

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

January 21, 2010

Members Present

Leonard Breen; Bill Brewer; Donald Bumpass; Rebecca Bustamante; Erin Cassidy; Jeff Crane; Donna Desforges; Mark Frank; Mack Hines; Renee James; Bill Jasper; Hee-jong Joo; Gerald Kohers; Paul Loeffler; Brian Loft; Melinda Miller; Sheryl Murphy-Manley; Brian Oetiker; Ling Ren; Tracy Steele; Doug Ullrich.

Members Absent

Chad Hargrave; Deborah Hatton; Darci Hill; Andrew Lopenzina.

Call to Order

Chair Loeffler called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November 19, 2009 meeting were approved.

Chair's Report

- Since the last meeting of the Faculty Senate, there has not been a meeting of the APC, nor have the Chair and Chair-Elect of the senate met with Provost Payne.
- Chair Loeffler reported from a conversation with Associate Provost Eglsaer that the APC would like to quickly modify Academic Policy 800722 (Merit Advances in Salary) into a two separate parts, one for market adjustments and another for merit increases. A conversation with Provost Payne and the Chair and Chair-Elect of the Faculty Senate will likely take place before bringing this forward to the Faculty Senate.

Committee Reports

- The Faculty Affairs committee is progressing in its work, and currently in the process of scheduling meeting times for the spring semester.
- The University Affairs committee will be meeting with Vice President Frank Parker about conducting a survey concerning the University Bookstore.
- The Academic Affairs committee is currently working on compiling a survey over concerns with the Math Tutoring Center. There still remains some uncertainty among the administration over the scope of the math center's tutoring responsibilities.
- The Committee on Committees reported that only 147 faculty have completed the committee preference form, this is down from 323 last year. A reminder email will be sent out. The committee also reported the formation of a new committee, the Parking and Transportation Committee. This new committee will need four faculty members. The Committee on Committees also received approval to fill a position on the Student Service Fee Committee. This position came at the request of Keith Jenkins, Associate VPSS. In preparation for the spring senate elections, the Committee on Committees also requested clarification over the establishment of a new college in the fall.

New Business

- Senators expressed concerns over the changing of the due date for grades during the fall semester from Monday, December 21 to Friday, December 18 at 2 pm.
 - Senators noted that the change is burdensome for faculty giving Wednesday or Thursday final exams, and overwhelming for those required to give Thursday night finals.
 - Since the date changes occurred during the semester, syllabi had already been distributed, leaving faculty with limited adjustment options (e.g., concerns were raised about changing the format or time of the final exam).
 - The date change appeared to be without the consent of the faculty or the Faculty Senate.
 - The same scheduling problem will again occur in December 2010, as grades are currently scheduled to be due on Monday, December 20th. (It appears that the calendar changes instituted at the request of the previous Faculty Senate will not occur until the Fall of 2011.)
- Senators raised concerns over the transparency and consistency of the B.A. and B.S. degree requirements reported in the online catalogues.
- Many senators expressed frustrations with the upcoming replacement of Blackboard with eCollege for all classes, including the on-ground classes. This replacement is scheduled to occur for summer 2010.
 - Those who have been through the eCollege training program reported that the system is unintuitive, difficult to learn, and generally inferior to Blackboard. Specific concerns centered on eCollege's limited grade book functions, and difficulties with its online quiz and test bank functionality.
 - Senators also raised questions over the level of faculty involvement and input into the decision to move from Blackboard to eCollege.
 - Concerns were raised over the ownership rights of course materials placed on eCollege. Some faculty expressed concern that uploaded material would become the property of eCollege.
- Senator Frank is on the Presidential Search Committee and provided the Faculty Senate with an update on the search.
 - The advertisement for the position was released at the start of January, and the search committee is currently accepting applications (this information can be found online at: http://www.shsu.edu/presidential_search/). This phase will continue until the beginning of April.
 - The search committee will next meet in early April (tentatively, April 6th and 7th) to begin assessing the qualities of those who have expressed an interest in the position. The committee was told to expect over 100 applications.
 - Over the month of April, the committee will be collecting more information and working to narrow the number of candidates for on-site visits during the months of May and June.

Senate adjourned at 4:55pm

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Frank, Chair-Elect