

Faculty Senate
Minutes of March 4, 2005

FACULTY ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Proxy

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|--|---|
| Bill Rowe – President (Fine Arts) | P |
| Debra Walden- Vice-Chair of the Senate | P |
| Bill Humphrey –President Elect | P |
| Margaret McClain – Secretary of the Senate | P |
| Dennis White- Parliamentarian | P |
| William B. Maynard—Faculty Association Secretary | P |

AGRICULTURE (1)

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|----------------|--------|
| Bert Greenwalt | Absent |
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BUSINESS (3)

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| Vacant Seat | |
| Dan Marburger | Absent |
| Jim Washam | P |

COMMUNICATIONS (2)

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| Pradeep Mishra | P |
| Jack Zibluk | P |

EDUCATION (5)

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| Cindy Albright | Absent |
| Kris Biondolillo | P |
| Dan Cline | P |
| Amany Saleh | P |
| Marci Malinsky | P |

ENGINEERING (1)

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| Shivan Haran | P |
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FINE ARTS (3)

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|----------------|---|
| Tim Crist | P |
| Alyson Gill | P |
| Kelly Schaefer | P |

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (6)

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| Win Bridges | P |
| Mary Donaghy | P |
| Ernesto Lombeida | Absent |
| Eric Gilbert | P |
| Joe Sartorelli | P |
| Richard Wang | P |

LIBRARY (1)

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|----------------|---|
| Myron Flugstad | P |
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MILITARY SCIENCE (1)

LTC Larry P. Aikman P

NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS (3)

Dick Freer Terry Baggs
Troy Thomas Absent
Debra Walden P

SCIENCE & MATHEMATICS (4)

William Burns P
David Gilmore Bob Bennett
Jeff Jenness P
Jie Miao P

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (1)

Margaret McClain P

I. Minutes: The minutes of the February 18, 2005, meeting were approved as submitted.

II. Old Business:

A. Committee Reports:

Fringe Benefits—Chairman Rowe reported that he had received numerous emails inquiring about a rumor that had been circulating on campus—that faculty/staff tuition discounts would be eliminated. Rowe reported that he had spoken with the *Jonesboro Sun* today about the subject; apparently the Finance Office has placed the elimination of this fringe benefit on the table. When Jennus Burton was asked how the removal of tuition discounts would affect future hiring at ASU, he denied that this benefit was a major consideration. Debra Walden suggested we talk to Chris Brown for further clarification of the administration’s plans.

B. Status of the Profession:

Drs. Cline, White, and Saleh are the members of the Status of the Profession Committee. They presented the results of their faculty survey in a paper entitled “Faculty Evaluation of the University President and the Vice Chancellor for Research and Academic Affairs at Arkansas State University.” Drs. Saleh and Cline ran through the results and explained the Committee’s methodology. Of the 413 faculty members who received the survey, 232 responded. They stated that the response rate of 56% was the highest ever achieved on a faculty survey at ASU.

Dr. Saleh explained several tables in the survey results. Dr. Cline said he had conducted a reliability test that yielded a 97% accuracy rating. He thus concluded that the survey had a high degree of validity. Cline said that the Committee’s report consists of the data that was gathered by means of the survey, but that the report does not contain any interpretation of the data.

Dr. Maynard reported that the definitive copy of the survey results would be online by 6:00 PM, March 4, 2005.

Dr. Wang moved to accept the report on the survey. Dr. Zibluk seconded, and the report was unanimously approved.

III. New Business:

A. Merit Raises: Chairman Rowe reported on a disturbing trend on campus, whereby two Physical Plant employees have received substantial raises, while faculty merit pay has been losing ground for the last ten years or so. Rowe said he had checked the university's budget and noted that all chairs had been awarded raises of 3% and up, while the faculty average was only 2.7%. Since many chairs make six-figure salaries, their 3% raises are quite substantial and have the effect of decreasing the pool of money available for lower-paid faculty. Rowe urged all faculty to look at the budget, on file in the library.

It was noted that the present equity gap is the result of a decade of sub-standard raises for faculty accompanied by higher raises for administrators.

B. Appropriate Use Policy (Distribution of Political Messages): The university administration had within the past week sent out emails reminding all computer users of the Appropriate Use Policy. Chair Rowe reported that according to the Faculty Senate's lawyer, political messages cannot be legally distributed within or outside the ASU community. There was some discussion about what the term *university community* actually means in the context of the Appropriate Use Policy. Does it include friends, relatives, alumni, computer users at ASU's satellite campuses, or only those on the Jonesboro campus? The general consensus was that some of the terminology in the document was too vague to be enforceable.

It was reported that the document sprang out of the Dr. Tronsellito situation of a few years ago.

Jeff Jenness reported that he had served, albeit in only an advisory capacity, on the committee that had developed the Appropriate Use Policy. Alyson Gill asked if some event had precipitated the university's recent email. Margaret McClain reported that one of her colleagues had been admonished after a complaint was made to Les Wyatt for her email contact with an Arkansas legislator.

Dr. Shivan mentioned that he had pulled the blue computer cords in his lab after catching students violating the Appropriate Use Policy regularly—i.e., downloading music.

Dr. Wang said that faculty members were professionals and should be able to police themselves. Dr. Sartorelli expressed the opinion that the policy is flawed and went on to say that researchers often had to access websites disallowed under the IT Policy. Dr. White mentioned that in his field, he often had to access controversial political websites for research purposes. Margaret McClain reported that in her work on missing children's causes, she was able to locate a missing child's name linked to a pornographic site, and was subsequently able to have the FBI shut the site down.

Bill Rowe added that others within the ASU community, such as the SGA, regularly distribute political messages. Our lawyer admits that no one really knows what the nebulous term *university community* means.

C. SGA Faculty Evaluations:

Dennis White noted that SGA evaluations of faculty will be done on university equipment and asked if the university might face any liability for negative material about faculty members that appears on the SGA website.

Dr. McDaniel said that the administration has urged the SGA to conduct the evaluation, so the university should face no liability. The initiative came from Catherine Jones' office.

John Hall brought up the question of whether all deans were evaluated. Faculty reported that some were and some were not—the evaluation of deans was to do a sampling only.

D. Other:

Four-Year Guarantee Bill—Dr. McDaniel opined that the passage of this bill would probably work against students. In view of the fact that we now serve many students who work either full- or part-time, they would have difficulty succeeding with a high course load.

McDaniel noted that the bill had a multitude of sponsors, but very little opposition in the State Legislature.

Dr. Bridges asked how much of the responsibility for expediting the four-year degree process would fall on the students' advisors.

John Hall suggested that the Faculty Senate work through the Academic Affairs office and have Robert Evans work with the legislators to “rattle their cages” on the four-year guarantee bill.

IV. Announcements: None

V. Adjournment:

In the absence of any further business, Chairman Rowe adjourned the meeting at 3:50 PM.