

Faculty Senate
Minutes of January 21, 2005

FACULTY ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| 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 | |

Proxy

AGRICULTURE (1)

| | | |
|----------------|---|--|
| Bert Greenwalt | P | |
|----------------|---|--|

BUSINESS (3)

| | | |
|---------------|--------|--|
| Gauri Guha | Absent | |
| Dan Marburger | P | |
| Jim Washam | P | |

COMMUNICATIONS (2)

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

EDUCATION (5)

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

ENGINEERING (1)

| | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| Shivan Haran | P | |
|--------------|---|--|

FINE ARTS (3)

| | | |
|----------------|--------|--|
| Tim Crist | Absent | |
| Allyson Gill | P | |
| Kelly Schaefer | P | |

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (6)

| | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| Win Bridges | P | |
| Mary Donaghy | P | |
| Ernesto Lombeida | P | |
| William Maynard | P | |
| Joe Sartorelli | P | |
| Richard Wang | P | |

LIBRARY (1)

| | | |
|----------------|---|--|
| Myron Flugstad | P | |
|----------------|---|--|

MILITARY SCIENCE (1)

LTC Larry P. Aikman Absent

NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS (3)

Dick Freer P
Troy Thomas Absent
Debra Walden P

SCIENCE & MATHEMATICS (4)

William Burns Absent
David Gilmore P
Jeff Jenness P
Jie Miao P

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (1)

Margaret McClain P

I. Minutes: The minutes of the December 3, 2004, meeting were approved as submitted.

II. New Business:

A. IT Changes (presented out of order) Rules were suspended. Mark Hoeting appeared to speak about recent and upcoming changes in IT, including WFF, Enterprise software, and Blackboard. He envisions the replacement process to take up to 36 months.

IT will be holding roundtable discussions and six procurement sessions for two weeks, beginning on January 31.

Training will be offered a month or two before the new financial system is installed in June 2006. The production date for the new student system will be sometime in the fall of 2006, with training to take place beginning in May of 2006 until quite close to the production date. There will be ongoing training after that.

The upgrading of the Blackboard system should be about an 18-month process. The entire campus should be moved over to BB6 next year, with BB5.5 staying up until 2006. The target date for complete migration from the old system to the new one is May 2006. Hoeting noted that the migration tool has been working much better than expected, and faculty members already on the new BB6 had positive comments about it.

Win Bridges called BB6 “a good workable program” with a smooth migration tool. The only drawback he saw with the program was that students could not self-enroll. Amany Saleh concurred that the enrollment tool is the most inconvenient feature of BB6, but she highly recommended the program.

Debra Walden wanted to know if migration to BB6 would be automatic or departments would be notified. Hoeting said that departments will be allowed to choose a migration period that is most convenient for them.

Dr. Richard Wang, who is still on the old BB system, has been inundated with problem calls from students. Dr. Dan Cline commented that BB5.5 was completely inoperable for at least 48 hours the previous weekend.

Dr. Jack Zibluk asked about the speed of the new Web for Faculty, and Hoeting replied that slow speed should be less of a problem in future since the new environment would be completely web-based. His office has done some simulations, and the results have been encouraging; he added, however, that there is no way to do 10,000 simultaneous simulations to reflect the type of traffic that could be expected.

Dr. Sartorelli expressed concern about whether BB5.5 would be kept as a backup, in case the BB6 system has problems. Hoeting said he did not anticipate any crashes of the new system.

Dr. Maynard asked if there would be any tech support for system failures on weekends and holidays, since many faculty members do their prep work on those "off" days. Maynard recommended setting up a special hotline for weekends and holidays. He added that users are sometimes locked out of the system or are asked to change their passwords on holidays. This is a problem when there is no tech support.

Hoeting explained that at the present time IT uses holidays to do maintenance. He did say that the Help Desk emails and Voice Mails are checked every day during off hours. Furthermore, all IT staff members have pagers to answer emergency problems sent via email.

III. Old Business:

A. Committee Reports

- i. **International Students Advisory Committee**—The Committee, consisting of Maynard, Rowe, et al., distributed its "Proposal: English Proficiency Exemption," approved by the Committee 26 October 2004. The Committee urged the Faculty Senate to read the Proposal and submit opinions.

- ii. **Board Meeting**—Bill Rowe, who attended the Dec. 10, 2004 teleconference, presented the meeting agenda, Executive Summary, and "Schedule for Board Meetings in 2005." Scheduled meetings for the coming year will be held January 31 at Jonesboro; Friday, February 25 at Newport; Friday, May 6 at Jonesboro (Commencement); Friday, September 9 at Mountain Home; and Friday, December 6 at Jonesboro (Commencement).

Rowe expressed some concern about the Board's decision to sell off about 536 acres of Poinsett County property, currently leased to Mr. Jim Fletcher for farming purposes until December 31, 2006. Rowe questioned some accounting anomalies. He opined that such a piece of land could be utilized by the College of Agriculture in the future. He felt that the 16% rate of return on investment is a respectable profit and does not warrant divestiture.

Bill Humphrey, who also attended, reported that the attendees asked no questions. There was little or no discussion before the Board made the recommendation to sell the property. It was the feeling of both Rowe and Humphrey that the university would be making a mistake in selling this parcel of land or any other real estate.

At present, the money from land sales would go into the auxiliary fund, but the future appreciation in value of the land was not adequately considered, according to Senate observers.

- iii. **Fringe Benefits**—a. The Committee submitted a document entitled "Routine

Preventative Care Options/Smoking Cessation,” in which several improvements to our health insurance coverage were detailed—physicals, smoking cessation programs, routine well child care, PSA and occult blood exam, routine gynecological exam, and mammograms. These additions to our health insurance were seen as positive changes.

Debra Walden noted that because of anomalies in billing procedures, patients needed to notify their primary care providers (PCP) to use the correct coding when billing for physicals. John Hall said that Human Resources would notify the PCP of the correct coding for the procedure if the patient asked HR to do so.

B. Faculty Handbook—i. Housing Policies: A draft of the document entitled “ASU Rental Procedures” was distributed. There was extensive discussion of the contents. Win Bridges made the point that a three-year residence period in faculty housing was really not long enough for a new faculty member since it routinely takes about 6 years to achieve tenure. He added that during the pre-tenure review done after 4 years of employment, an applicant should have a good idea of whether he/she will receive tenure. He did point out, however, that the document was only in draft form and that comments from faculty would be welcomed.

William Maynard pointed out that the Faculty Handbook specifically allows a faculty member to live in faculty housing for 4 years; thus, the draft document is in violation of the Faculty Handbook.

Susan Allen added that the rental policy for the new houses would be different from the policy in effect at the College Circle location. She reminded the Senate that the document on the table was only a draft and could be changed, pending comment.

Dr. Maynard made the point that some very highly paid administrators are now or have been living in low-cost faculty housing. He said it was his impression that the housing policy is changed by fiat. He noted that members of the IT staff and a Library Dean were now living in houses not meant for non-faculty usage.

Bill Rowe added that there was some rationale for renting to non-faculty—i.e., to prevent vacancies. Traditionally, when there have been vacancies, the houses have been rented to others. However, he continued, extending the rental period to 4 or 6 years should eliminate the problem of frequent vacancies.

Bill Humphrey mentioned that the faculty homes ought to serve their intended purpose as a recruiting tool to bring desirable faculty to ASU.

The faculty is encouraged to send their comments to Susan Allen.

ii. Holiday Schedule: The “Holiday Schedule 2005” (draft) was distributed. Again, faculty members are urged to send comments to Susan Allen. Dr. Maynard wished to see Martin Luther King’s name placed before Robert E. Lee’s for the December 27 holiday.

iii. Other Scheduling Problems: Allen was asked why the administration suddenly required the early posting of grades in December 2004. She assured the faculty that such a last-minute change in the schedule would not happen again. She did, however,

stress that the timely submission of grades was very important; late submissions could adversely affect student financial aid.

C. New Search Process--Dr. Wang initiated a discussion of the new procedures for conducting searches. He said his department is the first department in the new year to conduct a search under the new hiring guidelines. Wang explained that the process was conducted almost entirely online at www.applicantharbor.com, where prospective employees respond to ads and post resumes.

There was some discussion of the new system versus the old one. There was some general dissatisfaction with the new system. Dr. Humphrey, who said he was involved in the search for a new Director of Facilities Management, was not pleased with the new system. He said it required printing reams of resumes if one wanted to compare applicants' qualifications. One could not simultaneously compare several resumes online.

Dr. Wang expressed concern that the new system was taking faculty out of the search process.

Dr. Maynard said that the new search system was contrary to guidelines clearly laid out in the Faculty Handbook; furthermore, he questioned the administration's wisdom in paying for expensive online services while a cost crisis was in effect.

Dr. Hall questioned whether a new search process was really needed and opined that it violated shared governance guidelines.

Richard Wang said the new system came into effect with no prior notification to faculty, or even chairs of departments. He said that he had been given technical reasons for the new system—it's easier for new faculty to publish their resumes nationally; the search process can be tracked easily; the university can ensure compliance with federal government policies; and the university can obtain real-time data.

Dr. Wang mentioned other problems with the site—no academic positions posted; site still under construction.

Allyson Gill mentioned that grant applications are also placed online these days, and this trend represents the new world of electronics. She said that it is easy for a grant applicant to find out online if his/her application is complete.

Dr. Bridges theorized that standardizing the job application process in academia might not be a bad idea.

Drs. Sartorelli and Hall both asked where, in the current financial crisis, the money for the new hiring process was coming from.

Jeff Jenness expressed some concern over the accuracy of the transcripts submitted online. He wondered how they were entered into the system. He added that he felt the new process did not take into consideration faculty values.

Dr. Hall mentioned that the process was not consistent with the Faculty Handbook; Dr. Freer said it violated the process that we as a faculty have all agreed upon in the past.

Chair Rowe said he would try to have Glenn Jones address the Senate and answer faculty concerns.

D. Faculty Senator's Survey—It was determined that very few senators had surveyed their faculties on their satisfaction with the present administration. A survey questionnaire would shortly be sent out by the Faculty Association. The departments that were polled exhibited discontent. The issue was tabled.

IV. New Business (continued):

A. IT Changes (taken out of order)

B. Faculty Evaluations on the Internet— Dr. Jack Zibluk reported that he had been asked by the SGA to act as liaison between SGA and the Faculty Senate. Zibluk mentioned a list of concerns that he had received from faculty members and passed on to the students—validity, reliability, internal politics, FERPA and privacy, among others. He said students seemed receptive to faculty concerns; they just wanted to post their evaluations in the interest of helping other students make more informed choices. SGA said they would be willing to address the Faculty Senate in future when they had come up with a more concrete plan. At present, they are looking for some kind of Internet tool. Their evaluation system would not allow for comments; it would just be a rating system. Zibluk said he had spoken to Kent Johnson to find out whether the online student evaluations would in any way be used in departmental faculty evaluations. In conclusion, the students are committed to putting their evaluation system online sometime this spring.

Faculty members wondered about the funding source for the planned SGA evaluation system.

Some faculty expressed concern that the SGA system could be modeled on such (possibly libelous) websites as www.ratemyprofessor.com.

Mark Hoeting, who had been at the meeting between SGA and Dr. Zibluk, told the Senate that the evaluation system would not be outsourced, but linked to Web for Students.

Dennis White mentioned the freedom of speech issue involved in the SGA plan.

John Hall recalled the 1997 effort by students to disseminate evaluations of professors. He wondered if the SGA's evaluations would become part of the faculty member's personnel file, and what legal issues were involved.

Jeff Jenness believed that the evaluations should not be sponsored on ASU's official website.

Dan Marburger compared the student evaluations to restaurant reviews and admitted that some students would choose the easy way out—selecting a professor based on others' perceptions of how "easy" a professor was. He went on to say that the SGA results must be removed from the merit pay process.

Dr. Maynard stated that in the last attempt to evaluate professors online, the results were placed on ASU's website. He asked if the evaluations would be anonymous. Dr. Hall said that some faculty may want to know who submitted information about them.

Dr. Zibluk replied the system would be set up to collect data, not comments.

C. Equitable Hiring Practices— Bill Rowe conveyed concerns that faculty members have emailed to him. He has received complaints about nepotism; hiring for the Honors College; hiring of the Dean of the Graduate School; International Programs; conforming to diversity guidelines; lack of involvement by faculty in new hiring; and availability of monies for some hires but not others. Dr. Hall commented that in the hiring of the graduate dean, again shared governance has not been working.

D. Shared Governance--COIA—Dan Marburger reported that ASU was not represented at the COIA meeting held at Vanderbilt University 3 weeks ago. The meeting, which involved faculty senates acting as liaisons with athletic departments, has no legislative or regulatory powers. The meeting was held to discuss what standards were appropriate for student athletes. Marburger said the COIA document will be available online; faculty were asked to read the document. Marburger will vote for the ASU Faculty Senate in mid-February.

E. Faculty Handbook (again)— Bill Humphrey reported that the parts of the Faculty Handbook which have been completed would be placed online within the next two weeks. Four parts are ready for publication. The Contents of Section One are still to be determined; Humphrey reported that people have been asked to serve on the General Education and Curriculum Committees. Faculty members are urged to make comments and suggestions.

Apparently, no changes were made to Appendix F on teacher education—the governance of professional education programs.

The completed sections can be viewed at the Academic Affairs website; faculty should read the material and be prepared to vote separately on each of the completed sections at the next Faculty Senate meeting. The Faculty Senate will vote on the entire Handbook at a later time.

Dr. Maynard noted that Donn Mixon has reviewed the Faculty Handbook and the Attorney General's Office will review it as well.

The Foreword may be done later.

Comments can be sent to the Handbook Committee, comprised of Isaaksen, Rowe, Maynard, Hall, and Humphrey.

Dr. Hall urged the faculty to read and comment on the Handbook now, not after final approval.

Link to Faculty Handbook Draft is attached here. Click on parts of Handbook and open as Adobe Acrobat file.

Draft **Faculty Handbook**

January 10, 2005

ASU has been working on revision of the **Faculty Handbook** for a number of years. Because it appears difficult, if not impossible, to come to a consensus on the entire document, the **Faculty** Senate leadership and I have agreed to submit it for approval in sections.

The links below are to the first draft sections of the **Faculty Handbook**. These drafts will be posted to the RAA and **Faculty** Senate websites for comment through January 20, 2005. The drafts have been reviewed by the **Faculty** Senate **Handbook** Committee and University Counsel. Earlier drafts have been sent to deans and chairs for comment. Please direct your comments to Sherry Johnson of this office (sjohnson@astate.edu). She will compile the comments for further discussion.

I would like to comment on several items that may initially cause concern. The following is a quote from University Counsel: “Amendment 33 to the Arkansas Constitution vests in the Board of Trustees the authority to manage and control the University. It is imperative that this constitutional authority be consistently asserted and protected. From time to time, other state agencies, the legislature, and even the executive department seek to encroach upon the management and control of the University. We must be constantly vigilant to preserve the constitutional rights of our Board. “

“All University documents must consistently recognize and assert the constitutional authority of the Board. We do not want to place ourselves in a position of having suggested that the constitutional duties have in any way been delegated or diluted. Should the Board of Trustees lose the right to control and manage the University, other agencies might seek to dictate curriculum, program offerings or other policy matters constitutionally controlled by the Board of Trustees. We cannot allow this to happen. “ The resulting rather strong language in several places is necessary to ensure that ASU maintains its independence and to “safeguard the constitutional authority of the Board of Trustees.”

The second item is the concept of the **Faculty Handbook** as a contract. University Counsel has prepared a white paper on this topic, the contents of which can be summarized as: a) the **Handbook** is not a contract and b) the annual letter of appointment is a contract.

I look forward to your comments.

Susan Davis Allen

Vice Chancellor for Research and Academic Affairs

[Letter from the President](#)

[Foreword](#)

[Section I – University Vision, Mission, Organization and Governance](#)

[Section IV – Promotion, Retention and Tenure Policies and Procedures](#)

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[Appendix F \(Approved by the Board of Trustees April 20, 1998\)](#)

G. Other—FOIA and Grievance Procedures—Dr. Maynard reported that the *Jonesboro Sun* had filed an FOIA request for access to ASU faculty grievance procedures. The university attorney told the *Sun* that releasing these proceedings was contrary to existing law. Grievance proceedings are part of the employee’s personnel record and is thus considered private, except upon termination.

Dr. Susan Allen noted that two different laws covered personnel records versus employment records. She noted that employment records needed to be protected. The distinction between the two types of records will be made in the PRT section and Section II of the Handbook.

Grievance procedures are not considered open meetings.

It was suggested that the Executive Committee send a letter to the *Sun* regarding press FOIA requests to closed meetings and supporting the FOIA. Susan Allen suggested that perhaps the question could be put to a vote.

There was a call for a Sense of the Senate Resolution on media requests to be present at grievance hearings. Discussion followed. Dr. Humphrey thought that the media would be eager to print accusations, but very slow to print retractions. Dr. Hall expressed the opinion that the faculty member should be the one to decide whether to release information to the press. Chairman Rowe noted that in the past, the *Jonesboro Sun* has printed unsubstantiated accusations.

Dr. Maynard added that the *Sun* request consisted of two parts: (1) request to be notified of grievance proceedings and (2) access to personnel and employment files. Maynard proposed

that the Faculty Senate send a letter to the *Jonesboro Sun*, in which the Senate supported upholding the FOI Act and ASU's policy on personnel and employment records.

V. Announcements:

Bill Rowe announced that the NEA Clinic on Windover has plenty of flu shots available.

VI. Adjournment:

In the absence of any further business, Chairman Rowe adjourned the meeting at 5:00 PM