

MINUTES

FACULTY SENATE

January 21, 1997

The Faculty Senate convened at 3:30 p.m. in the Conference Room, Blume Conference Center, Hankamer School of Business, with Chair Jeter Basden presiding.

Present: D. Adams, W. Cooper for Baird, Barker, Basden, Buddo, Chinn, Conyers, Davis, Edwards, Farris, Fox, Garner, Hillman, Jensen, K. Johnson, P. Johnson, Knudson, Longfellow, Losey, McGee, Miller, Pippin, Robinson, Rolf, Stone, Wallace, Wiley, Willis, Yelderman, Youngdale

Absent: L. Adams, Gordon

Guest: Stan Madden, Vice President for University Marketing

I. **Invocation**

The invocation was led by Rusty Pippin.

II. **Approval of December 3 Minutes**

The minutes of the December 3 meeting were approved as distributed.

III. **Dialogue on Admissions and Academic Standards**

Dr. Stan Madden, Vice President for University Marketing, addressed the Senate about the university's admissions requirements and the concern over declining academic standards. He stated that he is aware of the growing concern among the faculty that admissions requirements are not enforced rigorously and that as a result the academic quality of the student body is declining. Madden indicated that Baylor is trying to attract national merit scholars, a diverse student body, and enough students "to pay everyone's salaries," and that these can be conflicting goals.

Several senators voiced concerns about the perception that Baylor's admissions standards are too low. Madden was asked if it was true that approximately forty percent of the freshman class admitted in the fall of

1996 did not meet the university's published standards for admission. Madden confirmed that this was the case.

In response to questions about the Freshman Challenge program, Madden indicated that the program is being toughened; for example, the minimum GPA requirement for students in the program is being raised to 2.25.

Questions were raised regarding how Baylor can identify outstanding high school students, especially those who already have family or other connections to the university. Madden responded that the university has initiated a VIK ("very important kids") program for the purpose of identifying just such students. Madden was asked what is being done to increase scholarship funding to attract top students. He indicated that Baylor targets certain students and aggressively pursues those students with attractive scholarship offers. Another senator asked about the possibility of more sizable increases in tuition with the intention of using some of the resulting revenue to give back to students as scholarships. Madden expressed concern that such tuition increases would negatively affect Baylor's ranking as one of the "best college buy" schools.

Madden was asked about the new role of Mr. Harold Cunningham, the new Acting Director of Operations for the university and a member of the Baylor Board of Regents. Madden stated that Cunningham was asked to accept a consulting position for up to six months to do two things: look at the overall operation of the university and oversee day-to-day operations. Several senators expressed concern regarding a regent taking on a second role as an administrator, and similarities were pointed out between this instance and the naming of regents to the search committee for the chair of the department of journalism. Another senator expressed concern that this could become a precedent and indicated that organizationally it is not wise to have regents acting in dual roles. Madden responded that these concerns were being heard and that the administration was aware of the concerns.

After Dr. Madden's departure from the Senate meeting, a brief discussion was held regarding what the faculty's role should be in further examining the question of admissions standards. A motion was made that the issue be referred to the Faculty Committee on Enrollment Management. The motion was seconded and passed.

IV. Items from Council of Deans/Vice President Schmeltekopf

- A. **Fall Academic Calendar 1997**
A December 16, 1996, document describing the Fall Academic Calendar 1997 has been sent from Dr. Schmeltekopf to all faculty.
- B. **Graduate School Study**
Senators received a copy of a memo from Dr. Schmeltekopf, dated December 30, 1996, appointing a review committee to study the current approach to administering the university's graduate programs. The committee will submit a report of its finding and recommendations to Dr. Schmeltekopf by March 1, 1997. (A copy of the memo is attached to the file copy of the minutes.)
- C. **Student Absences**
The issue of student absences for athletic events and other university-sponsored activities will be addressed by the Council of Deans at their next meeting. Chair Basden will report back to the Senate on this matter.

V. Updates

- A. **Journalism Department Chair Search Committee**
Senators received a copy of a letter from President Sloan to Dean Daniel dated December 11, 1996, which had been forwarded by Daniel to department chairs in the College of Arts and Sciences on January 15, 1997, in which the president stated that he had decided to add an additional faculty member to the journalism chair search committee. (A copy of this letter is attached to the file copy of the minutes.) This new committee member is a member of the journalism faculty.
- B. **Committee Guidelines**
The Senate had previously received notice from Dr. Schmeltekopf giving the administration's response to our recommendation to include students on selected university committees.
- C. **Senate Constitution and Bylaws**
Chair Basden reported that the Senate's Constitution and Bylaws are currently under review by the new university senior counsel, William Underwood.

- D. Faculty Handbook
Basden reported that the Faculty Handbook is also under review by the administration. A senator suggested that Basden send a letter to the administration expressing the Senate's concern that the handbook material has not been reviewed in a timely manner and/or that the Senate has not received communication back from the administration on this matter. Basden agreed to write such a letter.

VI. Committee/Liaison Reports

- A. Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, and Environment - Dan McGee, Chair
Senators had previously received via e-mail a copy of a draft document titled "Tenure Policy Statement" prepared by the Tenure Policy Review Task Force. McGee invited the senators to provide input to him on this document. McGee also stated that the top item on the agenda for the next AFRE Committee meeting was a discussion of the tenure committee's role in faculty dismissals.
- B. Faculty Committee on Enrollment Management - Howard Rolf, Chair
No report.
- C. Faculty Committee on Physical Facilities - Joe Yelderman, Chair
(At the December Senate meeting, a question was raised regarding the issue of students paying fees required for certain courses when the fees apparently do not go to maintain the facilities used by the classes. The Faculty Committee on Physical Facilities was asked to examine the issue and bring back a report.) Yelderman reported that he has brought the issue of the use of student fees to Dean Daniel, who is looking into the matter.
- D. Faculty Committee on Student Life and Services - Patricia Wallace, Chair
Wallace reported that the committee has received a request from the president's office via Dr. Hillis to study the need for an increase in university-owned student housing, specifically apartments. The administration wants to determine whether university-owned apartments would

offer advantages in the areas of security and proximity to campus. The committee will study the issue.

- E. Staff Council Liaison
No report.

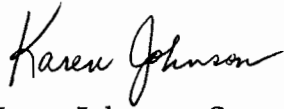
VII. Other Items or Announcements

- A. Compensation, Benefits and Personnel Committee
Senator Knudson stated that questions have been raised about experiences that faculty have had with the new Blue Choice Managed Care program. For example, there has been a significant change in the coverage for emergency room treatment which substantially increases the cost of such treatment to the insured. Knudson invited senators to contact him with concerns or questions, which he would then take to the Compensation, Benefits and Personnel Committee, of which he is a member.
- B. Administration Personnel Changes
William Underwood is the new university senior counsel. Harold Cunningham is the acting director of operations for the university.
- C. Proposed Texas Senate Bill 149--Post-Tenure Evaluation
Senators received copies of proposed Texas Senate Bill 149 dealing with the issue of post-tenure evaluation. (A copy of the document is attached to the file copy of the minutes.) Chair Basden indicated that faculty interested in obtaining further information on this bill and related matters can contact Karen Wood in the university's Office of Governmental Relations.
- D. Conference on the Future of Faculty in Higher Education
Senators received copies of a document containing information on a Conference on the Future of Faculty in Higher Education, to be held in Houston on February 14-16, 1997. (A copy of the document is attached to the file copy of the minutes.)
- E. Problems with Availability of Textbooks at the Baylor Bookstore

Senator Buddo stated that several faculty members in the School of Music had classes for which large numbers of students did not have textbooks because the Baylor Bookstore did not have the books in stock at the beginning of the semester. Other senators indicated that they or other faculty members had faced the same situation. From the comments made, it was clear that this was a wide-spread problem. The Senate agreed that the matter should be referred to the Bookstore Committee for review.

All business having been completed, Senate Chair Basden declared the meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Johnson".

Karen Johnson, Secretary