

ASU FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
February 15, 2002

FACULTY ASSOCIATION

Bob Bennett, President (AS)
Jeff Bailey, Past President (LIB)
Bill Rowe, Sec/Treasurer (FA)

FACULTY SENATE

Bob Bennett, Chair
Bill Humphrey, Vice-chair
Debra Walden, Secretary
Michael Morrell, Parliamentarian

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Bill Humphrey

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Roger Abernathy
Jim Bednarz
Joe Sartorelli absent
Dick Freer
David Jimerson absent
Ernesto Lombeida
Bill Maynard
Victoria Spaniol
Richard Wang

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Dan Marburger
Clint Relyea
Jim Washam
Chris Brown proxy – Gauri S. Guha

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Jo Anna Grant
Lillie M. Fears proxy – Jack Zibluk

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Cindy Albright absent
Kris Biondolillo
Joe Justen
John Ponder
Karen Yanowitz

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Charles Coleman absent

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Bill Rowe
John O'Connell
Ken Hatch

COLLEGE OF Nursing & Health Professions

Terry Baggs
Steve Guffey
Debra Walden

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Polly Green

LIBRARY

Myron Flugstad

MILITARY SCIENCE

Daniel Tiscareno absent

COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC DEANS

Jan Duggar absent

VISITORS

Dr. Jerry Linnstaedter
Dr. Lynita Cooksey
Marlin Shipman – faculty
Grover Welch – Herald Reporter

Andrea Smalec – President, SGA
Emily Jones, Kris Moore and
Jennifer Jeffries, students

CALL TO ORDER

Senate Chair Bennett called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Minutes from the Feb. 1, 2002 Faculty Senate meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve minutes was made by Senator O'Connell; seconded by Senator Grant. Motion carried.

REMARKS

Chair Bob Bennett recognized Dr. Jerry Linnstaedter who was there representing the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Dr. Linnstaedter stated that he was representing Dr. McDaniel who was attending another meeting. Linnstaedter offered one comment on the proposed resolution to retain the 16-week academic calendar. He stated that in his opinion decreasing the length of the calendar would make it difficult for several disciplines to cover curricular content. Therefore, he objects to any plan to shorten the length of the semester. Senator Wang invited Dr. Linnstaedter to remain for the duration of the meeting to discuss the proposed resolution.

Senator Maynard asked about the status of current state revenues and inquired as to whether a mechanism existed to eliminate proposed budget cuts on campus. Dr. Linnstaedter stated that he had heard rumors about improved tax revenues but that the university would need to wait for some official recommendation from the state before reconsidering budget issues.

REPORTS

Faculty Handbook

Chair Bennett recognized Senator Humphrey, chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee. He provided the senators with a report of the handbook committee containing two recommendations to amend the bylaws of the Faculty Association:

Recommendation #1 – structures committee function

Recommendation #2 -- suggests that an ad hoc committee be formed to study faculty reassignment for administrative duties other than deans or department chairs, most obviously program coordinators.

Parliamentarian Morrell summarized the content of the recommendations. Bennett made a motion to accept Recommendation #1. The motion passed unanimously. Bennett also made a motion to accept Recommendation #2 which also passed unanimously.

Chair Bennett then stated he would canvas the campus for faculty interested in serving on this new ad hoc committee. He stated that the executive committee would make a decision about committee personnel and would report back to the senate.

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution

Copies of the resolution to retain the 16-week academic calendar were provided each member of the senate. Senator Bednarz stated that he had published the resolution on the faculty list-serve. He then proceeded to read the resolution into the minutes (see attached).

A motion to adopt the resolution was made by Bednarz and was seconded by Senator Biondolillo. Discussion followed regarding the impact of the length of the academic calendar and curricular concerns.

Chair Bennett recognized Andrea Smalec, the president of the SGA. She noted that student senators had been meeting and had passed a resolution to decrease the academic calendar to 15 weeks in length, including a two-day break in the Fall semester. She stated that input had been obtained from the academic calendar committee and that accreditation issues had been taken into consideration. This statement was challenged by Senator Guffey who stated that no one had approached him in his capacity as director of physical therapy to determine if accreditation requirements could be met with the proposed shortened calendar.

Proxy Guha offered three points for consideration:

1. students do not want a long semester, a longer semester jeopardizes student enrollment
2. the College of Business will not be impacted by a 15 week semester in relation to accreditation
3. learning is not a function of time

Senator Guffey noted that his curriculum would be impacted. The current P.T. curriculum has been approved by accrediting agencies. His faculty would be required to construct new schedules and then inform the accrediting body as to the rationale for these changes.

Senator Freer noted that he represents a faculty that strongly opposes the resolution. He observed the 16-week semester decreases the time between terms that might be devoted to research, projects or enhanced preparation classroom instruction.

Senator Bednarz stated that a spot check of the calendar at the U of A demonstrates that their semester is only two days shorter than ours. Their regular classes run finals on Saturdays. He stated that the faculty in biologic sciences are under incredible pressure to do research and still the faculty supports the 16 week semester. He noted that graduates of a shortened calendar might have trouble competing with programs whose content hours are longer.

Senator Abernathy supported this opinion noting that "it would hurt the ability of our students to compete" with graduates from other schools. On the other hand, Senator Maynard noted that by the end of the long semester, students are exhausted and don't reap much benefit from additional days in the classroom. Parliamentarian Morrell noted that he has taught in a variety of programs and that he finds he has less time to "re-energize" himself. He believes that extra time between semesters makes a difference in how good a teacher he can be. Senator Biondiollo asked for more discussion regarding how a shortened calendar would benefit students. She expressed concern about the lost time in faculty/student contact.

Senator Baggs expressed a concern that the university might determine that a decrease in length warranted a decrease in faculty salaries.

Senator Walden asked Dr. Cooksey for a report on the timetable for implementation of a shorter semester. Dr. Cooksey stated that plans by the academic calendar committee had not yet been finalized.

Senator Bednarz reiterated his concerns stating, "I use every minute of contact time" and believes that quality learning time is important. He noted that biological sciences needs time to prepare students to be competitive in such areas as wildlife ecology; a major that has enjoyed competitive success in the marketplace.

Senator Rowe made a motion to table the discussion; Proxy Guha offered a second. With a vote to 14 for and 7 opposed, the motion to accept the resolution was tabled. After some discussion Chair Bennett stated invited a representative of the academic calendar committee to present to the Senate at the meeting March 1st, 2002.

NEW BUSINESS

Senator Wang introduced a new resolution that the faculty senate sponsor an interactive panel discussion entitled "**Athletics & Academics: A Zero-Sum Game?**" to be held on the campus of Arkansas State University in conjunction with Convocation of Scholars, 2002. The resolution would authorize the faculty senate chair to allocate funds from the Faculty Association account for expenses directly related to the panel, such funds not to exceed \$3,000. Wang noted that this resolution was a product of the senate that appointed Senators Grant, Maynard and himself to an ad hoc committee to consider the project.

Chair Bennett noted that this was a new business item and therefore could not be voted on today. He then asked for discussion.

Senator Maynard noted that two experts in the area of athletics and academic issues had been contacted and invited to participate on a panel discussion. Maynard referred the senate to the Knight Foundation Report – A Call to Action: Reconnecting College Sports and Higher Education. He indicated that noted authorities Murray Sperber and John Gerdy have expressed their willingness to come to campus to participate in an interactive panel discussion during Convocation of Scholars Week. Maynard stated that both the SGA and AAUP have agreed to co-sponsor this event. He noted that financial

support is needed from the senate and that time is limited in negotiating the logistics required to make this part of Convocation activities. The dates proposed for the panel discussion are April 9th and 11th.

Senator Wang made a motion to suspend the rules to approve the resolution today.

Senator Spaniol seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Bennett noted that the Faculty Association has the funds to support this project.

Senator Freer stated that he supported holding this discussion. We can take pride in providing a national forum for this discussion. Proxy Zibluk asked about the purpose for the panel discussion. He asked if the goal was to change policy or to embarrass and provoke. He asked if there was not another avenue for this discussion.

Senator Biondiollo agreed stating that we do not need to create a situation that would embarrass, even though there is need to address the question. Bednarz stated that he could not support a panel that was confrontational.

Chair Bennett recommended appointing at least two other persons to the committee, including himself, in order to share the responsibility for the project.

Senator O'Connell pointed out that he believed the title of the panel to be prejudicial. He suggested including experts from each side of the question. Proxy Guha noted that this discussion should be purely an academic pursuit and should not appear confrontational and that may mean changing the title.

Bennett suggested dropping the last three words of the proposed title, leaving the title as "Academics and Athletics". Senator Want accepted this friendly amendment.

Senator Freer stated that any change in the title reduces its impact and that he supported the title as previously proposed. Senator Spaniol expressed her hope that administration is composed of real scholars who will view this presentation as an open academic discussion and not personalize it. O'Connell suggested approaching the athletic department to look for experts to complete the panel. Senator Maynard reminded the senate that we are asking national experts to come and discuss a national report on athletics and academics. Senator Baggs then noted that if this is indeed national panel that we should not place individuals on the panel from our campus. Senator Freer made a motion to call the question, which was seconded by Senator Humphrey. The motion to call the question passed unanimously.

Chair Bennett asked for a vote on the current resolution with no adjustments. The resolution passed by voice vote.

Bennett then noted that the ad hoc committee would be expanded by two members, with one being himself. Senator Bednarz volunteered to serve on the committee.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Walden, Secretary