

ASU FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
February 21, 2003

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Bill Humphrey, Vice-Chair

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Bob Bennett, Chair and President of Faculty Association

Jim Bednarz

William Burns

Dick Freer

Ernesto Lombeida (absent)

Bill Maynard

Jie Miao

Joe Sartorelli (absent)

Norman Stafford

Richard Wang (absent)

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Chris Brown

Dan Marburger

Terry Roach (absent)

Jim Washam

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Lillie M. Fears (proxy – Marlin Shipman)

Jo Anna Grant

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Cindy Albright (absent)

Kris Biondolillo

Dan Cline

John D. Hall – Secretary/Treasurer of the Faculty Association

John Ponder

Karen Yanowitz (proxy – Aaron Bolin)

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Thomas Parsons

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Bill Rowe, President-Elect of the Faculty Association

Alyson Gill (absent)

Ken Hatch (absent)

John O'Connell

COLLEGE OF NURSING & HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Troy Thomas, Secretary

Terry Baggs

Debra Walden

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Polly Green (proxy – Margaret McClain)

LIBRARY

Myron Flugstad

MILITARY SCIENCE

LTC Michael Loftis (absent)

COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC DEANS

Jan Duggar (absent)

VISITORS

Dr. Rick McDaniel

Dennis White

Jack Zibluk – Journalism & Printing

Greg Chance – KASU Radio

Cory Clark – reporting student

Harold Cook – reporting student

Melanie Jarrett – reporting student

Jim Calie – reporting student

Andria Sims – reporting student

Paige Nicholson – reporting student

April Shye – reporting student

Sara Garland – reporting student

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Minutes of 2/7/03 were approved without change.

REMARKS

Chair Bennett recognized Dr. Rick McDaniel of Academic Affairs appearing in place of Dr. Susan Allen. Chair Bennett had asked Dr. Allen to come and address the confusion that ensued in the last Senate meeting over the Personnel Services Schedule and an

“apparent” 2-tier faculty system that would be created by the new Arkansas Biosciences Institute (ABI).

Chair Bennett gave a brief report from the UPC meeting that morning in which the VPs were asked to decide on budget cuts to address ASU’s \$839,893 share of the state budget cuts that were handed down this week. Bennett then asked McDaniel to begin his comments by talking about the items that had been selected as budget cuts.

- **UPC Report**

- Bennett reported that the state has cut approximately \$839,893 from this year’s budget.
- The UPC meeting was held this morning at 9:00 a.m. Dr. Wyatt released the following statement concerning the cuts:
 - **The revised revenue forecast, announced Wednesday by the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration, will have significant impact on Arkansas State University. State government’s budgets must be reduced by more than \$62 million. However, because of the planning and budgeting work that our officers perform on an ongoing basis, we believe we can minimize the impact on the students, faculty and staff of the university.**

At the Jonesboro campus, our share of this state budget reduction will amount to approximately \$840,000. We will make these cuts, as will other state institutions, because we are obligated to share the responsibility for dealing with the economic downturn that currently affects our state and our nation.

In consultation with the budget planning committee, I have chosen to implement a budget reduction management strategy that identifies several budget sources for reduction or elimination:

-- A selected hiring freeze will be implemented on filling vacant positions, with exceptions made only in the most critical positions. We do not anticipate any lay-offs as a result of this most recent budget adjustment.

-- Funds previously designated for the Career Ladder Incentive Program (CLIP) will be re-directed toward offsetting a portion of the revenue reduction. The CLIP program provides a one-time financial incentive to qualified employees to further develop their job-related skills and knowledge. While our employees will continue to pursue professional development, the incentive funds will not be

available this year.

-- A portion of the technology fee, \$2 per credit hour, will be re-directed into general operations of the university. The Board of Trustees had previously approved this transfer if and when it became necessary, so no further Board action will be required.

-- Market equity adjustments, a mechanism that has been used in the past to bring salaries of those with certain skills and knowledge into line with job market conditions, will be eliminated.

In the meantime, we continue to seek the greatest possible support for the educational enterprise at Arkansas State University through the Legislature, which is currently in session in Little Rock.

-- One of our highest priorities is to find new funds for a salary increase for faculty and staff; no such increase was awarded for the current year.

-- A second priority is restoration of funding lost through this cut and budget cuts from the last fiscal year. These cuts now total approximately \$4 million.

-- A third priority is attaining equity in the amount of state funding per student, as compared to our peers in Arkansas.

- Bennett stated that Dr. Wyatt is hoping we will not have a tuition increase.
- McDaniel set the stage by saying that last year ASU had cuts so this year's starting budget was lower; with these new cuts next year's starting budget will be lower as well. McDaniel said that we would all have to tighten our belts.
- Senator Maynard remarked that McDaniel forgot to mention the 1 million that was transferred to balance the budget, which made things worse. McDaniel asked what Maynard thought should have been done. Maynard replied that McDaniel was supposed to protect Academics and that if he couldn't do that then maybe he should step down.
- McDaniel continued with his comments restating the sentiment that everything will be tougher now because nothing is certain. McDaniel said that faculty members should get with their deans and begin to problem solve.
- Several senators wondered what impact the new budget decisions would have on their faculty searches. McDaniel remarked that departments should refrain from non-essential hires.

- McDaniel verified that the CLIP program had been killed for this year. This was a tough decision since many staff members had invested in this. This cut contributed approximately \$450,000 toward the budget deficit.
- McDaniel verified that \$2 of the technology fee would be used to address the deficit. This decision came 1 week after the decision had been made to give the money back to the technology fund that was taken out last year.
- Senator Chris Brown asked if this money was part of the IF monies that had been distributed to the colleges? McDaniel clarified that this was different money.
- Senator Dan Cline asked why we are freezing hiring if the moneys from the CLIP Program and the technology fee were enough to meet the budget deficit. Proxy Marlin Shipman asked how much hiring freeze would save. McDaniel responded that he did not know the answers to these questions. McDaniel stated that there was still a lot to work out and that he would be meeting with the Deans on Monday to discuss the hiring issue.
- Proxy Shipman asked – Is this a university wide hiring freeze?
- McDaniel replied – Yes, as far as I know.
- On the topic of Market Equity Adjustments (MEAs) – McDaniel said these would not even be run.
- Senator Humphrey commented that the press release made it sound like MEAs would be permanently eliminated. McDaniel said that was not his interpretation.
- Senator Burn asked - What is an MEA? McDaniel replied that they are used to correct certain salary inequities.
- Senator Biondolillo asked – Will there be MEAs for non-faculty? McDaniel said that he interpreted it as no MEAs for anybody.
- On a new topic, Dr. McDaniel stated that Dr. Wyatt holds faculty/staff raises as his highest priority. Senator Cline asked if Dr. McDaniel was part of the current budget discussions. McDaniel said yes.
- Senator Cline went on to say – A few years ago we had a reserve fund of about 10 million that was supposed to cover these sorts of things. As I understand it, this fund is gone. Is there something we can do to start to rebuild this fund for future emergencies?
- Proxy Shipman commented – Last year when we were trying to balance budget we shifted some personnel from Auxiliary to E&G funds. How much will this continue to cost E&G? McDaniel said that was a question for Jennus Burton.
- Senator Marburger summarized the events saying that the University wanted to increase funds to Athletics but couldn't transfer E&G funds. Therefore, some areas were switched to make funds for auxiliary; and some athletic expenses were shifted to E&G.
- Senator Burns asked – How much money is needed to provide faculty/staff raises? McDaniel said about 1 million dollars per 1% raise.
- Senator Burns asked – Will the university still try to absorb insurance increases? Bennett said – This issue came up at the President's Council. Staff members were concerned that in addition to no raises last year they got

insurance premium increases. Bennett said that Jennus Burton clarified that this was not the case because ASU had absorbed the cost of those increases. Bennett said – Yes, but salary is still down since insurance increased this year before.

- Bennett commented that his notes from President’s Council said no MEAs from next year as well.
- John Hall said – One of my concerns with eliminating the equity review is tied up with the Handbook. – Are faculty entitled to the equity review by the Handbook? Bennett added – When we did away with contracts we said the HB could be considered a contract. So is this a violation of the HB? Senator Biondolillo said – We should be able to find out. Bennett added that the HB doesn’t say that if money is short we don’t get this.
- Uncertainty ensued about what the old HB says about this issue.
- McDaniel then fielded questions related to the Arkansas Biosciences Institute (ABI).
- Senator Humphrey asked – How will the ABI affect the ASU organizational structure?
- (McDaniel handed out copies of the current organizational chart.
- Bennett remarked that the Personnel Services Schedule appears to create a 2-tier system. McDaniel stated that faculty members exist on a continuum – some focus more on research; some focus more on teaching. He said the ABI faculty will focus more on research but will still have teaching responsibilities. Bennett stated that the Personnel Services Schedule was submitted to LR and the ABI faculty members are described differently than other faculty on campus. McDaniel replied that since the ABI is a partnership, we had to name our faculty similarly to other partners.
- Dennis White said – I am concerned about the philosophy behind ABI. ABI funds are at the discretion of the legislation. Is funding for ABI faculty, etc. coming from a dedicated source? What happens if legislation decides to give the funds to someone else? At that point, who picks up the tab? Will ASU be left holding the bag? Will we have an ABI with no funding? McDaniel said – Those are good concerns. The public has said that they want a chunk of these funds to go to health efforts. Senator Cline replied – But funding for ABI is an excellent point. Dr. Allen said the ABI would be here as long as the money is here. But legislation grabbed 18.1 million from tobacco money yesterday to deal with state-wide cuts. McDaniel said – But they did not take money from the ABI.
- Dennis White asked Bennett – Does the Faculty Senate have a position on this? I think these are the sorts of things that the Faculty Senate needs to deal with. Also, does the Faculty Senate have a position on tenure for ABI faculty members?
- Senator O’Connell asked – Are ABI funds separate from other monies? McDaniel replied – yes.
- Discussion ensued over the implied future differences between current faculty members and ABI faculty members.

- Senator Norman Stafford stated that inequitable decisions on campus affect morale.
- Proxy Shipman asked – If you are not connected with ABI does that mean you are not “research faculty”?
- Senator Troy Thomas asked – Will there be significant difference between ABI and the regular faculty? McDaniel replied that there are too many factors involved to answer that question.
- Bennett read from the list of proposed ABI lines – Research instructors, research associates, research GAs. Research instructors.... are these tenured? McDaniel replied – No, just as no instructors are tenured.
- Senator Cline commented – I don’t think it is helpful to refer to ABI faculty in different terms than regular faculty.
- Senator Humphrey asked – will these faculty go through the normal tenure process? One ABI administrator went through the dept. process but bypassed the rest of the process. Bennett said – Going through dept. and then to administration is not the normal tenure process. This does not seem appropriate or fair. McDaniel replied – we have not done this with faculty. I don’t think we will do this.
- Senator O’Connell remarked – I know of 2 instructors at other universities where tenure is negotiable. Senator Humphrey said – That is common; we have done this at ASU.
- Senator Burns stated – We spoke to Dr. Allen recently about this. Dr. Allen said we are hoping to get “Big Guns” and these people will likely come in as Senior Faculty. Bennett remarked – if they are that good, why not go through the normal PRT process? This starts to create 2-tiers of faculty, if some faculty do not have to follow the procedures that other faculty follow. Senator Burns continued – Dr. Allen said that if they are headhunting a person, the hiring timetable might dictate tenure negotiation.
- Senator Stafford said – I think this is missing the point. Departments want to hire big guns, too, but cannot do this, but Administration can? Some of these people will come in making 2-3 times as much, and we will have a hard time accepting them as colleagues. Senator Maynard commented – This already occurs on our campus with administrators who get tenured as faculty members without specialty in an area. Senator Stafford said – There is a problem when you pay these top salaries for these big guns but can’t increase salaries and freeze hiring for regular faculty.
- Senator Bednarz said – We have had 2 issues related to ABI come through my tenure committee. We have agreed that in most circumstances we feel immediate tenure is inappropriate. However, we would like to evaluate all these candidates.
- Senator Cline asked – But what about taking it up through the normal chain of tenure?
- Bennett said – ASU needs to have policies related to these ABI faculty members.
- Bennett thanked Dr. McDaniel for his time.

REPORTS

- President's Council Report – Bennett
 - Glenn Jones is getting ready to send out a survey 2 weeks prior to Spring Break entitled - ASU 2003 Faculty Diversity Questionnaire.
 - Civilian Parking – Bennett read an email that he received from Dr. Rick Stripling:
 - **Bob, Just a follow-up from our conversation concerning recent ticketing and visitor parking. I have received several emails from faculty concerned with tickets written during a lecture or an event. I greatly appreciate hearing their concerns. I have asked UPD to place a hold on writing permit tickets after 5:00. I also concur with the Senate our system of dealing with visitors is not very good. I have formed a small group of staff members who work directly with parking to address issues raised by the Senate and others. So far we have developed a mission statement/objectives. We have also begun reviewing alternative ways for developing signage that will be pleasing and useful to the customer. In short, we have set a goal to have a plan for review by the end of March. Will keep you posted. Thanks!**
 - John Hall said - They are not going to write tickets after 5 p.m.? I'm not sure that's good. What if you have a lab class and can't get a parking spot?
 - Diversity – Bennett brought up the issue of the use of the Indian mascot in light of the current focus on diversity. Glen Jones agreed with Bennett on this issue. Bennett brought up the point that we would have a problem with a bunch of white guys running around in black face as mascots at a game.
- Research and AA Council
 - Proposal was made for a 4-year graduation plan – students would sign such a contract. McDaniel said the plan would not improve recruitment or retention but would be good for PR. McDaniel said this could also be a moot point because the AR legislature may currently be writing a law to require this.
- Childcare Center – Senator Thomas reported that the proposal from Dr. Michael Prince had been rejected.

OLD BUSINESS

- Bennett reported that the Grading Committee has met twice; is meeting every Tues. due to various problems we have not had any students attend yet. These meetings have been short. We did send out 2 proposals. 50 e-mails Bennett got back (95% were in favor of change).
 - (Handout – Increasing national trend since 1970s towards +/- system.)
 - Senator Rowe noted that the handout showed that very few Junior colleges use such a system.

- (Handout – summary of +/- grading proposals)
- Senator Biondolillo commented – I’m not sure the benefits will outweigh the costs.
- Senator Walden asked – Where is this initiative coming from? Bennett replied – from me.
- Senator Freer stated – I think we should discuss this when we have all the information.
- Pets on campus proposal still moving – Bennett made a call for senators to submit a proposal.
- Invited speaker – Committee is going to meet after the senate meeting. Got feedback on listserv from 10 faculty members. Will have something next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- Proposal to Change ASU Commencement was passed out – Will be voted on next meeting. Senators were reminded to talk to their constituents about this proposal.

**ASU Faculty Senate Resolution (FSR 2003-01)
Resolution to Change the Format of ASU Commencement
Submitted February 21, 2003**

We, the faculty of Arkansas State University, believe that the current format used for ASU Commencement ceremonies is unsatisfactory. We believe that the current format is excessive in length, lacks the necessary and expected dignity, is rather impersonal and is an event that many faculty and students seek to avoid. We believe that the sale of concessions, students leaving commencement during the ceremony, poor student/faculty attendance, and a “sporting event” atmosphere are symptoms that the format of Commencement needs alteration.

Therefore, be it resolved that the faculty of Arkansas State University request that an alternative format for Commencement be devised no later than the end of the Fall 2003 semester and be implemented for the May 2004 Commencement and thereafter. We request that a group composed of no fewer than 3 representatives each from the Faculty Senate, the Student Government Association and the Administration meet to determine this new format.

We additionally make the following suggestions for this new format:

- **There should be 2 Commencement ceremonies annually rather than 3, 1 in the Spring and 1 in the Fall**
- **Commencement exercises should be divided into 2 parts – a university-wide ceremony and college-specific ceremonies**
- **The university ceremony should include:**

- **A graduation speaker**
- **Graduates recognized in groups by the Deans of their respective colleges**
- **Diplomas handed out after the ceremony (if diplomas are given at the university-wide ceremony instead of at the college-specific ceremonies)**
- **The option of a faculty rotation**
- **No concession sales**
- **The college ceremonies should (at the discretion of the college):**
 - **Provide a smaller, more personal environment**
 - **Allow individual students to be recognized by name and to receive their diplomas**
 - **Allow family and friends to take pictures and interact with graduates and faculty members**
- **No parking tickets should be given on the day of Commencement except in spots obviously marked as special parking or no parking (such as handicapped parking or fire zones)**

We believe that a format that includes these elements will result in shorter, more dignified, more personal and better-attended Commencement services.

- Senator Cline commented – We were told that our chair would be forced to count heads at graduation. The HB reads attendance is expected not required.
- Senator Maynard remarked – At one time we tried to cut number of ceremonies from 3 to 2; AA could not do this but said at one time that the ratio of attendance was sufficient.
- Bennett made a call for a resolution regarding diversity and the use of the Indian mascot.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Troy Thomas, Secretary