

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Special Meeting

Thursday, February 17, 2000

3:30 PM

Cedar Breaks Room, Sharwan Smith Center

Present:

Idir Azouz, Luciane Berg, Bonnie Bishop, Morris Brown, Jim Cotts, Tom Cunningham, Ben Davidson, Brian Hoover, Roxann Johnson (proxy for Jim Aton), Lamar Jordan, Rick Lambson, Paul Larson, Ken Laundra (proxy for Dan Pence), Elise Leahy, Michael McGarvey, Carol Ann Modesitt, Earl Mulderink, Connie Nyman (proxy for Neil Gailey), Lila Schwaner.

Absent:

Ann Barnes, Jeff Barnes, Gary McIntyre, Greg Powell.

Excused:

Bill Romey.

Visitors:

Terry Alger, Amber Allen, Todd Amon, Steven Bennion, Rhead Bowman, David Christensen, Randy Christensen, Sterling Church, Kim Craft, Phil Dillard, Margaret Dixon, Robert Eves, Oakley Gordon, Les Jones, Richard Kimball, Marty Larkin, Suzanne Larson, Dean Lass, Ken Laundra, Britton Mace, Ken Munford, Matt Nickerson, Pat Paystrup, Des Penny, Ty Redd, Ray Reutzel, Stephen Roberds, Terry Schwaner, Peter Smith, Brent Sorenson, Greg Stauffer, Andreas Weingartner, Cynthia Wright.

I. Call to Order.

Earl Mulderink, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order at 3:35 P.M.

II. Question and answer session with President Bennion and Provost Reutzel.

Earl welcomed President Steven Bennion and Provost Ray Reutzel and asked them to make opening comments to start a 45-minute discussion period. President Bennion stated that we have an opportunity to shape our own future rather than have someone else shape it for us, and he suggested that SUU needs to be differentiated from the other USHE institutions. He discussed SUU's many strengths and noted recent changes at both Dixie and Utah Valley State Colleges that will impact SUU's future.

Provost Reutzel distributed copies of his written responses to a series of questions about prioritization and reorganization, and he commented that this process has been limited mainly to "talking" without any concrete changes. The Provost stated that the first iteration of proposed restructuring (issued in Fall 1999) was "bad judgment," and he asked for the faculty to be understanding and to offer much-needed input as SUU confronts many challenges. He noted that SUU's sole organizational change made this year will be the move of the Department of Communication from the College of Business, Technology, and Communication to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, a move requested by that department's faculty members.

Because SUU faces several serious dilemmas, the Provost added, we must define and discuss this university's vision and direction, issues to be discussed at a Faculty Forum on March 9, 2000. Provost Reutzel reiterated the need for SUU's faculty and administration to work together, and he offered reassurances that organizational changes will not force faculty members to lose employment or tenure.

Several of the faculty posed questions to both President Bennion and Provost Reutzel, most of which focused on the following issues:

- What is the university's vision?
- Should SUU build "vertically" rather than "horizontally"?
- Should SUU try to be all things to all people or be more specialized in some areas?
- How can students gain access to needed classes?
- What are the causes and consequences of large class sections?
- What must faculty know about problems and issues facing all USHE institutions?
- What can faculty expect in the prioritization and reallocation processes?

President Bennion and Provost Reutzel responded to these and other questions, and then departed. Following a brief intermission, the Faculty Senate turned to the scheduled agenda.

III. Old Business.

A. Program Prioritization

1. Roles and Responsibilities of the Faculty Senate

Numerous senators and guests addressed this issue in a discussion that began with Les Jones reading a prepared statement. He commented that fifteen years ago SUU experienced a prioritization process, and at that time the Senate deferred decision-making to the administration. Some tenured faculty lost their jobs as several programs were eliminated. Les addressed the issue of academic freedom and referred to SUU's Policies and Procedures. He stated that the Faculty Senate has a responsibility to participate in the prioritization process, and that discontinuance of any academic program must be based on educational and academic reasons, according to extant SUU policy. A lengthy discussion followed.

The consensus was that Faculty Senators plan to participate fully in the prioritization process, but many wished to defer specific action until the Faculty Forum of March 9. Most concurred that a "vision" should be shared before prioritization criteria can be discussed in more detail. A MOTION was made by Luciane Berg that the Faculty Senate hold special Faculty Senate meetings once a month in addition to the regularly-scheduled meeting for the remainder of the semester to discuss key issues and policies. SECONDED by Lamar Jordan. PASSED unanimously.

Earl asked Faculty Senators to share the information from today's meeting with their colleagues.

IV. Adjournment.

Motion to adjourn was made by Lamar Jordan at 5:40 PM.