LAMAR UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE
MINUTES FOR MARCH 5, 2003

ATTENDANCE

Arts and Sciences: Christine Bridges-Esser, Terri Davis, George Irwin, Jim Jordan, Donna Bumpus, Bruce Drury, Dave Castle, Vernice Monroe, Max Loges, Walter Sutton, Judy Mann, Sheila Smith, Dianna Rivers, Stephanie Yearwood, mike Mathis
Business: Larry Allen, Carl Montano, Celia Verick, K. C. Sen; Absent: Frank Cavaliere
Engineering: Peggy Doerschuk, Mien Jao, David Read, Valentine Andreev, Hsing Wei Chu, John Gossage
Fine Arts and Communication: Kurt Gilman, Prince Thomas, Zanthia Smith, Travis Almany, Ann Matlock; Absent: Larry Elliott
Library: Jon Tritsch, Sara Tusa
Developmental Studies: Joe Kemble
Port Arthur: Mavis Triebel

CALL TO ORDER

Faculty Senate President Bruce Drury called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The February 5, 2003, minutes were approved as posted on the website.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

1. State budget crisis: Current budget cut by 7 %; FY04-05 cut by 12.5% but with return of debt service money, it is really over 15 %; Over 30 vacant faculty positions cut, then seven restored; For FY04-05 there are threats to summer school, security, promotion, merit and equity raises, state contribution to health insurance. Tuition increases and course fees will temper the effect.

2. THECB Intern Program--- TCFS will pay $500 for up to four faculty. President Simmons promises that the University will help.

3. We hope that the election process can be completed with the following schedule:
March 3-6 Nominations, email ballot
March 17-20 First Ballot, campus mail
March 24-27 Second Ballot, campus mail

The supervising Senators are: A&S Mike Matthis
Terri Davis
BUS Larry Allen
K. C. Sen
EDU Joel Barton
Bill Holmes
EGR David Read
Valentin Andreev
FAC Ann Matlock
Kurt Gilman
LIB Sarah Tusa
Jon Tritsch

4. The students at Southwest Texas persuaded a legislator to carry a name change proposal making that school The Texas State University at San Marcos. The TSUS regents and staff had talked about an almost consistent naming system of TSU-City (except for Sam Houston) but they were planning to broach it in 2005. They will try to table it for this session.

5. We need to elect Senate representatives for the following Committees:
Academic IT Term TBA
Continuing Ed. 2004
Fisher Lecture Series 2004
University IT Slot is for the Senate President

6. Dr. Doerschuk report on the TCFS meeting.

How other Texas colleges and universities are dealing with impending budget cuts

Travel
most are freezing or reducing travel

Capital Purchases
Most are postponing or reducing capital purchases

Summer classes
one is decreasing offerings by 20 percent
one is going to four ten-hour days per week
a couple are increasing class sizes

Maintenance and Operation Expenses
most are reducing

Hiring freezes
most are imposing freezes or delays on hiring faculty and/or staff, some with exceptions
Texas A&M is freezing staff hires but not faculty; want 100 more faculty by 2004
U of Houston-Downtown freezing staff hires only
no hiring freeze at U of Houston

Salaries
Midwestern State is freezing salaries

COMMITTEE REPORTS ON PROPOSED AGENDA

Academic Issues: Chris Bridges. A Resolution will be presented under New Business. The Committee has decided to hold no further discussion concerning Academic Standards policy changes. At the request of Donna Birdwell and the Honors Council, Chris moved that the Faculty Senate Academic Issues Committee Chair be made a permanent ex-officio member of the Council. After a second by David Read, the motion passed unanimously.

Faculty Issues: Bill Holmes. The Committee is looking at a preliminary proposal that would streamline material that goes to the Faculty Promotion Committee. The Committee is also checking to see that feedback from the Dean and Chair evaluations currently in progress comes back to the faculty in accordance with the evaluation process. Bill urged Senators to be alert to this feedback process.

Budget and Compensation: Valentin Andreev. The Committee is seeking budget savings ideas for the University to help offset the current budget crisis. Ideas include holding mini sessions in a common building and the turning off of lights and computers, where possible when they are not in use. Energy costs are currently $2 million from state funding (E&G), with natural gas being ½ million. Additional electricity costs come from auxiliary funds.

Development and Research: Judy Mann. The Committee will offer workshops, suggested earlier by Dr. Doblin, in September 2003, on preparation of Development Leave packets. According to President Simmons, there will be no cuts in funding for Development Leaves or Enhancement Grants. The Committee will be circulating a survey seeking ideas from other universities concerning creative means of obtaining these grants.

Distinguished Faculty Lecturer: Dianna Rivers. The Committee is in the process of collecting applications, which are due by April 2. The Committee meets to consider these on April 23.

Staff Appreciation Day: No report.

OLD BUSINESS

Elections. The new election procedures have been distributed as discussed in the President’s report.

Engineering Dean. Valentin Andreev is waiting on results of the Dean’s Evaluation.

NEW BUSINESS

KUDOS. Chris Bridges introduced a resolution commending President Simmons’s accomplishments during his tenure at Lamar (see Appendix I) and moved its adoption. After a second by Joel Barton, the motion passed unanimously.

OPEN COMMENTS

Comments from Senators included summer teaching schedules, IT Committee meeting problems, web site inconsistencies, and the upcoming Rally-Around-Capital. Also, it was announced that the new TACT President is Jim Pucket.

APPENDIX 1

Whereas:

Dr. James Simmons, in his tenure as President of Lamar University: has shaped a vision of Lamar and its future; initiated growth while maintaining institutional and academic quality; renovated campus buildings and grounds; raised morale among students, staff and faculty; improved quality of campus life; researched and began implementation of equity raises; maintained commitment to merit pay increases; maintained open communications; articulated and documented Lamar’s needs to the community, the system and the state; was committed to shared governance and demonstrated his commitment to the faculty and this university .

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate of Lamar University hereby commends President Simmons for a job well done.