FACULTY SENATE MEETING
MINUTES
May 9, 2011
3:15 p.m., 601 Rudder Tower
http://facultysenate.tamu.edu


Call to Order:
Speaker Strawser called the meeting to order at 3:15 P.M. and presented the 2011 Faculty Senate Aggie Spirit Awards for outstanding accomplishments in the face of adversity to Heather Ann Marvets and Rachel Miller Wright. Each received a certificate and a check for $200, funded by voluntary donations from senators. There were four senators from Galveston present via videoconferencing.

Speaker Comments:

The April 11 Faculty Senate meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Motion Passed
FS.28.129
Attachment A

Consent Agenda
The consent agenda was approved as submitted.

GRADUATE COUNCIL

New Courses - April 7, 2011
CVEN 753 Damage Mechanics of Solids and Structures
EDCI 605 Qualitative Research Methods in Curriculum and Instruction
EDCI 686 Research Methods in EDCI:I
EDCI 687 Research Methods in EDCI:II
EDCI 688 Research Methods in EDCI:III
HLTH 644 Health Education Theory
HLTH 646 Health Education Training
MARB 668 Marine Evolutionary Biology
Math 620 Algebraic Geometry I
MEEN 616 Surface Science
MEMA 634 Damage Mechanics of Solids and Structures
MSEN 616 Surface Science
MSEN 656 Introduction to Mechanical and Physical Properties of Thin Films and Coatings
WGST 645 Queer Theory

Motion Passed
FS.28.130
Attachment B

Course Changes - April 7, 2011
CSCE 667 Seminar in Human-Centered Computing and Information
EDCI 665 Science Curriculum
EPSY 605 Effects of Culture, Diversity, and Poverty on Children and Youth

Motion Passed
FS.28.131
Attachment C

Special Consideration - April 7, 2011
College of Education and Human Development
Request to delete the Career Development Education doctoral program from the TAMU programs of study

Motion Passed
FS.28.132
Attachment D
UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

New Courses - April 8, 2011

HISP 204 Spanish and Spanish American Literature in Translation
THAR 410 Acting IV - Advanced Problems in Acting
WGST 445 Queer Theory

Change in Courses - April 8, 2011
POLS 481 Senior Research Seminar

Special Consideration - April 8, 2011

College of Architecture
College of Geosciences
College of Liberal Arts
- Request for a Minor in Global Culture and Society

Change in Courses - April 8, 2011
POLS 481 Senior Research Seminar

Special Consideration - April 8, 2011

College of Geosciences
- Department of Geology and Geophysics
  - Minor in Geology
  - Minor in Geophysics
  - Change in course requirements

Special Consideration - April 8, 2011

College of Science
- University Studies Degree
  - Area of Concentration
    - Mathematics for Teaching
      - Request for a change in GPA requirement

Change in Curriculum - April 20, 2011 (Revised from April 11 FS Meeting)

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
- Department of Entomology
  - B.S. in Forensic and Investigative Sciences
    - Pre-Law Emphasis
    - Science Emphasis

W-COURSES - April 20, 2011

W certification:

MAST 345 Texas Maritime Culture and History
RUSS 322 Masterpieces of Russian Literature

C certification:

MGMT/IBUS 452 International Management

W recertification:

MARS 280 Coastal and Ocean Resources
VIBS 443 Biology of Mammalian Cells and Tissues

End of Consent Agenda

Committee Reports
The Executive Committee asked that the following emergency resolution be added to the published agenda:

**WHEREAS**, the Alliance for Texas A&M University ([http://AllianceForTAMU.org](http://AllianceForTAMU.org)) has courageously stepped forward for the benefit of Former Students of Texas A&M University, and  

**WHEREAS**, they have undertaken to defend not only the value of their Texas A&M University degrees, but also the value of such degrees for future generations of Aggies, and  

**WHEREAS**, they have demonstrated their support for Texas A&M University against inappropriate and damaging political interventions,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Faculty Senate of Texas A&M University endorses their recent "Open Letter to the Texas A&M Community" and their continuing contributions to improving Texas higher education.

The motion to declare this an emergency item passed unanimously. The item was then opened for discussion. Speaker Strawser summarized the Alliance’s open letter and said that it was endorsed by 22 of 82 Distinguished Former Students. Jonathan Coopersmith (Liberal Arts) thanked the Executive Committee and spoke in favor of the resolution. Kim Hill (Liberal Arts) asked what happens if we pass this resolution. Speaker Strawser said it will no doubt be widely disseminated by *The Eagle*'s reporter present in the room. Kim Hill asked that it be forcefully promoted. The resolution passed unanimously.

**New Business**

Speaker Strawser gave his annual State of the Senate Address.

Provost Karan Watson responded that she was in “radical agreement,” and said the question for Texas A&M is what tactics and strategies are needed to go forward. She encouraged debate in a blog and said we need to frame the debate and have the discussions about how to go forward, but not limit ourselves to responding to a think tank. She urged cooperation between the administration and the senate to work together to communicate to those outside the university with reason and facts. Speaker Strawser added that the university’s services to the state and beyond should be underscored as well.

Speaker-Elect Benedik thanked Speaker Strawser for his tremendous service as speaker and presented the outgoing Speaker Strawser with a gavel, monetary donation to animal shelter in honor of Dr. Strawer, and the following resolution of appreciation.

**Resolution for Bob Strawser**

**WHEREAS**, Speaker Strawser is now ending his third term as Speaker of the Texas A&M Faculty Senate, but gives every indication of intending to run until he reaches the proverbial “nine lives,” and  

**WHEREAS**, Speaker Strawser is now completing his 18th year of service in the Faculty Senate and will be the first person eligible for the special Faculty Senate Optional Retirement Plan, and  

**WHEREAS**, Speaker Strawser’s diligent lack of punctuality has enabled him to earn the epithet "the late Bob Strawser" prior to his demise, and  

**WHEREAS**, Speaker Strawser has singlehandedly elevated the level of sartorial excellence for the Speaker of the Senate, and  

**WHEREAS**, Speaker Strawser has undertaken to single-handedly close the budget gap in the College of Veterinary Medicine by rescuing a whole menagerie of neglected animals and lavishing them with the finest medical care at our veterinary clinics, and  

**WHEREAS**, Speaker Strawser’s love of animals is exceeded only by his love of his wife and children and his pride in the enormous number of Texas A&M degrees they have earned, and
WHEREAS, Speaker Strawser, having nobly and selflessly served our country in the United States Marines, has never passed up an opportunity to remind everyone (especially Generals) of his exalted rank of Lance Corporal, thus fully embodying the Marines' nickname of "The Few, The Proud," and

WHEREAS, Speaker Strawser has spoken about being the Interim President of Texas A&M-Kingsville for a longer cumulative period of time than he WAS the Interim President of Texas A&M-Kingsville and

WHEREAS, Speaker Strawser, during his tenure as Interim President of Texas A&M-Kingsville, creatively solved the problem of which Diet Coke mug to carry around by getting one twice as big with room for the logos of both schools, and

WHEREAS, Speaker Strawser's love of a good story "which cannot leave the room" has on innumerable occasions successfully kept him from getting to or returning to the point at hand, and

WHEREAS, Speaker Strawser can always be counted on to know not only the inside scoop on all administrative and political maneuvers, but also the entire history and detailed context, where the bodies are buried, who had what ax to grind, who else ground the ax, and who used the ax to produce the bodies that were buried, and

WHEREAS, although Speaker Strawser's fearlessness in speaking the truth to authority has landed him in hot water on innumerable occasions and engendered challenges to his ethical integrity of which he has been completely vindicated,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of Texas A&M University expresses its gratitude, respect and affection for Robert "Big Bob" Strawser and applauds his leadership of the Faculty Senate and his dedication to Texas A&M University.

Election of Speaker-Elect
The issue of whether or not the two candidates for Speaker-Elect were eligible to run under the bylaws was raised, related to limits on their senate terms. Parliamentarian Stadelmann presented the facts and the options available. Speaker Strawser declined to rule on the issue and selected the option which called for the senate to decide. On behalf of the Senate, Secretary Daugherity therefore moved that Andrew Klein and John Stallone be deemed eligible to run for the office of Speaker-Elect.

In discussion on the motion, Janice Epstein (Science) agreed the senate as a whole should decide. Chris Mathewson (Geosciences) asked for clarification on the effect of term limits. Speaker-Elect Benedik replied that since the Senate voted to eliminate term limits in the fall, pending full faculty approval this is a one-time event. Speaker Strawser called for a ballot on the motion. Ballots were counted by the Election Committee, whose chair Janice Epstein announced that the motion passed 55-2.

Speaker Strawser called on the two candidates for Speaker-Elect, Andrew Klein and John Stallone, to make brief statements while ballots for Speaker-Elect were distributed. Ballots were counted by the Election Committee, whose chair Janice Epstein announced that John Stallone was elected Speaker-Elect for 2011-12.

Election of Secretary/Treasurer
Walter Daugherity, the sole candidate for Secretary-Treasurer, was chosen by acclamation.

Election of Executive Committee Officers
Speaker Benedik pointed out that the Executive Committee is limited to no more than two members from the same unit, so since he is from the College of Science, at most one more member of the Executive Committee may be from Science. Since the current Election Committee chair is a candidate for the Executive Committee, the former chair, Tom Vogel, was designated to chair the counting of ballots. He pointed out that the six at-large seats go to the top six persons who garner at least a fifty per cent vote; if needed the bottom vote-getter will be dropped for a runoff. After the ballots were counted he announced that five places were filled by John Carhart (Galveston), Norma Funkhouser (Libraries), Fran Gelwick (Agriculture), Blanca Lupiani (Veterinary Medicine and Integrative Biosciences), and Dale Rice (Liberal Arts). In a runoff Janice Epstein (Science) was elected to the sixth at-large seat.

Committee of the Whole
Speaker Benedik called on Speaker-Elect Stallone to convene the Committee of the Whole.

Kim Hill (Liberal Arts) said external threats to higher education are not limited to the seven so-called solutions promulgated by the Texas Public Policy Foundation and introduced Paul Parrish, who said

"I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this important body I was twice a member of, including its inaugural constitution as a Faculty Senate in 1983. I appreciate the opportunity, but I would never have imagined, when I began teaching Shakespeare 40 years ago, that I would, in a university setting, have a need to defend Shakespeare or, at least, research and scholarship on Shakespeare.

"The recent flap about the value of research at universities is centered, oddly enough, on research on Shakespeare. Or maybe it's not so odd, since some would regard research on Shakespeare is only that—grounded on how best to read and understand literature, culture, history, society, our understanding of the past (you know, apparently inconsequential matters like that)—it's not a life and death situation, society will not be protected from life-threatening diseases, or realize the value of well-constructed bridges, or see the importance of other discoveries many of you in this room are probably engaged in as I speak. The flap, like so many flaps these days, emanates from the innocently named Texas Public Policy Foundation and, specifically, the comments of Ronald Trowbridge, a Senior Fellow at the Foundation at a recent forum hosted by the Foundation. Accepting the value of some research—research that, to his way of thinking, directly benefits society and students (whatever exactly that means)—Trowbridge cited a study that concluded that 21,674 scholarly articles were published on Shakespeare between 1980 and 2006. To which evidence he responded, "Do we need the 21,675th?" In what were apparently off the cuff remarks at the forum, he added: “Why don’t they instead read the plays?” (My colleague Jim Harner, editor of the World Shakespeare Bibliography housed here at Texas A&M, has noted that Trowbridge’s source is flawed; there are in reality..."
34,011 articles on Shakespeare for the period 1980-2006.

“Equally disturbing—to most of us, I hope—is that the chair of the Texas A&M University Board of Regents—who had, to be fair, recently confirmed the value of teaching, service, and research at Texas A&M—nonetheless implied agreement with the direction of Trowbridge’s remarks: “Is there real value to research it [Shakespeare] more?,” he asked. “I think that’s worthy of talking about.”

“It would take far too long (and to my mind would only barely be relevant) to note how valuable some of the 21,000 (or 34,000) articles have been, how much they have enlightened us about Shakespeare, his accomplishments, and his times. But I’m not interested in adopting a defensive mode so much as pointing to the very worrisome implications of these attitudes about research and, perhaps especially, research that does not have a direct correlation to immediate practical results. It is as if we can decide at some point that we’ve done enough, that 21,674 or 34,011 articles in 26 or 27 years say it all, as if there is a way to say about any research: that’s enough, no more, we’re done. My students, and the students of every teacher of Shakespeare here and, I dare say, anywhere else in the state and the country, do read the plays but they also do the research about the plays in ways that are instructive, valuable, and, yes, necessary. Mr. Trowbridge’s remarks set up an imaginary opposition I think all of us would reject, regardless of field: the notion that there is either research or there is teaching—in this instance, there is research among those many articles or there is teaching the plays. We say it often but that doesn’t make it any less true: there is a crucial relationship between the research we do on a subject and our teaching of that subject. That is true of each of your areas of expertise, and it is no less true about Shakespeare. Thank you.”

Kim Hill (Liberal Arts) added that it is not just teaching and research on English that are at risk, but many kinds of basic research in many fields. He said we need to promote a view of research which goes beyond the immediately useful. Speaker Strawser commended Kim Hill and Paul Parrish for their remarks.

Speaker Daugherity gave an update on the current dependent eligibility audit and reported that as of today 49 dependents of 46 employees had been ruled ineligible for system health insurance coverage at a cost saving of $170,000 per year. The remaining half of system employees will be audited later.

There being no further business to come before the Committee of the Whole, Speaker-Elect Stallone returned the chair to Speaker Benedik.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 P.M. Speaker Benedik reminded the senators to attend the reception for the Faculty Senate at the University Club, hosted by President Loftin and Provost Watson.