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3-28-2014

## March 28, 2014 Minutes

SWOSU Faculty Senate

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Approved Minutes  
Southwestern Oklahoma State University  
FACULTY SENATE March 28, 2014—2:00 PM EDU 201

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Faculty Senate President Fred Gates called the March meeting of the Faculty Senate to order at 2:03 PM in Education 201.

**II. ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM:** The following members were present: David Bessinger, Tammy Blatnik, John Bradshaw, Ric Baugher for Brad Bryant, Tommye Davis (Sayre), Ralph May for Jerry Dunn, Phillip Fitzsimmons for Jason Dupree, Jared Edwards, David Esjornson, Fred Gates, Marci Grant, Andrea Holgado, Cheri Lemons for Tiffany Kessler, Ed Klein, Jim Long, Tom McNamara, Evette Meliza, Kristin Montarella, Cynthia Pena, Les Ramos, Ann Russell, Amber Sturgeon, Jeff Walker for Trisha Wald, Dennis Widen, Curt Woolever, and Jessica Young.

**III. CERTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES:** Ric Baugher for Brad Bryant, Ralph May for Jerry Dunn, Phillip Fitzsimmons for Jason Dupree, Sherry Lemons for Tiffany Kessler, Jeff Walker for Trisha Wald.

**IV. PRESENTATION OF VISITORS:** None.

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The February minutes were approved by a voice vote.

**VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**A. President Fred Gates**

1. From the Executive Council meeting of March 10, 2014.
  - a. President Beutler provided the latest update on House Bill 2887 dealing with guns on campus. Rep. Enns changed the language of the bill to force each university to have a policy on allowing guns on campus which is very similar to current law. However, there are procedural processes that could revive the original intent of the bill which was to allow guns on campus.

- b. President Beutler and Executive Vice President Tom Fagan spent a good deal of time discussing the upcoming budget. SWOSU can manage short term cuts but it is really the long term that is a growing concern as the state continues to leave appropriations flat. Fagan stated that 49 of the 50 states already spend less per student than they did prior to 2008. Raising tuition is always an option but that only goes so far as we start to price many students out of attendance. The legislature passed a tax cut bill that goes into effect only if future revenues go up which leaves future state funding even more in question. So, we need to look at everything—scholarships, staffing, etc. and go line by line in the budget. FY2015 is based upon a flat budget but we can't tread water and implement the strategic plan if that trend continues indefinitely. The real issue is the lack of a long-term budget strategy at the state level.
  - c. President Beutler introduced the Hotel/Motel Tax Application and Approval Policy that was sent out to campus. The reasoning behind the policy was to improve coordination with the committee in order to bring in activities that will have the most impact.
  - d. Vice President Fagan announced that the state had recently given a presentation on energy savings as part of the State Energy Savings Project. Higher Ed's focus will be on behavioral changes more than anything else. But, whatever savings may be affected by rate increases for natural gas, electricity, water, etc.
  - e. The Risk Management Task Force has been working at identifying and fixing possible risks on campus. Some of the issues were "low hanging fruit" or easy fixes such as enhanced signage or fixing loose bricks, etc. However, as any of you become aware of any potential issues, please let them know.
2. From the Administrative Council meeting of March 10, 2014.
- a. Wellness Center Director Scott Miller reported that they had been busy with several activities such as a church service, an upcoming NRA banquet, etc. Intramurals are finishing up winter sports and moving outside for spring sports.
  - b. Human Resources Director David Misak reported that blood born pathogen training will be introduced on campus in an online format. Not everyone will be required to complete the training initially, so more information will be forthcoming.

- c. Rick Skinner reported that the Physical Plant will be repaving/paving four parking lots this summer at West Neff, East Stewart, Milam Stadium, and the west side of the Conference Center.
- d. Interim Registrar Bob Klaassen provided an update on graduation and enrollment. About 800 students have applied for graduation this Spring. Summer enrollment is down about 3% over this time last year and Fall about 1%..
- e. Distance Learning Director Marci Grant announced the D2L will “die” June 30, 2014 so make sure all migrations to CANVAS are finished by then.
- f. Provost James South announced Marci Grant’s appointment as permanent Director of Distance Learning. The committee responsible for filling the position of Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs is in the interview process, the committee searching for a permanent Library Director is in the screening process, and the Registrar search committee is working applicants down to a short list.

g. Notable Dates:

April 5, SWOSUPALOOZA

April 9, Pizza Appreciation Lunch

April 12, Weatherford Arts Council, 66 West Fest featuring the Sugar Free All-stars and Brave Combo.

April 15, SWOSU Research Fair

- 3. From the Provost meeting of March 24, 2014.
  - a. As the State Regents continue to develop an online course policy it is becoming clear that we will be able to use an institutional rubric provided it conforms closely with Quality Matters. This will allow SWOSU to offer courses in other states once we become part of a consortium that has similar guidelines for online courses.
  - b. The administration will continue to meet with individual departments to discuss the budgeting process, long term planning, and possible restructuring. President Beutler, V.P. Fagan, and Provost South will be addressing Faculty Senate at our April meeting.

4. From the Faculty Advisory Council meeting of March 25, 2014.
  - a. We are investigating faculty workloads at colleges and universities around the state. Much of the concern here surrounds the heavy use of adjuncts. As I learn more I will keep the Senate informed.

**B. Secretary/Treasurer Curt Woolever:**

**1. Roll Sheet** – please sign.

**2. Treasurer's Report:**

- |                                |                           |           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| a. BancFirst Checking Account: | February Meeting Balance: | \$2311.19 |
|                                | CURRENT BALANCE:          | \$2311.19 |
|                                |                           |           |
| b. University Account:         | February Meeting balance: | \$105.01  |
|                                | CURRENT BALANCE:          | \$105.01  |

**C. President-Elect Evette Meliza:** Reminder about the SWOSU Student and Scholarly Activity Fair will be held on Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**D. Past President David Esjornson:** Nothing to Report

**E. Student Government Representative Blaine Boyd:** Not in Attendance

**VII. REPORTS FROM STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES:**

**Report from the Faculty Senate Nominating Committee -- 2014/2015 Committee Openings**

**Academic Advisory and Scholarship Council** -- Develops policies governing the student advisory and scholarship program within the framework of Regents' retention regulations. Serves as an appellate committee on student academic status. Meets the day before classes start each semester and summer sessions regularly and other meetings are scheduled as needed.

Three (3) positions open

**Academic Appeals Committee** -- Reviews the procedural fairness of an instructor's grading policy upon the filing of a written student academic appeal. FS nominates ten (10) faculty, with five (5) of those being chosen by the President or his designee for committee membership.

Ten(10) nominees needed

**Appellate Committee on Dismissal of Tenured Faculty Members** -- Hears appeals of dismissed tenured faculty members when hearings are requested. FS nominates eight (8) **tenured** faculty, with four (4) of those being chosen by the tenured faculty of the University for committee membership.

Eight (8) nominees needed

**Benefits Committee** -- Promotes programs that will contribute to the health and wellness of all University employees and their families; studies and reviews all employee benefit programs at Southwestern Oklahoma State University and makes this information available to SWOSU community; gathers faculty and staff input on all University benefit programs; and reviews annually University-sponsored benefits, and the RUSO benefit programs, and make recommendations through proper channels regarding such benefits.

Three positions open – College Specific –

One (1) needed -- Arts and Science

One (1) needed -- Professional and Graduate Studies

One (1) needed -- Pharmacy

**Bernhardt Award Selection Committee** -- Selects an outstanding faculty member to recognize.

Three positions open – College Specific –

Professional & Graduate Studies – Dr. Patsy Parker

One (1) needed -- Arts & Sciences

One (1) needed – Associate & Applied Science

One (1) needed – Pharmacy

**Campus Environmental Committee** -- Promotes environmental awareness, resource conservation, and recycling of certain materials.

One (1) position open

**Distance and eLearning Council** – The Distance and eLearning Committee (DELIC) is charged with the development and promotion of educational technologies, recommendation of educational technology priorities, policies, and procedures, advisement on distance and eLearning accreditation, and recommendations of faculty development related to educational technologies, both distant and eLearning, across the university..

Three (3) positions open – College Specific – Need representatives for

One (1) – Arts & Sciences

One (1) – Professional & Graduate Studies

One (1) – Pharmacy

**Faculty Development Committee** -- Encourages excellence in teaching and scholarly activities. This committee will offer programs to enable the faculty to improve personal and professional qualities as educators. Program content will encompass: teaching, research, and new faculty orientation.

Three (3) positions open, College specific –  
One (1) – Arts & Sciences  
One (1) – Professional & Graduate Studies  
One (1) – Associate & Applied Sciences

**Financial Assistance Advisory and Appeals Committee** -- Acts as an advisory committee to the student financial assistance officer, hears appeals, and recommends disposition of student grievances related to financial assistance awards.

One (1) position open

**Intellectual Property Committee** -- Disseminates information to the faculty regarding laws and policies regarding copyrights and the use of intellectual property. The Committee monitors general University compliance.

Three (3) positions open

**Report of the University Policies Committee  
Potential Change to a Single (M-F) Final Exam Week  
March 2014**

The Provost has requested that the Faculty Senate discuss a potential change in the current SWOSU final exam schedule (Th-F, then M-W) to a single, dedicated final exam week (M-F). Currently, SWOSU is the only RUSO institution with a “split” final exam schedule. Each of the other RUSO programs have a single final exam week which begins on a Monday and ends on the following Friday. This is the committee’s second report on this proposal. This report contains (1) an updated summary of potential advantages and disadvantages based on committee discussion and faculty feedback and (2) a summary of responses from faculty in support or against the proposal.

Advantages

1. More efficient management of transfer students. In the current SWOSU semester schedule, the admission, registration, and enrollment processes for transfer students, particularly Spring semester transfers, have been challenging due to issues such as difficulty in obtaining transcripts. SWOSU typically has several hundred transfer students each academic year.
2. Improved coordination of activities with other RUSO member schools (e.g., collaborative scholarly activities and system-wide meetings and conferences).
3. Greater efficiency of scheduling athletic events. In the current SWOSU semester and final exam schedule, particularly at the end of the Fall semester, Great American Conference and non-conference schools must consistently accommodate the SWOSU schedule (the vast majority of Great American Conference schools have schedules similar to the other RUSO programs). Given that the NCAA mandates a 7-day no event “dead period” beginning the Monday before Christmas and the fact that SWOSU finals span across two weeks, SWOSU is effectively prevented from scheduling athletic events over a period of two weeks. This has forced much earlier scheduling of conference games for Winter semester sports, particularly basketball, which is not typical and impacts both SWOSU and our athletic opponent institutions. In addition, the current Spring final exam schedule has necessitated that student athletes (baseball and softball) and Athletic Department staff to negotiate with faculty to arrange final exams to allow for participation in conference tournaments. The Athletic Department has repeatedly expressed that this is not an ideal situation for faculty or students.
4. Each academic semester would have 15 complete weeks (as opposed to 14 full weeks and 2 “half” weeks), which may facilitate more efficient planning and scheduling (e.g., the “add/drop” period may be placed in the first week of classes).
5. In courses with a laboratory component, there may be more advantageous scheduling and planning.



6. Faculty have expressed concerns that some students appear to diminish the importance of the W-F class days during the first week and in some cases do not report to class until the following Monday.
7. Due to an earlier end of the Fall semester, there may be more convenient scheduling of travel, particularly for international students.
8. A change to a single finals week will likely necessitate a change in the grade submission deadline to the early part of the week following finals, thereby eliminating the current time pressure for grade submission, particularly for faculty administering written finals.
9. The resulting adjustment in the calendar will allow for an expanded time and opportunities for intersession courses during the Winter break.

#### Disadvantages

1. The change to a Monday start will require a reexamination of the logistics of the annual Fall Faculty Workshop.
2. Students will be required to complete all final exams in a period of five consecutive days. This may present additional challenges for students with heavier than average loads, senior students in more demanding courses, or students in professional programs.

#### Responses in Support

“I agree with the proposal to move to M-F finals; also eliminate dead days.”

“I feel that the change to M-F finals is long overdue. Not because others are doing it, but because it makes sense to do it that way. I have wondered since 1989 why we scheduled exams to begin in the middle of the week.”

“Faculty in my School and related programs support the proposal.”

#### Responses Against

“I am against one full week of finals. The split week allows students to recover from the initial exams and put more time in on the last exams. As a student who experienced a full week of regular exams many times, I did poorer on the exams at the end of the week. Having a break allows students to perform the best they can. Also, I just had a new admission student (a good academic student) who just completed a degree from OSU, who expressed how much she liked the SWOSU final exam approach.”

“I think the split finals week works very well because it gives students a breather over the weekend rather than making it a straight 5 days in a row. OU had a straight 5-day finals week and as a student I would have much rather had a weekend in the middle to recover. I don’t really think changing the schedule to full weeks would affect my labs or courses in any way, however.”

“Having an opportunity to study over the weekend between finals seems to be less stressful than 4-6 finals spread over 5 days in a row.”

“I think that the way we schedule finals at SWOSU is far better than our sister institutions. By spreading finals over a weekend, students (at least those who study for finals!) have a chance to “recover” from the first 2 days. This is really helpful if a student has finals that require more study time toward the end of the final period. Plus, grades go in before graduation. Our system is not broken—don’t change it just because others don’t do things as well as we do at SWOSU!”

Motion to accept the report.

Motion was approved by a voice vote.

### **Student Affairs Committee Report:**

Recommendations:

The Students Affairs Committee, after reviewing the cheating and plagiarism policies in the Student Handbook, the College of Pharmacy policy and the policies of the other RUSO schools and after meeting with the Dean of Students, Dean Dougherty, offer the following recommendations:

- 1) The Student Affairs Committee requests that Dean Dougherty create a contract for students to sign indicating that the both have read and understand the cheating and plagiarism policy in the student handbook and agree to consequences of violations of the policy.
- 2) The contract should be presented to students at initial enrollment, during freshman orientation or at New Student Orientation sessions.
- 3) A module on cheating and plagiarism should be included in the curriculum of freshman orientation or First Year Experience if implemented to foster awareness and understanding of cheating and plagiarism and consequences of violations of the policy.

Motion to accept the report.

Motion was approved by a voice vote.

### **Report from the Adhoc Committee on the FUPTRC**

The committee has sent out an online survey to all faculty. Once the deadline of March 31<sup>st</sup> has passed, the committee will compile the results and make recommendations to the Senate.

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** The following motion was tabled in February for further discussion.

**Senate Motion 2014-01-02:** The Director of Service Learning proposes that a new standing committee, the Outreach Committee, be formed as a sustained oversight entity for all service related activities of the campus—Service Learning, club/organization-related service, certain kinds of internships and experiential learning capstones, and faculty outreach.

After discussing this matter with the Provost, the Senate Executive Committee has referred the matter to the University Policies Committee to come up with suggestions as the best means to handle this matter.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS:**

The SWOSU Staff Council has developed and approved the following request concerning the tuition waiver for spouses and dependents. They would like for the Senate to endorse the proposal as well before passing it along to the administration.

#### **Spouse/ Dependent Tuition Waiver Increase Proposal**

The Southwestern Staff Council would like to respectfully request an increase in the Spouse/Dependent Tuition Waiver from 12 hours to 15 hours per semester effective Fall 2014. This request is made after much research and deliberation on the part of the council. It is our desire to enhance the opportunities for the Universities employees and their families, and improve the benefits package currently offered by the University. This council believes that an increase would not only benefit the employee, but the University as well through additional revenue annually.

#### **Benefits (University)**

- Revenue created by additional student fees (Approx. \$11,000 to \$12,500 per year based upon enrollment averages for 2012 and 2013)
- Additional recruitment tool for new employees by enhancing the benefits package currently offered
- Improvement of graduation numbers (i.e. rates and length time for completion of Bachelor's)

Benefits (Employee)

- Allows Spouse/Dependent greater flexibility when selecting course work (i.e. 4 hour classes such as Biology, Chemistry, etc.)
- Earlier graduation for Spouse/Dependents
- Reduction of financial burden to employee by allowing for faster completion of degree thus enabling parents to remove dependents from insurance plans earlier

The council's request parallels a piece of legislation currently being heard in the state legislature(H.B.3211) which seeks to amend the eligibility requirements all O.H.L.A.P. recipients and mandates a minimum enrollment of 15 hours to be eligible for the program. O.H.L.A.P. is "Oklahoma's Promise" and this extension of the tuition waiver by the University would be considered "SWOSU's Promise". Our hope is that you will increase the hours allowed under the tuition waiver thus enhancing the benefits package and allowing the employee more flexibility when making decisions for their families. We sincerely appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Southwestern Staff Council  
Proposal approved: March 12, 2014

Motion to endorse the proposal.  
Motion approved by a voice vote.

**Senate Motion 2014-01-03:** Motion to send the report of the University Policies Committee about the Potential Change to a Single (M-F) Final Week Exam to the Provost for review.

Motion was approved by a voice vote.

**X. ADJOURNMENT:** 2:30 PM

**Next meeting 2:00 pm  
Friday April 25, 2014**