

Delta State University
Faculty Senate
Thursday, April 2, 2009
3:30 p.m.
Union 302

Members present:

Phyllis Bunn	Ellen Green	Catherine Hayes
David Hebert	Yasuhiro Kobayashi	Adam Lynde
Douglas Mark	Dan McFall	Eckward McKnight
Edith McMillen	Paulette Meikle-Yaw	D. Allan Mitchell
Hunter Moore	Robyn Moore	Brett Oleis
Duane Shuttlesworth	Jeff Smithpeters	Mark Snyder
Sheryl Stump	Subramanian Swaminathan	Tricia Walker

Staff council representative:

Christy Montesi

Guest:

Ann Lotven, Vice President for Academic Affairs

- I. Approval of Agenda.** Approved with an announcement by Past-president Phyllis Bunn added.
- II. Approval of Minutes from the Feb 12 Regular Meeting.** Approved. March 12 minutes will be offered in the next meeting.
- III. President's Report**
 - The new Senate session will begin on April 16th. Pres. Hebert said he had forgotten to call for nominations to executive positions in the March meeting but was doing so today. Those who want to be the next President-elect should contact current President-elect Patricia Roberts.
 - The state legislature is in recess to allow time for more information to be learned about the federal stimulus package. It is likely to reconvene in May. Until mid-summer, the University will not know what its financial picture will look like.
 - For newly elected senators, Pres. Hebert identified the four Faculty Senate representatives to the University Budget Committee: Pres.-elect Roberts, Senators McKnight, McMillen and Hayes.
- IV. Staff Council Report.** Christy Montesi said a workshop would be given on communications styles May 19. She said the election of a new staff council would occur in July with new members seated in September

- V. **Committee reports:** (Pres. Hebert asked that each chair explain the function of their committees for the benefit of the incoming faculty senators present).

Committee on Elections: Chair Stump said the committee runs two elections a year, those for the merit pay appeals committee and the senatorial elections. Chair Stump also repeated Pres. Hebert's appeal for nominations for senate officers so that senators can know who the candidates are ahead of time.

Committee on University Standing Committees: Chair McKnight reminded those who still haven't signed up for participation on a University Standing Committee to get word to him of their preferred committee choices before April 15.

He also explained his committee determines the membership of the various University Standing Committees, then sees that the committees meet and do their jobs. He said his committee had recently changed the date of choosing membership period to April.

Committee on Technology: Chair Dan McFall had no report but explained that his committee investigates problems with University technology.

Committee on University Services: Chair Kobayashi said he was told faculty social security numbers will no longer be available to all other users of the banner system beginning in August. He said if the University does not take this step, it will have to contend with the Federal government. He then explained to new senators that his committee considers the non-academic services provided at the University.

Committee on General Academic Affairs: Chair Smithpeters had no report but said his committee considers the academic functions of the University and matters involving faculty salaries and benefits.

Pres. Hebert reported that the President's Cabinet is discussing the resolution passed in the March meeting calling for the reinstatement of the faculty spousal benefit that reimburses faculty spouses for the cost of a full-time undergraduate and graduate schedule. The benefit had been reduced this past semester to six hours.

Sen. Subramanian reported that he had been told the cost of the faculty spousal benefit would be charged to the departmental budget of the faculty member using the reimbursement. Chair Smithpeters said he had not encountered this information in his investigation.

- VI. **Old Business:**

Proposal for Four-Day Finals Week: Sen. Kobayashi presented his proposal to shorten the times between exams to two hours, enabling a decrease in the number of days finals would be given to four. His proposal also suggested a move of the due date for final

grades to the Friday of finals week. Sen. Kobayashi moved the proposal be considered. Sen. Stump seconded.

Among the remarks: The proposal would not be good for Business Education (McKnight). The earlier due date would pose great difficulty for those teaching writing (Smithpeters). The shortening of exam week would increase pressure on students (Lynde).

Sen. Oleis made the motion to send the proposal to the General Academic Affairs Committee. Pres-elect Bunn seconded. Sen. McFall called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. New Business

Resolution Calling for the Provost to Investigate the Writing Proficiency Exam and Make Necessary Changes: Sen. Lynde offered the resolution, which cites a decline in student scores on the Writing Proficiency Exam and the perceived effect of this decline on student retention as reason to ask that the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Ann Lotven, investigate the administration of the WPE. The resolution he passed out differed from that sent to members of the Executive Committee in that it incorporated changes made after Lynde had had a conversation with incoming Senator and current proxy Allan Mitchell, who teaches in the Department of Languages and Literature.

Sen. Mitchell said the resolution needed to be sent to the General Academic Affairs committee for further study.

Sen. McKnight moved that the resolution be sent to General Academic Affairs. Sen. Mitchell seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Nature Trail: Pres. Hebert said future uses of the land DSU is currently using as a golf course are being studied. Several people have asked administration to allow its use as a botanical garden. Sens. Kobayashi and Green distributed a handout containing a rough sketch for the plans to create this garden and nature trail.

Sen. McKnight and Past-president Bunn said the golf course isn't dead yet. Sen. McFall agreed and added that on a small campus there is not the luxury of devoting large spaces to nature preserves. Sen. Lynde suggested the nature trail may help pay for itself.

Questions arose about what the University plans to do with the properties it has bought along Shumate Street. Vice President for Academic Affairs Lotven said the campus masterplan also included the building of new dining facilities and faculty and student housing.

Past-president Bunn moved that the nature trail idea be referred to the Committee on University Services. Sen. Kobayashi seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Past-President Bunn's Announcements: The Past-pres. announced the new faculty lounge in the Union would have a grand opening ceremony Wed. April 22nd. Several speakers and performers from the Dept. of Music, Delta Music Institute and the Department of Languages and Literature would appear. President Hilpert is also making an appearance.

Polices for the lounge were briefly discussed and a handout was distributed. The lounge will be opened in the morning by the Univ. Police Dept and closed at 5 pm.

VIII. Adjournment. Sen. McFall moved. Sen. McKnight seconded. Unanimous approval.