

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

**November 1, 2012  
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Austin Hall**

**Members present:**

Tracy Bilsing (H&SS); Don Bumpass (COBA); James Crosby (H&SS); Diane Dowdey (H&SS); Mark Frank (COBA); Randall Garner (CJ); Debbi Hatton (H&SS); Richard Henriksen (COE); Joan Hudson (COS); C. Renée James (COS); Bill Jasper (COS); Gerald Kohers (COBA); Hayoung Lim (FA&MC); Paul Loeffler (COS); Dennis Longmire (CJ); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (FA&MC); Joyce McCauley (COE); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Lisa Shen (NGL); Tracy Steele (H&SS); Stacy Ulbig (H&SS); Doug Ullrich (COS); Walton Watkins (FA&MC); Ricky White (COS); Pam Zelbst (COBA)

**Members not present:**

Nancy Baker (H&SS); Helen Berg (COE); Kevin Clifton (FA&MC); Donna Cox (COE); Tom Cox (H&SS); Debra Price (COE)

**Called to order:** 3:28 p.m. in Austin Hall by Chair Tracy Steele

**Special Guests:** Provost Jaimie Hebert and Dean Mitchell Muesham

Provost Hebert addressed a number of questions that had been presented to him previously. The first question was in reference to a concern about “dissolving faculty lines.” He said he was unclear what the specific issue was, but explained that as Provost, he apportions the funds to the colleges. Once the deans have their college budget, they may hire new faculty or adjuncts, dissolve lines, or whatever they see fit to do. There is no university-wide hiring freeze. Should the new sections added this fall sustain (and there is no reason to believe they will not), then many of those adjunct positions might be condensed into permanent tenure/tenure-track lines. If a dean requests an additional faculty line, he/she may do that through the standard budget process, and those priorities will be looked at from the Provost level.

If a college has sufficient funding, the dean can choose to create a full-time lecturer/instructor position to meet instructional needs. The current interpretation of policy is that such a position would be advertised and any qualified adjuncts could apply. Such a transition (from part-time to full-time) is not automatic for any existing adjuncts.

Colleges are encouraged to take a look at the percentage of courses taught by adjuncts to make sure that it is appropriate. The Provost expects that this percentage will vary from department to department, so there is no set “cap” or requirement on what percentage should be taught by tenure/tenure-track faculty versus adjuncts. Data will be collected across the University to determine what percentage is currently taught by adjuncts, and if there is an upward trend in the future, departments and colleges could make a case for creating more tenure-track lines.

Regarding adjuncts, there is an overall strong feeling that adjuncts should be paid more. However, increasing the per-course rate even modestly across the board is nontrivial, fiscally speaking. The Provost recognizes that adjuncts – like much of the rest of faculty – are going to have to devote more time and resources to meeting core requirements, but with no increase in compensation.

The Provost then gave Senate a very brief rundown of the budget. With increased enrollment, SHSU saw \$2.4 million in new revenue. However, \$1.2 million was immediately lost to Hazlewood exemptions. Of

the remaining \$1.2 million, adjuncts to cover the 243 new sections cost \$750,000. The remaining \$500,000 was divvied up among the colleges, and so it did not make much of an impact.

Regarding Hazlewood exemptions, the Provost indicated that Dan Branch – chair of Texas House Higher Education Committee – has been contacted about Hazlewood and informed of the burden it imposes on the universities. SHSU had \$4.8 million in exemptions, only ¼ of which went to actual veterans. The rest were covered by the “legacy” clause for dependents. Hazlewood’s original intention was to fill the gap between GI Bill coverage and the completion of a degree, but the scope has grown enormously.

Another topic addressed by Provost Hebert was the B On Time loans, which become a grant if a student completes a degree in four years or less with at least a 3.5 GPA. Currently 5% of designated tuition is set aside for the B On Time program, and this money is outside SHSU. At this point, the State of Texas has over \$100 million from funds fed into this account, and Texas A&M is the largest recipient of these loans.

Senate’s attention then turned to the role of faculty in the upcoming campus visit of IDEA. Dean Muesham is currently organizing the visit from the IDEA representatives to address a number of issues, including how to raise response rates, how to scale online versus on-the-ground courses, and others. The Faculty Evaluation Committee will collect information from a number of studies currently going on across campus and find where the problems really are. Questions that our faculty would like to ask the IDEA representatives are:

1. Who exactly is SHSU being normed against?
2. Is there a requirement to stay within the current IDEA framework?
3. Are there more efficient modes of preparing these forms (e.g., having the faculty complete their forms online)?
4. What is the best use of the data we receive?

Ideally by the end of the spring 2013 semester, we will have some general understanding of the problem along with a direction. At that point, SHSU can lay out more detailed plan to address the problems. Provost Hebert mentioned that SHSU spends about \$45K/year on IDEA, but all external teaching evaluation systems are comparably priced. The more important issue, however, is how this information is used in the overall evaluation of teaching quality. Using a single score or strictly student evaluation is a poor judge of teaching, and so we need to push to make the evaluation broader. Depending on the department, other evaluation tools that are appropriate include peer evaluation, outside evaluations, letters of recommendation, teaching philosophy statements, etc, and departments should strive to include a variety of appropriate metrics.

Senators brought up a few new questions regarding IDEA. In particular, since its implementation seven years ago, how has the information they have provided evolved? Have faculty felt incentivized to lower instructional quality for better scores? How are we using the data for development and not simply evaluation? What causes faculty members to be ‘outliers’ – either low OR high?

**Special Guest:** Dr. Frank Fair.

Dr. Fair gave a brief presentation on the recent Texas Association of College Teachers meeting and the issues TACT considers (e.g., handguns on campus). TACT communicates faculty concerns to ‘interested parties’ (e.g. police forces, student government) and then often will make a case to the legislature. In addition to helping empower faculty members in legislative decisions, membership in TACT also provides liability insurance in the event of a lawsuit against faculty member.

**Chair’s Report:** A lengthy hard copy report on the Council of Faculty Senates meeting in Austin was briefly addressed, but time did not allow for full discussion.

**Approval of Minutes:** October 18 meeting

**Adjournment:** 5:05 p.m.