MINUTES
FACULTY SENATE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

The Faculty Senate met in regular session on Wednesday, September 25, 1991, at 2:30 p.m. in Conference Room 4, Davis Hall. Chairman I. Bernstein presided.


INTRODUCTIONS: Chairman Bernstein introduced Executive Committee, Vice-President Eleanor Pape, Industrial Engineering; Secretary Lana Rings, Foreign Languages; Parliamentarian Tom Petry, Engineering; and Professor Mark Dunn, Accounting, who has a dual responsibility as COFCO Representative and member of the Presidential Nominating Committee in session at this time. New members of the Senate include Professor Burley Walker, Management; Professor Bill Stegall, Art; Tim McKinney, Music; Professor Mary Ridgway, Exercise, Sport and Health Studies; and Florence Zuefeldt. Faculty Senate Recorder.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made to correct the minutes of the meeting of September 17, 1991 to reflect the presence of Senator Gates. The motion was seconded and approved. Senator Petry made a motion to correct the minutes of the July 3, 1991 meeting to reflect they were there to consider names to nominate, and that the Parker letter was not a nomination letter. Motion was seconded and approved.

REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN: Chairman Bernstein presented a clarification of the function of the Faculty Senate, citing the lack of an independent voice and of input by the faculty into University policy, prior to the assembling of this body. He further stated that since the advent of the Faculty Senate, which acts as a vigilant and protective overseer of academic freedom, many positive things have been accomplished with the Senate assisting in the keeping of checks and balances.

Chairman Bernstein made explanation to query by a Senate member regarding procedure in calling emergency meeting July 3, 1991. He informed the Senate that the presidential Nominating Committee, in attempting to adhere to its schedule, had assembled to begin its deliberations. The need for the Faculty Senate to be represented in those proceedings being of importance, the action was taken. A quorum was present.

Chairman Berstein reiterated his belief that proxies should be accepted in the Faculty Senate in order to maintain the democratic concept by assuring representation of all departments. He expressed the hope that the operating Procedure Committee will address this issue.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN: Senator Hermann asked the reason for the Chairman's earlier explanation regarding the called meeting.
Chairman Berstein explained that the questioning member had not understood the urgency of selecting a Senate representative.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
HIGHLIGHT OF THE LAST STATE LEGISLATURE SESSION
President Nedderman presented the important educational issues addressed at the session of the State Legislature which he described as a "wild meeting", a "tug of war" regarding budget cuts.
1. There were two factions with different points of view. One strong group opposed any new taxes and stated there would be none regardless of budget cuts. The other segment wanted to raise taxes as necessary coverage to meet the government need in Austin. After a regular session and two special sessions the final result was somewhere in-between. While there will be many cuts there will also be $2.6 billion tax increase. We received a general revenue appropriation 2.2% below current services, taking growth into account, the amount required to stay even, and this was 4.1% above the 1990-1991 appropriation, most of which was for staff benefits and premium sharing.

2. Another item of extreme interest was the Texas Performance Audit by State Comptroller, John Sharp, who engaged a crew of over 100 auditors. Working a period of sixty days they produced a program which contained 975 recommendations. The Legislature rejected most of those which affected higher education. Examples of those which they did not accept include the Sharp proposal that undergraduate resident tuition be doubled immediately from $20.00 to $40.00 per semester credit hour, that 75% of increase go into the State Treasury and that all out of state tuition go into the Treasury as well. The outcome constituted a compromise whereby there will be no change this year but there will be a gradual increase of tuition to $32.00 per semester credit hour by 1995-1996. President Nedderman stated that doubling tuition in such a short time frame was totally unacceptable.

3. Another proposal which was disturbing was to reduce the general appropriation by an amount equal to interest earned on local accounts. We have two general areas. One is education, which is supported directly by the State. Another area is auxiliary enterprises, such as housing, the bookstore, and the University Center, for which, by law, we cannot use State funds. They must be self-supporting. Housing for example must maintain a reserve from rentals for emergency repairs, maintenance, equipment, etc. Normally this is invested and the interest used for the benefit of the students. Under Mr. Sharp's proposal the interest used for the supported activities would be used as a substitute for general revenue for the State. Such an action would make it necessary to raise lab fees in order to replace the reserve. This proposal was turned down. The Sharp proposal also recommended that all special items be phased out at a rate of 25% per year until they are eliminated. These items provide seed money and in many cases have a very high leverage effect. The Legislature did not accept this in general. The Rural Hospital Outreach Program will be funded, the Robotics Research Institute will receive $1 million this year and $8 million in the next year. However, the Institute of Urban Studies lost $700,000 for the biennium.

4. A proposal which was accepted was the reduction of the State contribution to Teacher Retirement to 7.31%. This will also apply to the Optional Retirement Plan. The university has the authority to make up the difference from the 7.31% to 8.5% if the university can provide the money from some other source. This is being done.

5. An important step was the bringing of GTA's and RA's under premium sharing for Health Insurance, which was a much needed addition to our program.

6. The Legislature granted us authority for an across-the-board increase for all State employees if the Comptroller would certify it. After some time we did gain this certification and a 2% salary increase was authorized. According to our Regents Guidelines and current legislation, there can be some merit raises, but given the uncertainty of possible reduction within the next year it would be prudent to conserve for the present.

PROJECTS ON CAMPUS
The Cooper Street project, including landscaping, is nearing completion; Preston Hall should be finished by early October; and the Day Care is currently in operation. On October 25, the Coordinating Board will be meeting to consider a $3.9 million, 2,000 foot repair/replacement of the Second Street utility tunnel and the $10.5 million addition to Phase I of Science Bldg. The Regents will next consider funding for Ransom Hall and Phase III renovation of the Library.

QUESTIONS TO THE PRESIDENT
Chairman Bernstein inquired as to the validity of the rumor concerning the budget cuts for Urban Affairs as being totally political.
President Nedderman responded he was not prepared to say because he didn’t know, but he personally did not believe this to be true.

Chairman Bernsstein asked whether or not the 2% raise for the faculty here would be taken from the faculty with other sources than the appropriation.

President Nedderman answered that the raise indeed would be taken from the appropriation.

Senator Eisenfeld questioned the fact that he had not received a letter that would verify his rank and salary review.

President Nedderman made explanation that the Board of Regents has not yet approved the operating budget and the letters are not yet prepared. A workable solution has not been reached in regard to merit raises and other budget items already discussed.

Senator Lowry requested clarification on State lowering of the ORP contribution to 7.31%. The explanation he received from State Senator Chris Harris, in response to one of the many letters written to representatives in defense of the retirement program, was that the 8.5% would be restored, possibly during the second year of the biennium.

President Nedderman stated he did not have that information but at this present time it is being “taken out of our hide.” He also expressed his disapproval of “tampering with the retirement system” as “one of the most serious things that can be done by the Legislature.”

Senator Chiasson asked whether or not the next pay check would reflect the 2% raise.

President Nedderman commented that it should.

Senator Hermann inquired as to the disposition of lab fees, i.e., whether they will still be kept by each department.

President Nedderman stated that they will.

**REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT BAKER**

The possibility exists that the state lottery, if it passes, could have an effect on the budget. He put into perspective the apparent increase in appropriations for UTA for 1991-1992. The increase amount is that which was mandated in insurance matching for GTA’s and RA’s. The percentages are misleading and there is no flexibility as the University has no more dollar control than it had last year.

There is uncertainty about the budget for next year.

There were no questions of the Vice President.

Chairman Bernsstein entertained a motion to change the agenda to enable Donna Darovich of Campus News Service, to make her presentation allowing her to leave prior to business meeting. Motion made by Senator Rings was seconed and carried.

Ms Darovich briefed the Senate on mission, responsibilities, activities and publications of the campus News Service. She stated that their mission is to disseminate positive information for the campus community. The responsibilities, activities and publications include: keeping a clip file on everything pertaining to UTA; presenting a weekly cable TV talk show, to which she invites faculty members to air research projects; maintaining a Speakers’ Guide for University resource; keeping the University before the media, on TV, radio and in newspapers throughout the Metroplex; publishing a monthly magazine “Presence”, a monthly faculty and staff newsletter, a monthly report about UTA personnel; and organizing and presenting seminars and workshops. Ms Darovich invited the cooperation of the members to participate in the Speakers’ Guide in their field of expertise, to forward to her any interesting news or events, to participate in a seminar or workshop, if interested, and to complain to the newspapers and TV stations if UTA is not covered. Her office is located in room 402 Davis Hall.

Chairman Bernsstein asked for caucuses to complete committee assignments. Committees formed: Presidential Advisory Committee: Senators Chuong (Engineering), Duwaji (Business), Eisenfeld (Science), and Rings (Liberal Arts), M. E. Jones (Other). Equity Committee: Senators Thompson (Engineering), Walker (Business), Paulus (Science), Ridgway (Liberal Arts), Hissson (Other). Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee: Senators Tong (Engineering), Mykytyn (Business), Ladde (Science), and Chiasson (Liberal Arts), Tolbert (Other).
OLD BUSINESS
The motion regarding Professorships and Endowed chairs has been acted on and modified by the Undergraduate Assembly. Senator Petry moved it be considered by Operations Committee. Seconded. Senator Girardot asked how many bodies were charged with handling this situation. The answer was: Faculty Senate, Undergraduate, Graduate Assembly. Senator Weed inquired as to the possibility that this body could modify and discuss this proposal. It was affirmed.

NEW BUSINESS
Senator Walker had presented a memo questioning legitimacy of outcome of the July 3 meeting, citing lack of knowledge and having not been informed.

Senator Rings presented a motion on behalf of the Department of Foreign Languages that plus and minus grades be included on and added to final grade reports and be reflected on student transcripts. The motion was seconded.

Discussion:
Senator Walker inquired as to how it might effect the GPA. To which group should this be brought? Faculty Senate?
Senator Duwaji asked for more detailed recommendation.
Senator Girardot ascertained it would encompass 13 different grades and expressed doubt that the Registrar's Office could handle that many grades without difficulty.
Senator Smith questioned the motion, citing that the reasons given for the change were not necessarily true or substantiated.
Senator Mykytyn expressed doubt regarding the authority of the Senate to act upon the motion.
Vice President Baker responded that it was appropriate for Senate to express opinion. The Scholastic Standards Committee has considered and rejected such a motion within the last four years.
Senator Hermann asked if all would be required to give these grades.
Senator Eisenfeld expressed the opinion that such a standard could make some students work harder.
Senator Wood requested that it be tabled until such time as the Registrars' Office could be reached for their opinion.
The motion was amended to be referred to the Academic Liaison Committee. The vote was 20 to 11 in favor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Senator Girardot announced that a Scholarship has been established in the name of Professor Emeritus John Murchison.

ADJOURNMENT:
The meeting adjourned at 4:15 P.M.