver will forward the revised document to the Provost.

B: Condolence Letter. The Senate chair will write a letter of condolence to Dr. Keith Sanford who recently lost his wife under most tragic circumstances.

C: Provost Search Update. With the search concluded, the Senate chair read an e-mail dispatch from Dr. Jeffrey in which the latter clarified an earlier remark in which he had not properly acknowledged the representative function of the Faculty Senate.

D: Curriculum Changes Regarding REL/MFL/GTX Requirements. Senator Jacobson, chair of the ad hoc committee studying recent and impending curriculum changes primarily in Baylor's professional programs, reported that he is gathering data and expects to have a more comprehensive report in December. Apparently certain degree tracks in the Business School will continue to enjoy a greater measure of elasticity than others with regard to foreign language and Great Texts requirements.

E: E-mail Crash. Dr. Reagan Ramsower's response to the Senate concerning the recent e-mail crash prompted a brief discussion. Based on follow-up points raised primarily by Senator Walbesser, the Senate chair will be in touch with Dr. Ramsower and request additional clarifications. The AAUP meeting on Wednesday, November 18, addresses technology matters and may be an appropriate forum to bring up questions in relation to the e-mail breakdown.

F: Faculty Evaluation Procedures for Tenure, Retention and Promotion. No further information or instructions have been received regarding this matter.

G: Changes in Faculty Handbook. The Provost's Office will make available to the Senate, by December or January, a list of changes introduced in the most recent edition of the Faculty Handbook. The Senate has been assured that the administration will return to the tradition of advising the Faculty Senate ahead of time, for consultation and feedback purposes, of any changes in policies and procedures expressed in the Handbook that would affect the faculty.

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): Senator Stanley reported a slight increase in applications but also a dip in the numbers of freshmen accepted and deposits received when compared to last year. The administration continues to fine-tune the admissions process, especially the timing of acceptance letters, in order to produce an incoming freshmen class of desirable size and composition.

C. Faculty Committee on Physical Facilities (Senator Beck, chair): Senator Beck reported on a recent meeting of the committee with Mr. Rick Creel in which a full presentation of the university's master plan was withheld due to "sensitive negotiations" in progress, but a "verbal" elaboration of the plan may be forthcoming at a meeting in December.

D. Faculty Committee on Student Life and Services (Senator Wilson, chair): While no changes in housing arrangements are contemplated for the current academic year to benefit students who desire to stay on campus when classes are not in session, including international students, up to three dormitories are being earmarked to stay open throughout next year to accommodate students in need of uninterrupted housing.

E. Liaison Reports

A: Athletic Council (Senator Dunn): The Athletic Department is getting ready for its self-study. A central concern is its operational deficit. No information is presently available on the status of coach searches.

B: Staff Council (Senator Abbott-Kirk): The deadline for donations benefiting Santa's Workshop is November 26. The Staff Council is working on implementing in its sphere the twelve imperatives of the Vision 2012 document and will begin publishing a newsletter entitled "Staff Voice."

C: Personnel Benefits and Compensation (Senators Ngan/Williams): No report.

V. New Business

A: Small Group Meeting with President: The first of three small group meetings of Senators with President Sloan brought an open and cordial exchange of views and information on such subjects as university finances, student retention and admission procedures, as well as equity issues surrounding the A/B faculty classification system.

B: Faculty Forum on the "Christian Nature of the University": The Senate views with favor the general proposition that the faculty should be encouraged to engage in a discussion on the Christian nature of Baylor University. As a first step, the chair is now soliciting names of people who may be asked to provide a position paper or commentary. Senators are encouraged to approach the chair with suggestions.

C: Golden Bears: The chair indicated that the Senate has not been approached by the so-called "Golden Bears" group whose advertisements critical of the Baylor administration have been published in the Waco newspaper recently. Subsequent discussion centered on an apparent administrative policy to request certain members of the faculty and of the administration to write pro-Baylor letters or columns for the Waco newspaper whenever the university appears to be the subject of criticism.

D: Attendance Policy and Faculty Notification: A recent case in the Hankamer School of Business, in which a student with excess absences had originally received a failing grade but was reinstated by the administration after claiming not to have been notified ahead of time by his professor about his impending violation of Baylor's 75 percent attendance rule, prompted expressions of disbelief among Senators. The Senate chair will bring up the case in his next meeting with the Provost.

E: Request for Enrollment Figures and Instructors of Record in 1000/2000-level Courses: Given lack of time for a proper discussion of the issue, upon a motion by Senator Hanks (seconded by Senator Benesh), the Senate tabled a motion introduced by Senator Walbesser and seconded by Senator Baldrige to request from the administration enrollment figures and the names of instructors of record for entry-level courses in the

fall semesters of 2000, 2001 and 2002. The matter will be placed on the agenda for the December meeting.

F: "Intelligent Design" CD: Senator Walbesser brought to the Senate's attention the apparent practice of a Distinguished Professor of Engineering who distributes to his students CDs that promote "Intelligent Design." By all appearances the distribution of the CDs is unrelated to the professor's stated course content. The Senate views the case as a peer review issue and will take no action at this point besides monitoring the situation.

VI. The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric C. Rust
Secretary