

# MSU Faculty Senate

## March Minutes

The MSU Faculty Senate met at 3:00 p.m. on March 9, 2006 in the Cheyenne Meeting Room of CSC. Senators present included Arnoult, Sharon; Bultena, Charles (Treasurer); Coe, Mary Ann; Comello, Robert; Davis, Fred; Guthrie, Paul; Johnson, Tina; Johnston, Chuck; Kaciuba, Gail; Lewandowski, Elizabeth; Marty, Melissa; McClintock, Stuart (Secretary); McNeely, Tom; Redmon, Bob (Vice Chair); Rhoads, Jon; Schuppener, James; Stiles, Beverly (Parliamentarian); Tucker, David (Chair).

Agenda was unanimously approved. February minutes had previously been approved by e-mail.

### *Current Business:*

1. COPLAC and First-Year Experience. Associate Provost Bob Clark and Director of Student Activities Matt Park asked to address the Faculty Senate to discuss COPLAC and the First-Year Experience. Dr. Clark said that the two site visitors have been selected to do COPLAC's on-site visit at some point in April. At the end of their visit, they will meet with the president and others and will give the administration an idea of what their recommendation regarding MSU's membership will be at the annual COPLAC meeting this summer in Georgia.

Dr. Clark and Matt Park also discussed the First-Year Experience. Last spring, Dr. Clark was asked to rethink the composition of the Student Retention Committee. Its name was changed to the Student Success Committee. It was reformed and expanded to have twenty-six members. MSU was also asked by the Policy Center on First Year of College to participate in a national higher education project known as "Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year" This project uses an aspirational model of excellence for the first year of college. This model will help guide MSU in the development and refining of an overall approach to educating, engaging, and supporting first-year students.

Dr. Clark and Mr. Parks said that a committee has been studying what MSU is doing for its first-year students. The committee will create a thorough model with nine dimensions covering all aspects of first-year experience across the university. Three sub-committees have been formed, and each will work on three dimensions.

This is a self-paced program with ongoing assessment. The university will grade itself on its performance. The present assessment of performance will come, in part, from surveys in fall 2005 of faculty and staff and of five hundred students. The staff at the Policy Center will comment on our assessment. From its comments we will develop an action plan.

For more information about the Policy Center and this project, consult [www.fyfoundations.org](http://www.fyfoundations.org). There was some general discussion of first-year students at MSU. Here is a summary of points made by members of the Senate, Dr. Clark, and Matt Park

-There are some discrepancies between student and faculty responses in some areas of the surveys. Matt Park mentioned advising in particular.

-Dr. Clark is also looking at a study of the sophomore year.

-Some faculty only teach upper division courses and have no contact with freshman. Senator Johnston said that in the College of Business Administration, students can now declare their major early, allowing them to join organizations, and thus have some contact with faculty members that they might otherwise only meet later in advanced classes.

-Vice-chair Redmon talked about a change in first-year paradigm that has occurred. Formerly the first year served to filter out unsuccessful students. Now it must be set up to find ways to facilitate success.

-Senator Arnoult mentioned that too many students arrive at MSU and are not prepared to do college-level work. Senator Johnson said that in secondary school, the teacher, not the student, is held responsible for student success. She said that students need to realize that success is their responsibility in college.

-Responding to Senators Arnoult and Johnson, Dr. Clark said that Dawson Orr, Superintendent of the WFISD, would like to set up meetings between high school and college educators to discuss what college professors expect a student to be able to do when he/she begins college.

-Senator Coe mentioned that many local students come to MSU after being used to much smaller classes in high school.

-Dr. Clark added that the College Connections courses at some universities are taught within each college, and students are taught by their advisors (if they have declared their major).

2. Policy 3:130. The policy for titled professors is being rewritten, and the Faculty Senate examined its content. Senator Coe made a motion, with a second from Senator McNeely, to recommend that the Senate approve the rewritten policy. It was approved in a nine to five hand vote, and there were two abstentions. Vice-Chair Redmon motioned to recommend that the following language be added to section E of the new policy: "The university will cover additional benefit costs from funds other than those designated for general faculty benefits". Senator Guthrie seconded the motion, and it passed.

3. Dean Sportsman of Health Sciences and Human Services asked that a clarification be made to an item in the February minutes. The February minutes state "Senator Kilgore brought to the Senate's attention that mandatory attendance is required at a meeting in the College of Health Sciences and Human Services at which the American Democracy Project is being presented." Dean Sportsman would like to state that Senator Kilgore was correct in stating that attendance at the meetings was mandatory, but it was not specifically for a presentation of the ADP.

4. Chairman Tucker and Senator Arnoult gave a report on the Texas Council of Faculty Senates meeting that they attended in February. See their notes at the end of the minutes.

#### Committee and Other Reports:

1. Administrative Council (Tucker): (no meeting)
2. Board of Regents (Tucker): (no meeting)
3. Academic Council (Redmon): (no meeting)
4. Enrollment Management (Stiles): (no meeting)
5. Intercollegiate Athletics Council (Marty): See end of minutes
6. Alumni Association Council: (no meeting)
7. Student Affairs (Lewandowski): See end of minutes.

8. Other active committees: none
9. Financial report (Bultena): The Faculty Senate has \$515.

#### Closing Items:

1. Chairman Tucker said that three new seats have been added to the Senate for next year because of growth in the Colleges of Science and Math, Fine Arts, and Health Sciences and Human Services.
2. Chairman Tucker said that the April meeting will be the last of the year at which business can be conducted. (The only business that can be conducted at the May meeting is the election of officers for next year.) Therefore he asked senators to seriously consider any items that they think need to be addressed at the April meeting.
3. Senator Lewandowski would like at some point for the Senate to address membership rules in the Faculty Senate. She wonders if it is fair to have untenured faculty on the Senate.
4. Secretary McClintock announced that the provost has contracted for the anti-plagiarism software and will announce when it will be in effect.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be at 3 PM on April 20, 2006 in Cheyenne Meeting Room in CSC. The next executive Council meeting will be April 18, 2006 at 3 PM in the Apache Board Room in CSC

## Intercollegiate Athletics Committee

March 9, 2006

**Members Present:** Keith Lamb, Chair; Dail Neely, Dean of Students; Sam Crutcher, M-Club President; Michael O'Connor, Alumni Representative; Dr. Paul Guthrie; Faculty Athletic Representative; Jim Gorham, Melissa Marty, Dr. James Owen, Will Morefield, Student Government President. **Member Absent:** Joey Greenwood. **Guest Present:** Kurt Portmann, Athletic Director.

Chair, Keith Lamb, opened the meeting and thanked the members for their presence. He turned the meeting over to Kurt Portmann, Athletic Director, to explain to the committee the process for tutoring student-athletes. Kurt explained that Carl Nichols is responsible for coordinating the tutors for student-athletes. The student-athletes are encouraged from their first meetings of the year to see him as soon as they are having difficulty in any class. Carl contacts the tutors for the student-athletes and the tutors are responsible to report back to Carl if any student-athlete does not attend scheduled tutoring sessions. There are areas that have tutors in their respective departments such as English, Math, and Science and they encourage the student-athletes to use these services. They will not turn any student-athlete away if they express to Carl that they need help in any area. The ultimate goal is to help the student-athlete succeed.

Dr. Guthrie then explained that as the Faculty Athletic Representative he had attended a coaches meeting and he felt that the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee should understand the process that athletics uses for tutoring assistance. The athletics department was involved in a compliance review in the fall 2006 semester. The review was conducted with representatives from the Big 12 who interviewed departments that work with athletics, such as admissions and registrar, to

review how the athletic department is handled. The review found that everything is being handled correctly, but that there is a need for all policies to be in a policy manual.

The committee discussed the monitoring of tutors by athletics and the quality/training of tutors. The most common problem with tutoring is the student-athlete who does not attend a tutoring session. Kurt reported that the majority of student-athletes who receive tutoring do pass the class in which they received tutoring.

The committee then began discussion on progress reports that are sent to faculty members for student-athletes. Currently, the results of student-athlete's tutoring are only monitored by the grade the student-athlete receives when the final grades are posted. The committee would have Carl track the success of students after they receive tutoring services. It was noted that Carl is a part-time employee of the university.

The athletic department has limited resources for tutoring services, and student-athletes access the resources on a first-come first-served basis. If the allocated resources are exhausted the funds are taken from the budget of the sport involved. The committee asked the athletic director about strong students using tutoring services. Kurt reported that they have students who are "A" students that have requested help keeping an "A" in classes in which they might be having some difficulty, and those students are not turned away. As students access tutoring resources through Carl, Kurt feels that, although individual sports pay after the budget is depleted, access is consistent and fair.

The committee's next discussion topic was scheduling games/matches. Kurt provided the committee a handout with information from individual coaches about the dates their student-athletes missed classes this year. Softball will miss the most classes because of the number of games that they play. Kurt feels that the coaches are good about watching their schedules to minimize the number of classes their student-athletes will miss. It was noted that conference games are not scheduled by the coaches, so they have no control over those games. Carl Nichols is responsible for providing the student-athlete a schedule of who will be making trips so that the student-athlete can give notice to faculty. The student-athlete is ultimately responsible for their work and should coordinate with their faculty.

Dr. Guthrie reported that in his contact with coaches they seemed very concerned about missed class time. The committee asked if it would benefit athletics if guidelines were established with the help of the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee. After discussion, it was decided there was not a need for established guidelines. Kurt agreed to provide the committee a report each year on of the number of days missed by each sport.

Kurt again provided the committee an update on the insurance issue with uninsured student athletes. The athletic department is making insurance forms available online in an effort to get more insurance information from student-athletes. The athletic trainer has received two quotes on insurance policies that individual student-athletes could purchase if they do not have appropriate insurance. One policy was \$900 for ten months of insurance with a \$1,000 deductible and no cap on surgery. It paid at 90% after the deductible was met. The second policy was \$1,000 for a ten month policy with a \$10,000 cap on surgery and it paid at 80% after the \$1,000 deductible.

The committee discussed the pros and cons of requiring non-scholarship student-athletes to have insurance coverage and whether that would limit their participation. The committee feels that the football program will be the most affected if we require insurance. Kurt would favor requiring insurance for non-scholarship walk-ons, but the idea is not endorsed by all coaches. Kurt provided the committee a hand-out of an article from the NCAA on the insurance dilemma and how it has created tough choices for universities.

Melissa volunteered to report to the committee the number of current non-scholarship student-athletes who are not covered by an individual policy. The committee will ask Kurt to provide a report on (1) the monetary value of claims and (2) the number of claims for each year the athletic department has been self-insured. The insurance question will be researched further. Keith feels that the committee should provide some direction to the Athletic Director as he came to the committee for guidance with the insurance issue.

The committee was provided the season evaluations for football and men's soccer completed since the last meeting. Keith briefly went over those evaluations and noted to the committee that the comments sections were removed from these reports. The entire evaluations will be e-mailed to the committee.

Keith will request a report from the Athletic Director on the results of the compliance review at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

## Student Affairs Council Report

February 12, 2006 Meeting

The following issues discussed are of specific interest to the faculty.

- ❖ The University Guest House is now open. Departments can use the house for guests for the cost of \$50 for one bedroom per night or \$100 for the entire house per night. (Personal note: The meeting was held in the house. It is tastefully decorated in MSU colors and quite comfortable. The kitchen is very modern. As someone who, when interviewing here, stayed in the former guest house, this is a wonderful space!)
- ❖ The commitment has been made to develop an engineering program, including electrical and possibly industrial engineering. The possibility of a new building to house the program(s) exists.
- ❖ The Student Government Association is considering establishing a student endowed scholarship for future MSU students, funding the endowment with a \$.50-\$1 per credit hour fee. The SGA is also considering creating a student directory (as is common at many universities).
- ❖ MSU will be building a Habitat for Humanity House April 3-25. Twenty five people are needed each day to volunteer their time on the construction. Individuals and groups who wish to participate should sign up at the Information Desk in the CSC.
- ❖ April 3-7 is Greek Week.

- ❖ MSU has received initial approval from COPLAC. A site visit will take place this spring and a final decision on the university's application will be made in June.
- ❖ *Facebook* is rapidly becoming a popular website with students. A great deal of personal information is being posted without care for personal safety and a number of cases of stalking related to the site have been reported nation-wide. Student Affairs is taking a hard look at how to keep the students informed of the site and aware of potential risk.
- ❖ A preliminary budget proposal for Spirit Days was passed. The budget included the addition of a separate Spirit Day for transfer students (the result of a number of requests from transfer students during last year's Spirit Days).

Respectfully submitted,  
Elizabeth J. Lewandowski  
Professor of Theatre

## **Report from the Texas Council of Faculty Senates, Austin, February, 2006.**

\* You may recall the situation we told you about last semester at TAMU-Kingsville, in which the president of the university dissolved the Faculty Senate with the support of the TAMU system chancellor. A new Faculty Senate, with a new constitution, has been approved by a vote of the faculty there.

\*There was also a situation at UT-Austin involving the written comments on student evaluations, with the administration considering them university property, which it could control, and some faculty disagreeing. A particularly sensitive area was the university's intention to publish, on its web site, not only the numerical data from the evaluations, but the written comments as well. A committee that was formed to investigate and make recommendations on this issue came up with the following: that written comments no longer be part of the official Course Instructor Survey (CIS), but be solicited via procedures that would avoid problems with the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act. A faculty member who chooses to use written comments for purposes of tenure/promotion must submit all written comments, not just selected ones, and at that point they will become official records, and subject to the Open Records Act. The university must also inform faculty in writing of their rights and obligation with respect to CIS evaluations. It remains to be seen how the administration at UT will respond to these recommendations.

\*A presentation was made by Gaines West, an attorney who specializes in cases involving faculty issues such as academic freedom. In relation to litigation about such things, he had one basic message: "the law and the judges are against you." He made available four brief articles he had written: "Tenure: Fact or Fallacy? At State Universities Tenure Protects Only When No Protection Is Needed," "Qualified Immunity: The Judiciary's 'End Run' to Civil Rights," "Free Speech: What's the Real Cost?," and "Private Universities: Bargaining for the Freedom of Speech." The first three apply to faculty at state-supported institutions, the last to private universities. I have a copy of all four, and will be glad to send a copy of any or all to whomever wants them. (Can't do it electronically because our department scanner won't work.)

Mr. West, however, while stressing the impotence of individual faculty members, did say that faculty at an institution do have a great deal of power and strength if they are united.

\*Catherine Parsonneault from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board had two things to report. An undergraduate advisory committee is being formed to recommend policy and process for evaluating (by the THECB) all undergraduate degree programs. The THECB in the past has monitored degree programs in terms of numbers (to cull “underperforming” programs), but will now monitor quality as well. All academic officers have been sent information on this and asked for nominations to this committee. I have a copy of what was sent should anyone want to see it. The other item was on how the THECB is dealing with a section of SB 1227, from the last legislative session, which directed the THECB to report on the “feasibility of implementing an automatic admission program for undergraduate students who earn an associate degree or certificate at a junior college or similar institution and apply to transfer to a general academic teaching institution.” Dr. Parsonneault pointed out that, potentially, this could mean that someone who got a certificate in welding at a junior college would be guaranteed admission at any four-year state institution. She indicated the THECB in preparing its feasibility report would emphasize both institutional capacities (that is, campuses already crowded would be able to limit or refuse such transfers) and, more importantly, that there be “appropriate academic requirements,” and no admission based on any completion of any associate’s degree or certificate.

Saturday morning, we went to a presentation to TFA by Dr. Wanda Howell of the University of Arizona Faculty Senate. Her topic was “Best Practices in Shared Governance.” In 1992 the State of Arizona passed a faculty governance law. In part, the law states:

“The faculty members of each University, through their elected faculty representatives, shall participate in the governance of their respective Universities and shall actively participate in the development of University policy.”

To this effect, the University of Arizona has a formal “Memorandum of Understanding Entered into by the Faculty and the Administration of The University of Arizona.” The document states “Within shared governance, a decision on a change in those policies under the jurisdiction of shared governance should normally be reached only after there is general acceptance of the policy proposal in either its original or modified form by both the administrator(s) and the appropriate overarching shared governance body for the issue in question.” The document defines “general acceptance” in the following way: “General acceptance means that (1) the appropriate overarching shared governance body has been properly consulted and (2) has communicated its support for the policy to the President (or designee). In this process, a spirit of mutual respect between administrator(s) and the shared governance body – the taking of each other’s positions into serious consideration – is the expectation.” The document acknowledges that general acceptance is not always achievable: “The President or designee(s), however, can make and announce a final decision without ‘general acceptance’ provided he or she believes that every reasonable effort has been made to reach a common position through consultation and to be responsive and that such decision is necessary in the best interests of the University. In this circumstance, the President or designee is expected to explain the position taken.”

Further information about the guidelines for shared governance for The University of Arizona is available on their website.