

## MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING

January 20, 2004, 3:30 p.m., in Cashion 303

**Present:** Senators Abbott-Kirk, Baldrige, Beck, Brown, Cloud, Connally, Cordon, Cox (Chair), Dunn, Gilbreath, Green, Hanks, Haynes, Mathis, McGee, McGlashan, McManness, Ngan, Norman, Patton, Pinney, Purdy, Robinson, Rust, Spain, Stanley, Sturgill, Tatum, Wallace, Weaver, Williams, Wilson, Young.

**Absent with notification:** Senator Lehr.

**I.** The meeting was called to order at 3:33 p.m. Senator McGee gave the invocation. The Senate learned with sorrow of the death of the Provost's father.

**II.** The minutes of the December meeting, distributed earlier by e-mail, were unanimously approved as amended.

### **III. Old Business**

**A: Small Group Meetings with President Sloan.** Senators originally slated to meet with President Sloan on November 25 will join the two groups of Senators scheduled to meet with him in the spring semester. The February 17 meeting will be held in the former Blume Conference Center rather than in Cashion.

**B: Medical Benefits Task Force.** The task force (Senators Lehr and Pinney, co-chairs) will meet shortly and present a report at the February meeting.

**C: Due Process Concerns.** The Senate was informed about a tenure denial and appeal case that appears to violate AAUP due process guidelines. At Baylor the same individuals who deny tenure also preside over the appeals process. The Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Environment (Senator McGlashan, Chair) will look into the case and make a report which will also compare Baylor's tenure decision appeals procedures to those at other universities.

**D: Ombudsman.** The Chair presented a letter from Ombudsman Greg Benesh expressing his understanding of the Senate's decision not to award him ex officio observer status at Senate meetings. The Council of Deans, in a parallel move, has likewise withdrawn observer status for the Ombudsman at its meetings.

### **IV. Committee/Liaison Reports**

**A. Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Environment** (Senator McGlashan, chair): The Committee has not yet met during the new year, but will do so soon and will add a case from the Business School to the other matters brought to its attention.

**B. Faculty Committee on Enrollment Management** (Senator Stanley, chair): Freshman applications and deposits are running slightly ahead of 2003 levels. SAT scores average around 1220 at this time. Admission of transfer students is slow because of delays in the forwarding of transcripts. Faculty are being encouraged to volunteer their time to call prospective students in their major or in related fields. Provisional students are limited to taking 15 semester hours of classes. Senators also discussed ways to increase faculty participation at commencement ceremonies.

**C. Faculty Committee on Physical Facilities** (Senator Beck, chair): Given that the administration has recently sent out detailed memos on the state of Baylor's construction projects, Senator Beck referred to them only in general terms. Apparently no final decision has been made regarding the renovation of Sid Richardson and Marris McLean once the new Science Building is finished.

**D. Faculty Committee on Student Life and Services** (Senator Wilson, chair): Faculty are advised that in the future finals will begin at 9 AM instead of 8 AM. The Chapel Friday program, introduced last fall, is being evaluated. Apparently faculty have been approached by students low on funds to meet basic academic needs. Some professors have given away money and surplus textbooks to these students to ease the burden. Many visitors to the campus appear dismayed at the high fees Baylor charges for the use of its recreational facilities, especially during the summer.

#### **E. Liaison Reports.**

**A: Athletic Council** (Senator Dunn): Senator Dunn reported at some length on the Big XII Sports Reform Conference in Kansas City which he recently attended in an official capacity. Seven schools were represented. Faculty at other institutions appear to be more openly involved in athletic matters than is the case at Baylor. It was the consensus of the Senate to allow the Academic Council to study the issues raised and the reforms suggested at the conference before taking action, if any. In other matters Senator Dunn stated that the Academic Council was not consulted before Baylor asked the NCAA recently to obtain an academic waiver for two basketball players.

**B: Staff Council** (Senator Brown): The "Race for the Cure" will be held on April 3 this year. Senator Brown raised the issue of redundancy in representation inasmuch as a representative of the Staff Council meets on a monthly basis with the Senate's Executive Committee and many of the issues discussed are common knowledge as a result of campus-wide

announcements. The Senate may decide in the future whether to reduce its representation at Staff Council meetings.

**C: Personnel Benefits and Compensation** (Senators Ngan/Williams): Senator Williams reported on the response she received from the administration regarding the way health insurance premiums are determined for faculty based on the assumption of summer employment without regard to whether such employment was in fact the case. The administration's response from Richard Amos states that the system is fair, that it is the only reasonable way to figure things, and that Baylor's system compares favorably to that of other schools, e.g. Tulane's. It is the sense of the Senate that a basic fairness issue remains and that the situation will be monitored.

## V. New Business

**A: Maternity Benefits** Inasmuch as Baylor has no official maternity benefits policy, the Senate established an *ad hoc* committee to study the matter and to offer recommendations. The committee will consist of Senators Purdy (chair), Brown, Hanks, Tatum, and Cox (*ex officio*).

**B: Senate Elections.** Senator Rust reported on the schedule for the upcoming Senate elections which are to be completed before Spring Break. Units electing Senators in this cycle will be Arts and Sciences (8), Business (1), Education (1), Law (1), Music (1), and Nursing (1). Senators Abbott-Kirk, Beck, Dunn, Gilbreath, Haynes, Weaver, Wilson and Young will retire after the present term. Five others with expiring terms (Baldrige, Cordon, McGlashan, Robinson and Wallace) are eligible for reelection.

**C: Chair's Report on Council of Deans Meeting.** Senator Patton, who substituted for Senator Cox, reported on the issues addressed at the meeting. The prerogatives of the Ombudsman were clarified (see Item III.D. above). A new grade change policy has been adopted to the effect that, under normal circumstances, the instructor sets the grade. A stronger emphasis will be placed on recruitment, with faculty being asked to participate more intensively than in the past. The Provost bemoaned that some faculty had cancelled classes prior to the Thanksgiving Break.

Following Dr. Patton's remarks, the Senate adopted unanimously the following resolution, introduced by Senator Hanks and seconded by Senator Wilson:

"Having heard rumors of classes cancelled just prior to Fall Break and other vacation periods in Fall 2003, and having heard of final examinations being unilaterally rescheduled by faculty members for the last week of classes during the same semester, the Faculty Senate reminds all faculty members that considerations professional and contractual require us to meet all our classes

except where illness or professional meetings prevent it. Moreover, we remind all faculty members that unilateral changes to the final examination schedule are unfair to students and inconvenient to fellow faculty members. Therefore, the Faculty Senate requests of all faculty members that they remind themselves that classes and examinations must take place as scheduled by the University."

**D. Other Business.** It was pointed out that summer contracts as well as contracts for part-time faculty have not yet been issued. Senators also offered reactions to recent articles in the local press concerning Baylor University.

**VI.** The meeting was adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric C. Rust  
Secretary