LAMAR UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
December 7, 2005

Senators Present: Arts & Sciences: Sandra Brannan, Don Owen, Peggy Doerschuk, Dave Castle, Steve Zani, Paul Nicoletto, Terri Davis, Christine Bridges, George Irwin, Rick Altemose, Valentin Andreev, Dale Daniel, Mary Kelly, Jim Love, Mike Matthis, Dianna Rivers, Jeremy Shelton, Shelia Smith; Business: Kakoli Bandyopadhya, Soumava Bandyopadhya, Celia Varick, Jai Young Choi, Richard Drapeau; Education: Andrea Karlin, Bernadette Moore, Fara Goulas, George Strickland, Kim Chalambaga, Bill Holmes; Engineering: Hsing-wei Chu, Brian Craig, John Gossage, Paul Corder, Mien Jao; Fine Arts & Communications: O’Brien Stanley, Ann Matlock, Nicki Michalski, Jeff Wisor; Library: Jeff Lacy, Theresa Storey; Developmental Studies: Joe Kemble; Lamar College-Port Arthur: Mavis Trieble

Senators Absent: Arts & Sciences: Emma Hawkins, Kenneth Doris; Fine Arts & Communication: Kurt Dyrhaug, Connie Barker, Kurt Gilman; Engineering: Bernard Maxum

1. The December 2006 Faculty Senate meeting was called to order by President Bill Holmes at 3:05 p.m., December 7, 2005.

2. The Minutes were approved from the November 2, 2005 meeting.

3. Visitor Presentations:

a. Linzay Fontenot – President, Student Government Association presented information on Holiday Happenings, December 5-8 on campus.
b. Judy Mann – Student Support Services handed out their brochure of Student Support Services.

4. President’s Report

a. The process of recovery from Hurricane Rita continues to go well on our campus. Obviously, there are still trouble spots to be addressed and some major repairs to be completed. If you are aware of a specific problem which is not being addressed, please communicate your concern to your Chair and/or Dean.

b. A special plan for follow-up study of campus buildings post Rita has not been formulated, but the issue is being studied.

c. It looks like we have lost about 800 students this semester. Of this number, about 500 were Rita related.

d. The three scheduled Dean evaluations are in process (Hopper, Schultz, Venta).

e. There are eight scheduled Chair evaluations in process (Coppin, Crawford, Curl, Martin, Meeks, Osborne, Srinivasan, and Warren).

f. The results of the Capital Fundraising Campaign study have been very positive. You will be hearing more about this in the next six months to a year.

g. An advertisement is being prepared to advertise nationally for about 30-40 faculty positions (5 or 6 of which will be new positions).

5. Committee Reports

a. Academic Issues: Terri Davis
Three resolutions will be presented under New Business.

b. Faculty Issues: Hsing-Wei Chu

c. Budget & Compensation: Ann Matlock

The Budget and Compensation Committee of the Faculty Senate met on November 9, 2005. We will meet for the last time this semester on December 14, Wednesday of next week at 3:00 p.m.

We discussed the preliminary results of the survey of faculty senators and will have the final results for analysis at our December meeting. The preliminary results reflect an improvement in the way faculty receive information about their raises, although there are a few areas of concern.

A preliminary analysis of the way that equity raises were computed for FY06 was discussed. A more detailed and up-to-date explanation of this process is attached to this report and is being distributed to senators today. The way the FY06 equity raises were computed was beneficial to 75% of the faculty. Please share this information with any faculty members in your departments who have concerns about the process.

According to our research, all staff and administrators received a merit increase equal to the amount of the merit pool again this year. Members of the committee developed an analysis of the merit raises of most of the faculty in their departments. The reports on remaining departments to be examined will be discussed at the December committee meeting.

Our committee also is researching the policies that govern how merit raises for chairs are calculated. We discussed methods of dealing with problems of salary compression and inversion. At this time, it is our opinion that this salary issue is a matter for the University Equity Committee to examine, although we are willing to help with the process.

Since I will be on research leave in the spring, Kurt Gilman was elected to serve as chair of the committee during spring semester.

d. Development & Research: Rick Altemose

The Committee met on Wednesday, November 30, 2005 and recommended the following faculty development leaves:

Semester-Long Full Salary Leaves:

1) J.R. Altemose for “Police reform in the state of Guanajuato, Mexico: A participant observation study”
2) Mary Kelley for “New Women Who Shaped Modern Texas, 1900-1990”
3) Dawn McCarty for “Comparing the Mexican and U.S. Social Welfare Systems: A Case Study of Casa de los Angeles”
4) Quoc-Nam Tran for “Efficient Computer Algebra Methods for Computer-Aided Geometric Design”

Summer Leaves:
1) George M. Irwin for “Development of Experimental Techniques in Studies of the Low-Lying Nuclear Level in Thorium-229”
2) Rebecca Boone for “Mercurino di Gattinara: Language and Power in the Garden of Empire”
3) Dianna L. Rivers for “Healthcare Availability During the Storm Disasters of September 2005 in Southeast Texas and Southeast France”

The committee finds all of the requests meritorious and recommends funding all of them.

e. Distinguished Faculty Lecturer: Fara Goulas

Dr. Kenneth Rivers will have a theater audience of his own January 30 when he presents Lamar University’s 19th annual Distinguished Faculty Lecture, sharing insights and experiences reflecting his love affair with film. As the lights dim, the music crescendos, and the screen lights up, he will lead a cinematic journey through a century of great film-making.

“The Meaning of the Movies: 100 Years of Cinema in the U.S. and Around the World” is the topic of the lecture, sponsored by ExxonMobil. The lecture will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the University Theatre, with a reception afterward in the lobby of the theatre.

6. Old Business: None

7. New Business:

I. Faculty Senate Resolution on Hurricane Rita Recovery

WHEREAS the damage suffered by Lamar University as a result of Hurricane Rita was of such magnitude that it seriously threatened the ability of the University to complete the Fall 2005 semester; and,

WHEREAS President Jimmy Simmons and other members of the administration and staff responded swiftly and effectively to the crisis to ensure the completion of the semester, the physical integrity and rebuilding of the campus, and that faculty, staff, and work study students received their regular pay without interruption during the evacuation; and,

WHEREAS President Simmons and other members of the administration have continued to address and monitor the rebuilding of the campus;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate highly commends President Simmons and the administration for its effective leadership and response to the damage caused to Lamar University as a result of Hurricane Rita.

Motion carried.

II. Faculty Senate Resolution on Admission Standards

WHEREAS the Faculty Senate presented the administration with a resolution in Spring 2005 advising the University to write and make public the policies and procedural guidelines to be used in granting admission to Individual Approval students; and,

WHEREAS the administration vigorously enforced the admissions standards and placed on probation or rejected admission to students who did not meet University admission standards in Fall 2005; and,

WHEREAS the administration’s enforcement of admissions standards recognizes the importance of maintaining high retention rates for Lamar student;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate commends the administration for enforcing admission standards and significantly decreasing the number of Individual Approval students granted in Fall 2005.

Motion carried.

III. Faculty Senate Resolution on Mini-Sessions

WHEREAS mini-sessions serve a variety of curricular purposes ranging from traditional seminar courses to field research and travel abroad courses; and,

WHEREAS departments and faculty have historically been allowed to structure courses to satisfy both legislative requirements and curricular purposes within a time frame ranging from nine to fifteen days;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate recommends that the administration adopt a fifteen-day mini-session schedule to allow faculty discretion and flexibility in designing their specific mini-session courses and schedules while simultaneously satisfying the contact hour and other requirements mandated by State law.

Motion carried.

8. Open Discussion/Comments

a. Contact Jana Daigle for the results of the e-mail pilot study concerning “My Lamar.”

b. Senator Drapeau brought forth the concern about a termination contract issued to a faculty member in the College of Business. The issue was referred to the Faculty Issues/Executive Committee.

c. Valentin Andreev who is chair of the Equity Committee gave an update about the work of the Committee.

d. Nicki Michalski said that the Piper Professor Teaching Award should not be presented to an administrator.

e. There was concern about on-line student evaluations as to their accuracy.

9. A motion to adjourn was made by Terri Davis and seconded by Valentin Andreev.

Respectively submitted,
George Strickland, Secretary
2/8/2006