

This month is our last meeting of the year. The agenda is somewhat packed; and the agenda includes deliberation for the Operating Procedure for guns on campus.

The choices before the Senate addressing guns on campus are unpalatable. For the sake of time and fruitful debate next Wednesday, some up front explanation may be helpful.

There is nearly nothing in the OP about which Faculty have expressed particular concern that can be meaningfully amended without inviting a lawsuit. In particular, the very reasonable concern by faculty to have the option to choose for themselves regarding armed persons in their own offices has been addressed by the Faculty Senate. Our TTU President has echoed the same concern publically.

Regardless of our vote, this OP will be implemented virtually as composed. The TTU President's *ad hoc* advisory committee (which recommended rules to implement SB11) along with our University and System attorneys concluded that the law would not allow us to prohibit guns in our own offices. We are left only with hope that a local option for offices may be addressed favorably by an influential state court near the capital.

We have known all along that this vote would be choice among lesser evils.

The Faculty Status and Welfare Committee (FS&W) examines OPs more closely on our behalf. The committee is charged to place a motion for discussion out of their deliberations. Typically, FS&W will move to approve or to reject an OP. Approvals are often accompanied by suggested edits to the OP. Quite reasonably, there was nowhere for FS&W to go. The law as written is exceptionally inflexible regarding the places where faculty members work: in classrooms, libraries, museums, performance venues and our offices.

Even before an OP is sent to FS&W, typically there will be faculty input. That was true here. In the 15 person committee that advised the President, 3 were faculty. That is too few. Yet I believe *this* outcome would have been no different, simply because it cannot be different given the law. Where central state powers allow local governance does not extend to specific concerns highlighted by faculty: concerns consistent across a faculty survey, town hall fora, and the Senate's February resolution.

FS&W really had nowhere to go. No material edits were possible that would address specific concerns by faculty without inviting a suit, according to our attorneys. That is at best a stark choice for us.

For administrators who must implement the law, it is *no* choice. This is the President's OP; but it is the Texas State Legislature's law. I offer that the President's position does not seem to materially differ from faculty. Yet our President is compelled to implement the law. For the Faculty Senate, the OP vote *de facto* reduces to some type of statement: but what statement is proper? FS&W struggled responsibly to identify what a vote on this OP truly means. Their somewhat unusual choice befits an unusual issue.

FS&W voted against the OP by 5 to 3 after several iterations. I assure you that their vote was not casually adopted. Given that outcome on the OP itself, they offer an explanation for their in the form of a Resolution which they endorsed by a vote of 6 to 2. The attached resolution is the motion from FS&W.

In the interest of time next Wednesday, I want to preview an order of discussion.

The *resolution* will be debated directly. That discussion inevitably will center on the OP as well as the benefits and consequences of rejecting the OP. It is important to note that during this period no amendments to the OP will be admitted. Only amendments to the resolution will be in order until the resolution is adjudicated. Conversation inevitably will focus on what is gained and what is risked in failing to accept the OP at this time.

Vice President Milam and I have worked on this all year. We each will make initial informational observations for two minutes. We will take very specific informational queries. I cannot imagine follow up queries would not ask our opinion. Vice President Milam and I desire to participate in debate. Given that, after our statements, I will 'gavel over' to the Senate Parliamentarian, Dr. Gary Elbow.

For disclosure I am not passionate about either option in this very unhappy choice. I am passionate about faculty. I care greatly about the diminution of our professional voice in carrying out our day to day professional duties that is all around us. My concern is that Senators be able to vote with as much information as is reasonable in the time available.

Thanks again. It has been a far more rewarding experience to serve as Faculty Senate President than I could have imagined. I entered this 'job' with very serious trepidations. All of those seem strange to me today. The energy of new faces on the Senate floor and the dedication of veteran Senators are impressive to anyone. I hope to see all of you on Wednesday.

Michael.