

Minutes, SFA meeting, January 29, 2014
8:30-10:00, Elkins Auditorium

Andy Yuengert opened the meeting at 8:35.

Devotional by Mike Murrie on hope: How can we work with students to build endurance, character, and hope? How might we use scholarship to build these? How can struggling with governance generate hope?

Preliminaries

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes from the SFA meeting of 12/4/13. Approved!

Andy reviewed the rest of semester's SFA Meetings:

March 26

- Growing Seaver, move to vote
- Merit Pay final discussion
- Nomination for next year's officers

April 16

- Merit pay proposals, move to vote
- Honoring retiring faculty
- Other

Growing Seaver:

Andy began the growing Seaver discussion by explaining the results of a survey he had sent out. He apologized for any confusion when the survey was initially sent out, because the subject line of the e-mail did not clearly indicate what the survey was. He sent a notification later with a clarification, but he suggested that perhaps not as many people responded as he had hoped because of the initial confusion.

The results were presented using PowerPoint slides.

The results were from 69 people. The rank of respondents was distributed as: 36 Professor, 10 Associate Professor, 15 Assistant Professor, 3 visiting professor, 1 library, 4 decline to state. The number of respondents varied by division, with the most from NASC-15, HUTE-13, SOSC-10 and others less.

In reply to the first question that asked if people strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree, there was a fairly even distribution. 24.6% indicated neither agree nor disagree; 15.9% strongly agreed, 23.2% agreed, 15.9% disagreed, and 20.3% strongly disagreed.

Andy noted there were some differences by division, with NASC more negative than positive, while some were more positive than negative. SOSC was the most negative (70%) with no one in that division in the neither agree nor disagree column.

The next question asked for what aspects of the proposal people saw as positive or negative and what measures people would suggest would be helpful to see whether we're getting worse or better. Andy explained that he was showing a summary of themes he saw, rather than detailed responses, since it was not fair to show individual responses since people taking the survey might expect anonymity.

Andy also mentioned that he personally is on the "disagree" but not strongly disagree side, and wanted to acknowledge his biases to be fair.

Of 48 people who responded to the proposal positively, Andy identified these recurring themes: potential but risk; bigger profile among Christian schools, more tenure track faculty, opportunity to bolster small programs. He noted that the comments on the positive side were not generally as focused and specific as comments on the negative side.

Of 52 responses which were negative regarding the proposal, Andy identified these recurring themes: Already strained by decade of growth (where to put people, faculty, staff, students); doubts about student quality; doubts about space, resources, may harm our strength (student-centered), division structure must change, risk of not getting resources from University, declining student population nationally.

Andy elaborated on some points, in particular twice using numbers of 40-50 faculty as the size of potential increase.

The last part of the survey asked for advice. As Dean Marrs had indicated that we would only grow if we could get better, what would "better" look like? What measures would be needed to ensure quality?

Of 44 people who responded these measures were mentioned: incoming class (scores), student-faculty ratio, success after graduation (jobs, grad school, awards), faculty research, faculty salaries, smaller class size (fewer large classes), graduation rates, faith, diversity, and alumni support

In concluding remarks on the survey, Andy mentioned that there is considerable split among faculty—that we are really all over the map. He intended to forward the survey results to Dean Marrs and the administration, but mentioned that from the faculty we might consider concrete proposals, focused on the issue of what it means for Seaver to be better. He asked if there were clarifying questions; there were none.

Andy then shared another PowerPoint slide showing "Potential Quality Indicators" with data he had gotten from OIE; he thanked Lily Pang and Don Thompson for assistance in gathering that data. This was the same as the PowerPoint he had sent out with the survey, so faculty should have seen it. The premise was that he wanted to know what we already know about how much Seaver has grown in the last

decade, and what that growth has done to student quality, etc.; The point is that we have some measures already and we can look at what the impact has been.

He showed that undergraduate enrollment has grown from 2001 (2755 students) to 2013 (3239 students) a growth of about 500 students. He noted that most growth was in the first three years, and that by 2004 we had 3000 students. He doesn't know for sure why the growth happened then. He reminded that the goal of growing Seaver was around 3600 students.

Next, he showed a graph with applications, # accepted, and #enrolled; In particular, we've grown from 6527 applications in 2001 to over 10,486 in 2013; He noted that Dean Marrs says it is not easier to get a class just because we have more applications since nationally students are applying to more schools; Acceptance rates are going up, and yields are going down to get a class. The undergrad acceptance rate shows 37.2% acceptance, up from 27.2% and yield rate dropping from 38.3 to 23.1%.

Next, he focused on the quality of the incoming class; GPA averages from 2001-2013, have dipped a little from 3.63 to 3.59, but rose to 3.7 in middle.

He showed that SAT critical writing scores for the past 5 years haven't moved much, either at the 75th and 25th percentiles; SAT critical reading also hasn't changed much in either 75th or 25th percentile; SAT Math scores show some growth (up 20 points in the 75th percentile or 10 points in 25th percentiles). The ACT composite has risen from 29-31 and from 24-26 at the 75 and 25th percentiles, respectively.

Andy then asked, once they get here how are students doing? Retention rates: he noted the scale he used makes it look like it's bouncing around, but that it reflects tiny percentages. Retention rates are up from 89.1 to 91.7%, about 2% increase in freshman retention rates, with a lot of money going into this without a lot of change.

Seaver College graduation rates for 6 and 4 years were next. The 4-year rate fell in early 2000s but is back over what it was in 2001 to 75.9%. The 6-year rate hasn't changed much.

Andy elaborated on all these numbers, noting that he had thought there would be bigger spreads or declines, but he didn't see in aggregate numbers much decline.

Student-faculty ratios and Class sizes were next. In 2001, the student-faculty ratio was 12; it peaked at a high of 14.1 in 2009 and now is 13 (2013). While this suggests a big increase in the decade, it has gone down in the past five years, but not as low as 2001.

Q: how is this calculated? A: FTE, not tenured; Andy noted that regardless, it is calculated consistently.

Number of sections by class size showed a lot of action occurred in the early part of the decade; up to 2005 we were really increasing the number of larger sections (100+) This has come down a little since then, but we have higher numbers than in 2001. Sections of 50-99 also grew, from 4 to 10-15 at a high point and these are back down to 12 sections. Classes of 40-49, jumped from 1 to 17 now. Number of sections by class size, 30-39 went from 57 to 46, a modest decline. Andy noted that it is not clear if this is because students went to larger or smaller sections. Smaller section classes, from 20-29 have been relatively steady, classes from 10-19 have been relatively steady—up from 300 to 329; Classes from 2-9 students have gone up and down, a very volatile number, with lots of sections.

Total number of tenure track/instructional faculty rose from 135 in 2001 then dropped back to 135 in 2008. There has been an increase to 154 since then.

Andy made some conclusions: we don't see much change in the quality of students, but we do see an increase in faculty load as Seaver has grown since 2001, with the number of large sections moderately up as an example. He suggests that the idea that growth has put more burdens on faculty is born out by this data.

Andy then asked if there were clarifying questions about the data.

Q: Is there any information on how financial aid has changed per student? A: No, he doesn't have any, although someone does.

Q: Is there any information on how this has changed major to major or division to division? Are some majors more impacted by large class sizes or not?

A: He doesn't know, but believes some majors are more impacted; but it is hard to know if this is because of national trends or because of growing numbers of students.

Q: Do you have data on national rankings?

A: No, but we should have that data. He would like to see that.

Q: What's happened to divisions by using quality standards. This person could envision that quality standards for business may not look the same as for science or arts. Is it possible to get that data? Looking forward it would be good to see that by division and major.

A: Quality data on incoming class was offered during assessment. He doesn't know if it's archived, but we but could follow it. It would be interesting to see if there are differentials by majors/divisions even if not overall by averages.

Q. Do you have data on number of people who have received awards? Any data on Fulbrights, etc.?

A. There should be such data, and it could be useful, but he doesn't know how we would interpret it. Based on resources devoted to it one would expect it's gone up; but if it's a quality measure we could look at it.

Q: Have operating funds for divisions changed? Has there been increased funding for faculty research during this time? Could we get that information? A. He assumes we do, and he offered to write that down and follow up. He said it's a question of measuring inputs, not just outputs.

Q: This person noticed spikes in early 2000s of class size and wondered if some of the class size changed due to implementation of GE 2000? He suggests it's a guess, and doesn't know if it's a cause, but wonders if it should be considered.

A: This makes sense; the timing could have changed the mix of classes offered.

Andy showed data again noted that Dean Marrs suggested a correlation to the .com boom/bust when Seaver took extra students so wouldn't have to take a cut, and another time, when Seaver took extra students for the university. He suggests there is some evidence faculty bore the brunt of these increases.

Comment: It was noted that the 1997 catalog said we 2800 students, so the 2755 in 2001 may have been low, compared to 5 years earlier.

Andy noted that it would also be good to know how many students were in Malibu, because new IP programs, Buenos Aires, Lausanne, Shanghai are included in these increases; some of this growth would be those students so it's not clear how much of that growth is in Malibu.

Q: OIE data, There was a question about clarification of data, that showed that from 2003-2013 FTS grew by 370, FTE faculty grew by 8, so how can student-faculty ratio be going down? How is that? The numbers don't match. Andy went back to the data on the slide to show the changes in student-faculty ratios. The raw numbers seem off.

Observation/Q: It would be good to get student perspectives on what it's like to be with 900 in a class as a freshman. Was Mark Davis involved in discussions? Andy answered that he is involved.

Comment/observation: When advising, it is hard to get freshmen in classes that aren't too big, and students are struggling when in three large classes. This creates transition issues; we've observed this and we try to make sure new students are not in two large classes, but it is difficult to do.

Andy stated that it would help to make observations in concrete ways; he is looking for concrete proposals. He suggested proposals that say we propose these things or our support is conditional on specific points (e.g., student-faculty ration must not go over 12).

Q: Do you know if proposed strategy for growing is it to increase applicant pool or to increase yield with better packages? If yield isn't increased doesn't that imply a lowering of standards if the applicant pool stays the same?

A: Andy hesitates to speak on Dean Marrs behalf, but he had just asked him, "Where do you expect to get these extra students?" He had said to this body before, Seaver college has never marketed itself, and he has confidence that by doing that, marketing Seaver college, marketing in the Christian student market we could attract much attention we aren't even trying to get now.

Comment: On financial aid, there is a concern that we're discounting too much. That makes me wonder about quality.

Comment by Ron: Part of growing Seaver is to offset that problem of too much discount; what he thinks Dean Marrs would say is that the effort is to make financial aid more manageable—have it go down, not grow it by offering more financial aid.

Q: Do we have numbers on percentages of international students, how that has grown? Is that a part of the financial aid equation or the yield question. How many international students are turning down coming? (No specific answer.)

Comment/Q: You asked for specific recommendations; I don't know a response, because of ambiguity. I don't know what I'm responding to. I don't know what it's going to look like. To say if we agree or don't agree when we don't know what it means is hard, so I was in the neither agree or disagree category. What do we think Seaver 2025 is going to look like? I'd like to have someone cast a vision and then we could say what we like or don't like.

A: It's just a white paper, conceptual drawing as Dean Marrs has said. What would you like more detail on? You need to be specific about what detail you want. E.g., where is the classroom space going to be? It's a big difference whether we get it from main campus or Drescher. He thinks it's a terrible idea in his view to spread students up to Drescher.

Q: You mentioned some concern in Divisions about space. Could we get metrics for measuring space, lab space, hours per student? Could we get such metrics?

A: It would be useful for Natural Sciences to do it. They will do it for you, but it might be good if they got it from Natural Science instead of having them suggest it—the division could indicate this is how much we'd need if we're going to grow by this many students; it would be valuable for us to offer such information.

Andy reiterated that he thought it would be good to have a general proposal from SFA, but that it also might be good to have specific proposals from SFA about what we say we need; what are we concerned about? What do we want to keep track of?

Q/C: This person also would like to hear the academic vision for growing Seaver. They worked on academic excellence proposal, and it went nowhere when it reached the Dean's office. One hears at parties that Seaver is being asked to carry graduate schools; the business school and GSEO are in trouble. At meetings, we are told we can't talk about it, but is that the issue? And if so, can we have a clear/honest/transparent conversation about whether the aim of this is for Seaver to carry the graduate schools?

Q/C: It is upsetting that only 2 faculty were involved in crafting this proposal: Since Seaver is already grown, we should get something in return; we should ask that all full professors be eligible to apply for a 3/2 teaching load when they undergo their

five year review, or if they have not yet done so, that they be eligible to apply previous to their next 5 year review. This would be a renewable five year reduction in teaching load that would foster scholarship at the senior level. Studies show that professors are most productive at two points in their academic careers, early and later. It is a U shaped curve. This way they could complete longer projects, like monographs or several articles. Second, faculty should have the opportunity to apply for 75% funding of their regular pay for one year sabbaticals. Third, the faculty dining room should be open Monday-Friday 11:00-2:30 so that faculty with varying schedules can come for lunch. This will also help promote a sense of community, which is important if the faculty grows.

Q/C: They will do this whether we want it or not, so they would like it to be focused growth; The line about redistribution in majors in the proposal concerns her; she wonders what it means, and fears it might mean they plan to grow business and the business division; we are the Seaver college of arts, letters and sciences, and we don't want this to become the Seaver college of business. What are their plans with that regard? What are they really thinking, and what are we thinking as a faculty with regard to majors. Again, do they have a plan?

Andy: In the report, it does say that the proposal assume growing everyone at same level, but there is that line in the proposal about possible redistribution of programs.

Each division can get OIE information on increases in the divisions and metrics on resources, and quality indicators; we should work on that in divisions before we go forward.

Q. Does diversity play into this plan? If we extend marketing to Christians of a certain income that can pay, doesn't that take the diversity discussion and push it aside? There was a limited amount of speculation about whether that was in proposal.

Comment; we need a stipulation on class size distribution, plus 100 student classes have gotten bigger; and the 50-99 size probably doesn't feel a lot different to a student; we need a set of metrics for how we're going to arrest that growth and get back to quality and student centeredness.

Comment: Admissions needs reform to consider impacts on majors. We need that in the discussion of growing Seaver. It is standard at top universities, and we are in competition with UCLA/Berkeley, etc., in national rankings, so we ought to be considering that; we could grow Seaver and improve academics, particularly in some majors that aren't competitive because we're so small. For example, compare LMU and us. They have 17 faculty in history and we have 6, they have 9 in studio arts, and we have 3. How do we compete? Students are looking at websites, and they aren't going to go to a school if they don't see good representation of faculty in their field; that's something concrete we can focus on.

Comment: Likes the idea of each division voicing its opinion; some may not want to grow and others may want to, and we should know the reasons for that.

Comment: Another piece of puzzle, in the impact on faculty and students, is advising. Having 98 advisees, you can't do the kind of mentoring you would like to do; Onestop can't handle the extra load and we have to clean up the mess; by division and program, it would be helpful to get data on advising as well.

Comment/Q: What is the sustainability of the change? Dean Marrs has been working hard, working more than most, and while we can believe he has worked hard to keep quality indicators up. But, can we maintain quality long term with an administration that can sustain the quality as we change?

Comment: The document notes that given the current environment, this is an odd time to grow, and he has reservation for the same reasons—this has not provided an answer to that core question. Demographics show that student population is declining, and what are increasing are underrepresented groups, which has real aid implications. We would need more. He sees the thinking as similar to a “faith budget” at church. The consequences may be further reduction in our rankings, which matter a lot to students. He would like to see more fleshed out why they think they can attract students at Seaver at the same time they think it won't have an effect on quality indicators.

Comment: An independent consulting company is giving them confidence; she's suspicious of that.

Comment: Ron explained that he was not trying to defend the Dean, but in conversation with Ron, Andy, and the Dean yesterday he understood that the ideas on admissions and marketing are coming from our internal people. They believe that they can do this—get more students and keep the quality up, and that's the information that the Dean is getting; regardless of how we look at this, as a faith budget or risk there is definitely some risk in this.

Comment: They are not interested in targeting certain groups and impacted or un-impacted majors, because we have far too little input with admissions; they would like to see concrete data on increased staff; we've already grown, but how much have support services have grown as well? We need this data.

Comment: During the transition process, assuming this moved forward, they would be concerned with trying to play catch up; given the risk factors, if the decision to grow is made, they think they'll start by bringing in more students, not faculty, and this will put more load on faculty and staff we presently have. Then they'll try to catch up.

Andy: To be fair, he pointed out that the proposal suggests one new faculty for every nine students, so there is something of a plan. But yes, it is easier to bring in students.

Comment: There is nothing in the proposal about Church of Christ faculty and nothing about strategies to hire them; that will be increasingly difficult to do. We may need to look at other faith based schools to see what they do to ensure that connection to Churches of Christ are maintained. (This was spoken as a Roman Catholic.)

Andy: He noted there are lots of questions and requests for more data. He called on the faculty to make a proposal or set of proposals that we can vote on, to get sense of faculty perspective. Expressing that “we need to know more” will not have as much of an impact as something more concrete. E.g. we would expect these things to happen in any growth plan.

He pointed out that perhaps we could suggest a set of questions be answered that we see as unresolved. Perhaps we specify that we want to be part of the discussion as they sketch out more details. Between now and the next meeting, he said that he would act as clearing house for people to get together if they are trying to put together proposals for the next meeting.

Andy clarified three possible types of proposals: 1. something similar to the straw proposal question (I support the Growing Seaver proposal); 2. specified things/metrics we want to keep track of; what we think is important (e.g. student-faculty ratio); 3. open questions we still have, that we as a faculty need to be involved in if this proposal goes forward.

Two drafting committees were proposed. Andy also suggested that the SFA ExCom could collect data sought from various divisions.

Paul Begin volunteered to work on metrics we want to keep track of and/or that our support would be contingent upon.

Andy asked that anyone who was interested in working with Paul or on the issue of open questions (number three above) send him an e-mail.

Salary data update

Andy noted that we have some new salary data: Ron Cox and Andy Yuengert met with Dean Feltner to get on the same page with data trends. At Ron’s initiative, they wanted to see if we could move beyond an impasse between administration and faculty, in part by working with data that everyone agrees on. Since people weren’t agreeing on what data was relevant, we seemed stuck. Andy felt as an economist who worked on compensation, he could contribute to this.

The data from Feltner included AAUP averages by school provided to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, which was by rank, Assistant, Associate, Professor, and was only available for Pepperdine, not Seaver. Jody Semerau gave data on Seaver averages, adding more years, with data now from 2002-03 to 2012-13, and one extra year, to 2013-14 for Seaver.

Andy consolidated graphs by placing 18 comparison colleges/universities in two categories, research universities and colleges. He used CPI-LA for inflation, and broke data out by rank, in order to compare apples to apples, rather than averages because they are not reported in AAUP data. There are still issues, like changes over time, different weights that have to be kept in mind when looking at the data.

Full Professor Comparisons (which don't account for retirements, etc.) show that Seaver full professor average salaries are below colleges and research universities, but have grown in the last five years. Previous data we have looked at stopped in 2010-2011. Seaver was in the upper range of colleges in 2001 but has not caught up to them in average salaries yet. The bottom line is that average full professor salaries in 2010-2011 did show stagnation in comparison to other schools and inflation, but since then, there has been some attempt to catch up and rectify the problem. We have almost caught up to inflation, but not to other schools.

Andy also noted that starting in 2011, the extra salary pool that was intended to go to base, but then went to bonuses, has helped us in beating inflation but did not quite help us catch up with other schools.

The story is not as good for other ranks:

Associate Salaries in 2002-03 were higher than comparisons, even research universities; then they stagnated. There has been some recovery over the last couple of years, but not as much as for full professor. Andy noted that Associate Professor numbers were more volatile than other numbers; for example, the average goes down if several people got promoted to professor.

Salaries for Associate Professors, while growing, still haven't caught up to inflation; indeed, they are still 4-5% shy of inflation, and shy of other colleges/universities.

Assistant Professor comparisons show a similar story; in 2002-03 they were paid more than average research universities. Salaries stagnated over the last ten years, and while there was an attempt to address this over the last couple years, they still haven't caught up to inflation, 8% shy of inflation or 6% shy with bonuses added.

Andy concluded by noting that salaries show slow growth from 2002-2011 was a real problem, and that David Strong deserves much credit for revealing this problem. He also noted that a reason for the lag was partly growth in tenure track faculty without a corresponding growth in salary pool, and also because of neglect.

Andy noted the attempts to address the lag since 2011 are a good start, but not enough, and that we need to continue to point this out, monitor, and advocate. He noted that the SFA Executive Committee is supposed to negotiate salaries, and that at a minimum we should be collecting next year's data point and hold the administration to it every year. Andy noted that he would post the data.

Q. Can we do something about what we pay our adjuncts? They should get what they get at other universities. Especially if we grow Seaver, this is a good time to address this problem. This is a social justice issue.

Andy mentioned that this is also true for visiting professors, and that a current proposal in the works does mention salaries for them a bit. He acknowledged the need to look at adjunct and visiting faculty salaries.

Andy reiterated that he would keep in touch with people willing to craft proposals, and encouraged anyone to e-mail him with any concerns.

At 10:05 a motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Adjourned!

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Rivas
SFA Secretary Treasurer