

MINUTES  
TROY UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE MEETING  
27 October 2010

1. Dr. Shelton called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.
2. Mr. Jim Davis completed the roll call for the meeting. Attendance was as follows:
  - a. Members present:
    - Tammy Esteves
    - Tom Kolasa
    - Brian Webb
    - Marty Olliff
    - Scout Blum
    - Jim Davis
    - Regina Gaillard
    - Govind Menon
    - Ben Robertson
    - Sam Shelton
    - Lane Eckis
    - Bill Heisler
    - John Irwin
    - Robert Kitahara
    - Richard Voss
    - John Jinright
    - Johanna Alberich
    - Frank Browning
    - Michael Burgan
    - Eddie Clark
    - Mary Ann Hooten
    - Mary Battaglia
    - Debra Lett
  - b. Members absent:
    - Catherine Allard
    - David Hollingsworth (with notice)
    - Zhang Jun
3. The September minutes were approved as corrected after the correction of a typo and a spelling error.
4. President's Report
  - A. President's Correspondence
    - i. Dr. Shelton reported that he had sent a letter to Dean Reeves concerning the campus-to-campus shuttle idea. He noted that Dean Reeves is in attendance at the meeting and will discuss the matter under Old Business.
    - ii. Dr. Shelton stated that there has been discussion of the confusion over the issue of employee tuition assistance. The entire issue is under review by HR, so that issue is tabled for the present.
  - B. Other

- i. Dr. Shelton reported to the Senate, as a member of the Senior Vice-Chancellor for Academics Search Committee, that the position has been re-advertised, and the deadline for submissions extended until the end of December. Dr. Shelton said that as he understands it, this is due to the number of applications received, not the quality of applications received. The intent is to have a larger pool to look at. The new announcement has a start time of 1 July 2011.
  
- ii. Dr. Shelton announced that under Article IV, Section 5 of the Faculty Senate Constitution, which reads in part “After a member misses two meetings during the academic year, the president will provide notice of excessive absences to the member. On the subsequent absence of the member, the president shall have the power to make a motion for the removal the member from the Senate. If the motion has the approval of two-thirds of the Senate, the member will be removed and the President will call a special election to fill the remaining time on the member’s term,” he has sent such a notice to Dr. Jun Zhang of the College of Arts and Sciences for missing the two meetings of this academic year, although he has not attended the Senate since October 2009.
  
- iii. Dr. Shelton reported that he attended the latest meeting of the Board of Trustees. The Board announced the issuance of a new bond issue for two purposes, to repay some current bond issues that have higher interest rates than the new bonds, and to provide \$16 million for the renovation of Alumni Hall on the Troy campus and for the continuation of the Trojan Arena project. The anticipated savings on the new lower interest rates is a little over \$1 million.  
 At the Board meeting, Marcus Paramore, the Troy legislative liaison, reported that Troy is going to challenge, in some fashion, the law passed last year that limited the tuition increases that universities in the state, except for Auburn and Alabama, can charge to participants in the PACT program.  
 There was discussion of a report from a consultant about the creation of a School of Science and Technology within the College of Arts and Sciences. The Board took no action on the matter.

## 5. Committee Reports

- A. Executive Committee—Dr. Shelton reported that the Executive Committee met the previous Wednesday to approve the agenda for today’s meeting, as well as to get committee updates from the committee chairs.
  
- B. Committee on Committees—Dr. Allard was not present.
  
- C. Elections Committee—Mr. Davis had nothing to report.
  
- D. Academic Affairs Committee—Dr. Olliff reported that the AAC had a preliminary discussion of the charge to look into the 2015 plan. They have identified 12 areas that significant enough academic impact that the Senate should have a meaningful amount of input. These items range from expanding the number of undergraduate and graduate programs, to things that may seem peripheral but have academic component, such as developing a Professional Development Institute. This report has been forwarded to all senators, and Dr. Olliff asked that this be accepted as the AAC report. The next step would be to look at how the Senate and the faculty can have some reasonable input, and questions we should ask and what directions we might consider making recommendations.
  
- E. Faculty Welfare Committee—Dr. Kolasa reported on the Lecturer Study. He said that he will have a draft to submit to the Executive Committee, after looking at other institutions to

see how they handle these issues. The seven issues that have come up so far are job security, benefits, research opportunities, University duties, reviews of the lecturers, recruitment practices, and pay. The report should be ready this month.

#### F. Campus Reports

i. Dothan Campus—Dr. Olliff reported that the Dr. Fulmer tells him the plan is to have an Associate Dean of A&S in place shortly. This is good news because they are starting to feel the lack of the Associate Dean as the duties are not getting done or are scattered to several different people. An unfilled secretarial staff position in A&S might possibly be filled, according to Dr. Fulmer, even in light of the hiring freeze.

Dr. Olliff explained that the four Faculty Senators from the Dothan campus have met together to see what they can do to represent the Dothan faculty to the Dothan administration. To that end, Dr. Olliff has sent a letter to Dr. Jeffrey asking for a general faculty meeting to discuss coming up with a Dothan version of new faculty orientation. Dr. Olliff has made contact with the Dothan SGA, and they will be working to set up liaisons between the two bodies.

There has been unhappiness with Dr. Ingram's email reiterating the limits to outside employment by the faculty. Several faculty members have contact Dr. Olliff expressing "various degrees of consternation" over the policy. With the reduction of overloads, with faculty compensation being dropped from the five-year plan, and now with this reiteration of the limits on outside employment, some faculty members feel that their pocketbooks are being attacked.

ii. Global Campus—Dr. Esteves says there is still concern being expressed to her concerning the travel policy of having to deal through All Seasons Travel, particularly because AST has east-coast business hours and other time zones have trouble with the time differences.

iii. Montgomery Campus—Dr. Kolasa said that Vice-Chancellor Ray White is planning a larger homecoming event this year. The History and Social Sciences Association is having a Halloween movie, organized by new president Ashley Hicks. The HSSA is also working with Habitat for Humanity, probably in November. Discussions with Student Services continue on forming a campus SGA, with some positive results. Dr. Kolasa also asked for information on whether it would be possible to extend the dining hours at the campus cafeteria, because of the predicament of most of their students who come to class just after work and have nowhere else to eat, plus classes often last until 10:15. Mr. Agboatwala said that the Troy campus cafeteria stays open until 7:00, but the retail food services are open much later. Dothan cafeteria stays open until 7:00, Phenix City until 6:00. Mr. Davis noted that the Troy campus SGA is in the process of negotiating cafeteria closing hours with the Stewart Dining Hall on the Troy campus.

iv. Phenix City Campus—Dr. Hollingsworth was not present.

v. Troy Campus—Dr. Allard was not present.

vi. Library—Mr. Webb had no report.

G. Constitution Review—Dr. Allard was not present. Dr. Shelton said that the committee is working on the master list of eligible full-time employees, for election purposes, and Dr. Shelton has asked her to expedite the A&S portion because of the anticipated need or a special election in that college. Dr. Blum said that the A&S portion is complete.

H. SGA-Faculty Senate Liaisons—Mr. Davis said that he had been attending the Troy campus SGA meetings since the last Senate meeting. He said that he was favorably impressed with the SGA. The SGA asked him to speak to them about Plus/Minus grading because so little is

generally known about it. He reported to them that the Faculty Senate has sent a letter to the Chancellor asking for the formation of a committee to study the issue, and explained the basic working of a Plus/Minus system. The SGA senators asked some good questions and expressed some interest. The talk did, in addition, result in an article in the Tropolitan, the Troy campus student newspaper.

Dr. Olliff reported that he has contacted Amy Farver, the Student Services Coordinator for the Dothan campus, and that he will be on the SGA's November agenda, which he hopes will lead to the establishment of a liaisonship with the Dothan SGA.

I. Dr. Blum reported that the committee to evaluate the article in the Chronicle, organized by Dr. Dew, is scheduled to meet on November 9.

## 6. Old Business

A. Quality Enhancement Institute—Dr. Shelton said that his understanding is that QEI is still alive, and that some of the resources will become online resources, such as resources for teaching, assessment, FAQs, how to improve our teaching, and creative thinking. It is a work in progress, but it is progressing. Dr. Vardaman said that new teacher orientation is moving forward as part of the SACS requirements, but he confirmed that the focus is for it to be online, with some face-to-face meetings built in. Dr. Shelton said that his understanding that the FAQs would be available mainly online, including, possibly, some videos. Dr. Vardaman emphasized the “possibly.”

B. Plus/Minus Grading Study—Dr. Shelton said as a result of the SGA's interest, the Tropolitan contacted him about the topic, not, as the article's headline said, the other way around. The Senate is still awaiting action from the Chancellor on our request.

C. Campus-to-Campus Shuttle—Dean Reeves was present to speak about the feasibility of a campus-to-campus shuttle. He told the Senate that he has begun the process of looking into campus-to-campus shuttles between Troy and Montgomery, and between Troy and Dothan. It is a purely economic decision. With a minimum of 20 people to break even, it would be about \$15 per round trip per person. With a smaller bus it would be about \$10 per person per round trip, but it would be limited to 14 people. Questions would include what time of day? How many times per day? A survey would be necessary to determine student interest, as part of a feasibility student. Dr. Kolasa said that he has heard from students who would take courses here on the Troy campus if there were a shuttle. Dr. Blum asked if the ticket price could fluctuate with fuel prices. Dean Reeves answered affirmatively. Dr. Shelton commented that there would be extra wear on the buses, and it was his understanding that there is no federal money available replacing the buses.

Dr. Blum made a motion that the Senate request that Dean Reeves do a feasibility study to determine the level of interest among faculty, staff, and students. Dr. Gaillard commented that the feasibility would change with each term. The motion passed.

D. Consolidated Elections Proposal—Dr. Shelton reviewed the history of this proposal for the new Senators, outlining the proposal put forth to the Deans last Spring to consolidate all campus standing committee elections to be run by the Senate using its current automated/online balloting system. There were questions raised at the time which resulted in the delay of the initiation of the system. Dr. Shelton asked if the Senate wants to continue to pursue this issue. Dr. Blum spoke in favor of continuing to push the issue as a very worthwhile thing. Dr. Shelton accepted the Senate's recommendation that he continue to push the proposal.

## 7. New Business

A. Blackboard Help—Ms. Battaglia raised the issue of getting emergency help with problems with Blackboard when a teacher is actually conducting class and runs into problems that could result in the loss of an entire class period, and thus require immediate help. In addition, Ms. Battaglia had experienced a breach of her password. Present at the meeting to discuss these issues were Ronnie Creel and Kim Shaver of Blackboard Support, and Greg Price, Eric Blair, and Angel Johnson from IT.

(Due to a malfunction by Faculty Senate Secretary 8.2, the complete transcript of this 45-minute discussion is unavailable. If you wish to view the transcript, submit a ticket. As Mr. Creel and Ms. Shaver emphasized, the most likely way to receive immediate help is through the ticket system. During peak hours there are seven technicians available and most tickets are answered within a few minutes. There is a “triage” system by which those tickets which appear to be emergencies are answered first. Finally, a telephone call might possibly not get through at all because of the likelihood of the person you are calling not being available to answer. Ms. Shaver explained that in a true emergency, instructors could put on the ticket for the technician to please call the instructor. Mr. Creel asked that the Senate support efforts to hire more technicians to provide better help-coverage, particularly in off-hours and on weekends. Several Senators expressed support for the fast response and helpfulness they have experienced with the ticket system.

As far as Ms. Battaglia’s security breach, someone had obtained her email password and used it to breach her Blackboard account. Mr. Creel urged that everyone regularly change their email passwords.)

B. Termination of Dr. Jun Zhang—Dr. Shelton asked that the Senate vote to terminate the membership of Dr. Jun Zhang, to declare his position vacant, and to call for an election to fill his unexpired term as Art and Sciences representative, which expires in 2012. A voice vote was called for, requiring two-thirds of the Senate members. The motion passed with 23 “yes” votes.

Dr. Shelton announced that we will be sending out an announcement of the vacancy soon, and asked that Senators urge their fellow faculty members to put their names in as candidates.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 pm.