

Minutes of  
THE FACULTY SENATE  
OF  
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met in a special called meeting on Friday, April 30, 2004, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 325 of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center. The following members were present:

Dr. Sid Womack	Mr. Ron Robison
Dr. Annette Holeyfield	Dr. Jeff Robertson
Dr. Scott Kirkconnell	Ms. Darla Sparacino
Dr. Carl Greco	Dr. Trey Philpotts
Ms. Marti Wilkerson	Dr. Kevin Mason
Dr. Kathy Pearson	

Dr. Charles Busch, Mr. Ken Futterer, Ms. Peggy Lee, and Dr. Joe Moore were absent.

CALL TO ORDER

President Sparacino called the meeting to order and stated that the April 14, 2004, minutes were not ready for review. President Sparacino stated that the purpose of the called meeting was to address issues arising from the recent Standing Committee elections (i.e., election of an at-large position on the Curriculum Committee due to the elected faculty member being ineligible to serve and breaking a tie for an at-large position on the Faculty Welfare Committee) and asked Dr. Kirkconnell to begin the discussion. Dr. Kirkconnell noted that the Faculty Senate had been asked in the past to break ties and elect faculty to at-large positions but that this has been practice only and is not stated anywhere in the *Faculty Handbook*. Dr. Kirkconnell asked that the Faculty Senate consider having elections on the web utilizing Blackboard and distributed information downloaded from a website entitled the "Center for Voting and Democracy" (<http://fairvote.org/activism/irvkit.htm#call>). A further incentive to utilizing Blackboard would be to increase faculty participation as only 54 faculty voted in the recent election with over 200 faculty eligible to vote. Ms. Wilkerson reported that some faculty who voted during the time she was assisting with the election had happened to wander in due to having seen a sign. She also stated that the Senate did not have a ballot box and that ballots were simply laid face down on the table. Ms. Wilkerson noted that these committees have important work to perform and election to the committees is also important. She then asked Dr. Kirkconnell if Blackboard allows for secret voting. Dr. Kirkconnell stated that Blackboard will allow for secret voting, anonymous voting, and will allow an individual to vote only once.

Other points of discussion relating to the election process itself included faculty not being able to vote due to being in class the entire time that the elections are held; the fact that the faculty in general do not see much difference between nominees for at-large positions and that they are not as concerned since most committees already have school representatives; and the ease of voting on Blackboard where candidates for at-large positions could post their stand on certain issues so that the general faculty could know something about the individuals before casting their votes.

Dr. Greco stated that a committee should be formed to look at the issue of standing committee elections over the summer and report back to the Senate in the fall. Motion by Dr. Greco, seconded by Dr. Womack, to form a sub-committee to study the election process as it pertains to both the general election and the school elections and that the sub-committee report back to the Senate in September. Motion carried. President Sparacino

asked for volunteers to serve on the sub-committee. Dr. Greco, Ms. Wilkerson, and Dr. Robertson volunteered to serve.

Relating to the current issue, Ms. Wilkerson reported that she had spoken to individuals from her school who were in favor of the Senate resolving the at-large position issues as had been historically done but who were also in favor of the election system being reviewed. Dr. Robertson noted that resolution of the tie for the Faculty Welfare Committee may be acceptable for the Senate to do but that automatically electing the person who received the second most votes for the at-large position on the Curriculum Committee might be a problem, especially if the person initially elected had received a large majority of the votes and the person receiving the next most votes had only received a few. President Sparacino stated that this issue is one that would also need to be reviewed by the sub-committee.

President Sparacino asked that the Senate first consider the tie for the at-large position on the Faculty Welfare Committee. Motion by Ms. Wilkerson, seconded by Dr. Pearson, that the Faculty Senate break the tie. Motion carried. Dr. Linda Kondrick (Department of Physical Sciences) was elected to the at-large position.

President Sparacino then asked for action relating to the at-large position on the Curriculum Committee. Motion by Ms. Wilkerson, seconded by Mr. Robison, to utilize the historical precedent and elect the individual who received the second most votes. Motion carried. Ms. Kate Brugh (Department of Speech, Theatre, and Journalism) was thereby elected to the at-large position on the Curriculum Committee.

Dr. Kirkconnell noted that Computer Services would need to be involved for a switch in election procedures utilizing Blackboard and that these individuals, while accommodating, do have workloads scheduled by supervisors. Therefore, the Senate will need to take this into account when reviewing the election process.

ADJOURNMENT      The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Darla Sparacino, M.Ed., President



Scott Kirkconnell, Ph.D., Secretary