Lamar University
Faculty Senate Minutes
March 1, 2006

Senators Present: Arts & Sciences: Sandra Brannan, Kenneth Doris, Jim Love, Paul Nicoletto, Christine Bridges, Shelia Smith, Emma Hawkins, Don Owen, Dave Castle, Steve Zani, Rick Altemose, Valentin Andreev, Dale Daniel, Mike Matthis, Dianna Rivers, Jeremy Shelton, Peggy Doerschuk, George Irwin; Business: Celia Varick, Jai Young Choi, Soumava Bandyopadhyay; Education: Mary Wilkerson, Bernadette Moore, George Strickland, Kim Chalambaga, Bill Holmes; Engineering: Brian Craig, Bernard Maxum, Hsing-wei Chu, Paul Corder, Mien Jao; Fine Arts & Communications: Kurt Gilman, Kurt Dyrhaug, O’Brien Stanley, Prince Thomas, Nicki Michalski, Jeff Wisor, Connie Barker; Library: Jeff Lacy, Theresa Storey; Developmental Studies: Joe Kemble; Lamar College-Port Arthur: Mavis Triebel.

Senators Absent: Arts & Sciences: Mary Kelly, Terri Davis; Business: Richard Drapeau, Kakoli Bandyopadhyay; Education: Fara Goulas; Engineering: John Gossage; Fine Arts & Communication: Kurt Dyrhaug.

1. President Bill Holmes called the Faculty Senate to order at 3:05 p.m.

2. A motion was made by Christine Bridges and seconded by Valentin Andreev to approve the February 1, 2006 Minutes.

3. President’s Report:

(1) Staff Appreciation Day has been scheduled for April 7, 2006. The chair of the event, Mark Asteris, will provide additional information.

(2) I attended the Texas Council of Faculty Senates (TCFS) spring meeting February 17-18, 2006. The major parts of the program are listed below:

a. Update on shared governance issues at Texas A&M University – Kingsville

b. Update on faculty evaluation issues at University of Texas at Austin

c. Gaines West, Attorney – Current status of academic freedom and related litigation

d. Catherine Parsoneault, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board – Update on various activities and initiatives of THECB

e. The agenda also included roundup reports which gave each university representative an opportunity to present information related to enrollment, new programs, campus construction projects, and shared governance issues. Regional meetings were held in order to discuss issues with other representatives from various areas of the state. Of course, there was a regular TCFS business meeting on the agenda.

f. There was also an early morning meeting on Friday of the TSUS TCFS representatives. The Chancellor was scheduled to attend but did not because of a board meeting. The plan is for him to attend the next meeting, October 20, 2006.

(3) You have received course evaluation items from the University Ad Hoc Committee on course evaluations, chaired by Brad Mayer. What evolved from the deliberations of this group was the concept of appending a “university core” of questions to every unit’s existing course evaluation form which, of course, will be completed on line by students. That is, each department or college would include at the end of its course evaluation form the same set of items, with one additional “embedded assessment” item for courses in the general education core. Please study these items and give feedback to the Committee. The Faculty Senate representative on the Committee is Dianna Rivers.

(4) Final enrollment for this semester was down by 355 students from spring, 2005.

(5) Campus parking lots will be patrolled more carefully for parking violations.

(6) The Faculty Senate Scholarship given about three years ago has assisted a student who will graduate in May, 2006.

(7) All of the dean and chair evaluations scheduled for this year are close to being completed. Please notify me if you are aware of one which is not completed by March 21, 2006.

(8) FEMA’s funds are on the way to Lamar by way of the State. The current amount which is expected soon is $7.8 million.

(9) A new scholarship program has been initiated. The Mirabeau Scholarships (15) are designed to attract students with higher SAT and ACT scores.

(10) The Faculty Senate will be represented on the University Faculty Equity Committee by the chair of the Budget and Compensation Committee.

4. Committee Reports:

• Academic Issues: Terri Davis

No Report

• Faculty Issues: Hsing Wei Chu

The committee will discuss how Program Directors should be evaluated

• Budget & Compensation: Kurt Gilman

The B & C Committee is focusing on the following issues of concern to faculty:

1. Merit raises, and how these are explained within each department

A resolution concerning this will be proposed during New Business

2. Merit raises: dollars-per-share vs. percentages

The committee is concerned about the effects of dollars-per-share merit raises on faculty salary compression.

This issue was also brought up by President Simmons in his report to the Faculty Equity Committee. He did not offer any solutions that would be applicable to departments across the board.

David Castle reported to the B & C Committee on these inequities in 2004.

The B & C Committee will continue to discuss this issue.

3. B&CC has discussed the idea of retirement incentives.
The basis for all of them is eligibility for retirement, or the rule of 80.
Several ideas are being studied. The committee will review these proposals next week and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee.

Faculty Senate Resolution on Merit Raises

Whereas Lamar University has an established policy on faculty merit raises,

Whereas the annual survey of the faculty senators continues to reveal deficiencies and unevenness in the application and knowledge of the merit policies by different departments,

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate insists that part of the merit process should be a written statement from the chair to each faculty in the respective departments that includes, but is not limited to, the following information:

- The total salary increase for the faculty member,

- The merit category of the faculty member (highest merit, high merit, merit, low merit, no merit),

- The amount and percent of the merit raise (The amount of the merit raise must directly reflect the category earned by the faculty member as shown on the F2.08 form in accordance with the departmental procedure for merit raises, as posted on the Lamar University web page, departmental procedure for merit raises),

- The category and merit raises (in % form or $ amount by category) of the other faculty in the department (without names), so that faculty members can see how they compare to others in the department,

- The amount of salary increase due to equity,

- The amount of salary increase due to promotion.

In addition, we think that all departments should examine and amend, if necessary, the process being used in the spring of 2006, before merit evaluations are done for the next FY report. This policy must be reexamined every five years, with a complete review and discussion, or sooner, if requested by faculty within each department.

• Development and Research: Rick Altemose

The committee discussed the need to encourage half-pay, full-year development leaves. The administration has done a great deal; we can help by changing our incentives.

Our current system carries strong financial incentives towards summer leaves and extremely strong financial disincentives for full-year leaves. One problem is that the maximum for expenses ($5,000) is the same for all leaves, whether 5 1/2 weeks or 36 weeks.

The Committee voted unanimously that the following be submitted to the Senate for approval:

“Expenses reimbursement over and above salary replacement will be limited to:

Summer session - $2,500

Full semester - $5,000

Full-year, half-pay - $10,000, plus the possibility of an additional $5,000 that can be awarded if the faculty member will get no other reimbursement (salary, grants, fellowships, etc.), for lost salary, for a possible total of $15,000 expenses reimbursement.

However, expenses reimbursement plus the expense for adjuncts/overloads to replace the faculty member may not total more than 1/2 of the faculty member’s budgeted salary.”

• Distinguished Faculty Lecturer: Fara Goulas

Nominations have been received and the committee will meet next week to review the drafts submitted. The Distinguished Faculty Lecturer will be announced in May.

5. Old Business

6. New Business

Resolution from Budget and Compensation Committee was carried.

Motion from Development and Research Committee was carried.

Election of Nominating Committee resulted in the following persons being elected:
Valentin Andreev, Chair – Arts & Sciences
Fara Goulas – Education
Celia Varick – Business
Mien Joa – Engineering
Jeff Lacy – Library
Prince Thomas – Fine Arts
Joe Kemble – Developmental Studies

7. Open Discussion/Comments
• The President asked that all elections be finished by March 8th.
• Paul Nicoletto asked for faculty input on a departmental ethical issue.

8. A motion was made by Dave Castle and seconded by Valentin Andreev for the meeting to adjourn.

* [<](http://hpcc.cs.lamar.edu/senate/index.php/minutes-and-resolutions/minutes/old-minutes/295-minutes-of-april-5-2006)