I. CALL TO ORDER

The Cameron University Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, Oct 5, 2005. Chair Jim Lambert called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. in Howell Hall, Room 106.

II. ROLL CALL

**Present:** James Lambert, John Bachelor, Linda Wright-Smith, Sherry Reynolds, Jason Duan, Sylvia Miller, Sherry Reynolds, Sue Fuson, Phil Adrian, Antonio Laverghetta, Edna McMillan, James Heflin, Harrison Watts, Mike Davis, John Hodgson, Doug Catterall, Suzanne Crawford, John Moots, Phil Schroeder, Gabriella Adam-Rodwell, Chao Zhao, Sharon Christensen, Capt. Mitchell for Major Armstrong, Jr., Ted Snider, Todd Raborn, Jeanne Gaunce

**Absent:** Joe Jones, David Fennema, Mary Penick

**Guests:** President Cynthia Ross; Vice-Presidents Gary Buckley and Glen Pinkston; Assistant to VPAA—Dr. Lance Janda

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lambert moved to approve the minutes from the September 28, 2005 meeting. Snider made an amendment to correct the spelling of “Bachelor” and “Sylvia” on bottom first page. Snider moved to approve the minutes as amended and Adam-Rodwell seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

IV. CHAIR LAMBERT’S WELCOME TO PRESIDENT ROSS

We are blessed at Cameron University to have President Cindy Ross as our President. President Ross has brought with her several marvelous character traits which have been and are dynamic to her success at Cameron. I will amplify on 3 of these traits:

1. She makes all of her decisions with the best interests of our Cameron University students in mind—she has stated that from her first press conference after being named President, and she has demonstrated it from 2002 to today with her administrative actions—just look at Cameron Village and the CETES center;

2. President Ross has made it a very high priority to implement the philosophy of “shared governance” with the Cameron University faculty. This is demonstrated even today with her presence with us at our Faculty Senate meeting—and it is demonstrated daily with her consultation of Cameron University faculty in her decisions which affect the Cameron University faculty directly. In my activities as
Faculty Senate Chair, I represent you at the Faculty Advisory Council—which is a council comprised of Faculty Senate chairs or chair-elects which gathers once a year at Oklahoma City to provide a sounding board to our Chancellor of the Oklahoma Higher Regents, Dr. Paul Risser. Every year the complaint from OTHER universities always arises: “Do any of you have any communication with your President?” My response has always been an emphatic, yes; we do at Cameron University—because our President is Cindy Ross. President Ross cares about us as a faculty, and she has shown that care day-in and day-out.

3. President Ross has a vision for Cameron University—to make it the “university of choice” in Southwest Oklahoma. That vision is easy to comprehend, but it is challenging to develop. She has visited and met with practically every single school system in our Recruiting Area in Southwest Oklahoma. She knows them and they know her. We have seen the results of her vision with our enrollment gain in the traditional-aged student.

Please join me in welcoming President Cindy Ross to our Faculty Senate meeting today, and I hope that you will join me in expressing our gratitude to her for her tireless work on behalf of Cameron University.

V. DIALOGUE WITH PRESIDENT CINDY ROSS

President Ross expressed her apologies for missing the last meeting because of sickness. She left the president’s council meeting early so she could be with us today. The topics which she discussed with the Faculty Senate concerned: faculty pay raises; student retention; traffic flow on Gore Blvd. (next to Cameron); and announcements which affected the Cameron faculty in general.

I. Regarding Faculty Pay Raises:

Enrollment has not made up from budget cuts that Cameron had. The money for the cost of living adjustments usually comes from increased enrollment. This fall semester, the enrollment is flat with the total enrollment being up by one student from last fall. Graduate enrollment has really been struggling the last few semesters and that is a concern. We need to have a strong summer enrollment. We had a 10% loss last year in summer student enrollment. This fall we have lost 55 military or military-related students compared to last fall. Overall, we have lost 485 military or military-related students since 9-11.

The salary plan is in the process of being administered. Eligibility requirements are the same as it was last year. One must be a current, regular full-time or part-time employee in a faculty, administration or classified position at the time the salary increase is paid. Employees must have at least an overall satisfactory performance evaluation and employed at Cameron University prior to May 16, 2005. The cost of living is 3% or $700 minimum for those who would get a lesser amount using the 3% increase. It is retroactive to August 1 for 10 month employees.
Faculty initiatives during Phase One included the equity and market adjustments in pay. Department chair increase was part of Phase One. Faculty travel funds have a 53% overall increase. Fifteen departments have received increases in travel budgets. They added money to six departments’ instructional operating budgets. President Ross noted that they focused on academic and faculty incentives. She would feel more comfortable if we had student growth. We need increased numbers.

II. Regarding Student Retention:

President Ross was at OKC yesterday and today. They received a status report on preliminary enrollment--the system as a whole is essentially flat; however, Rodgers University continues to grow. What happened at Cameron reflects the system as a whole. We need to emphasize that Cameron University should be the university of choice for southwestern Oklahoma students. We need to share with the community the excitement and demonstrate the quality of education Cameron students receive. She has done some reshuffling in the graduate area and named graduate recruiters. The departments and faculty influence graduate enrollment. We need to talk about retention. We are doing an abysmal job in retaining and graduating students. She noted that there is a lot of data collected on retention but it is not pristine. We are looking at the school level, demographics, etcetera to determine who we are losing and why.

Only full-time students who are first-time, full-time entering as a freshman are counted when considering retention rates. We don’t know why these students left. Less then 3% nationally leave school because of grades. There is not enough concrete data to tell us why they left. At Cameron 37.5% of the students take remedial math and 20.2% take remedial English classes. The two year part of our academic degrees raises the number of remedial students.

At Cameron, we are in the process of implementing a three-part grant: student surveys to develop longitudinal assessment data to follow students; entering students’ background demographics surveys; and college student needs’ assessment survey and at-risk student surveys. College outcome surveys are used to see the level of satisfaction when they leave the university. Part 2 includes an early-alert system for at-risk students. Part 3 is academic advising. There will be an advising audit this fall. President Ross encouraged faculty to identify and assist at-risk students. Even our PLUS students are not retained at the level they should be. We have good students who are choosing to leave Cameron. Retention is everyone’s business. Making this a student friendly welcoming place is a priority. Retaining has absolutely nothing with lowering student standards. It is about setting standards, having expectations, and letting them know the standards and intervening if they are having trouble. It is raising standards and articulating the standards. We have started a Sure Step program in science to help in need students with other student tutors. Tutors sit in the class so they know what is going on and tutor the students that need help. Student tutors really help.
President Ross emphasized that she is really hard-nosed—we should assess students and know what level they are and make it mandatory to take remedial classes as needed. We are providing a tremendous disservice if we put them in the position of failing because we let them in a college class they were not ready for. If we focus on remediation in reading and writing skills, the students will be able to handle college level classes such as history.

Another suggestion was provided to have Cameron counterparts visit with their secondary school counterparts to see what is being taught and let them know what we expect of a freshman so that they know what the students need to have to succeed when they attend college and have to work at college level. You get the side benefit in that these teachers are more likely to indicate to their students that Cameron University is a good institute to attend. It is all about relationships. They may have retention personnel come and talk to faculty to help faculty understand how they can help with retention.

III. Regarding Traffic Problems on Gore Blvd.:

Gore traffic problems are being explored...

IV. Regarding other General Announcements:

VP Pinkston talked about the master plan and meetings held, surveys gathered from staff, faculty, and students. He talked about giving Cameron a look that included the mix and texture of Cameron brick, taking care of lighting with a family of fixtures so there is continuity. They plan to integrate what they have learned and the master plan scheme with upcoming building projects.

A library project is not being pursued at this time. Centennial plans include a comprehensive fund-raising plan. It will include an endowed faculty, student scholarships, and centennial gardens. Research shows it is easier to raise money for a student union. Obviously we have numerous needs.

If a lawsuit concerning the capitol bond is not filed within 30 days, we will start on the business building as a first priority. President Ross noted that October is a busy month with Convocation on Oct 14th that kicks off our alumni weekend. That Saturday is also student recruitment day. Dedication for Cameron village will be Monday Oct 24th at 7:30 p.m. There will be fireworks afterward. Student activities begin at 8:30 p.m.. Occupancy is at 93% at Cameron Village and 67% at Shepler. We have 100 more students living on campus this fall as opposed to last fall.

V. Concluding Remarks:

President. Ross thanked the Faculty Senate for their service to the university and noted how crucial it is to have an active and involved Faculty Senate.

Lambert entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting: Moots moved to adjourn, Caterall seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.
Next regular meeting is Wednesday, November 9, 2005, 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Wright-Smith
Faculty Senate Secretary