

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

27 March 2014

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Austin Hall

Members present: Nancy Baker (CHSS); Tracy Bilsing (CHSS); Madhusudan Choudhary (COS); Kevin Clifton (COFAMC); Donna Cox (COE); James Crosby (CHSS); Richard Henriksen (COE); Joan Hudson (COS); C. Renée James (COS); Mark Klespis (COS); James Landa (CHSS); Dennis Longmire (COCJ); David McTier (COFAMC); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (COFAMC); Diana Nabors (COE); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Debra Price (COE); Lisa Shen (NGL); Stacy Ulbig (CHSS); Anthony Watkins (COFAMC); Pam Zelbst (COBA)

Members not present: Helen Berg (COE); Jonathan Breazeale (COBA); Don Bumpass (COBA); Tom Cox (CHSS); Mark Frank (COBA); Randall Garner (COCJ); Hayoung Lim (COFAMC); Jeff Littlejohn (CHSS); Paul Loeffler (COS); Doug Ullrich (COS); Mary Anne Vincent (COHS)

Called to order: 3:30 p.m. in Austin Hall by Chair Renee James

Minutes approved: Minutes for March 6 need further corrections before they can be approved.

Chair's Report

Faculty Senate Website

The Faculty Senate website updates have begun.

Meeting with the Provost

Dr. James and Dr. Baker met with the provost on March 19. Dr. James described to the provost the March 6 meeting with special guests Ms. Rhonda Beassie and Mr. William Angrove and the discussion concerning intellectual property rights.

Dr. James has submitted to the provost the proposed changes to the TSUS intellectual property rights. Dr. Kandi Tayebi has contacted Dr.s James and Baker to say that several schools have requested such changes to that policy, and therefore the TSUS Board of Regents will be reviewing the intellectual property policy; the Faculty Senate's proposed policy changes will not be sent forward to the Regents at this time. Dr. James thinks our proposed changes may need to be taken up next year, again.

At the request of IT, future new IT policies will be created with initial feedback from Dr. Nancy Baker and possibly also Dr. Paul Loeffler before they are put in front of Faculty Senate. The hope is that earlier, informal feedback on the language in new or revised policies will help smooth the process of Senate approval of such policies.

The FES committee had created three possible FES options that they submitted to the provost last year. Currently, the Council of Academic Deans is reviewing the three FES options, after which it will be sent to the provost. The provost wants this to be wrapped up this semester, so that it can be implemented next year. Members of this committee asked that Dr. James remind the provost that he agreed to host Town Hall meetings on the FES options this semester and have faculty vote on the three options. Dr. James will remind him.

Dean searches are underway in the COE and CHSS. The provost expects that these searches will be completed in the next few weeks.

The provost asked Dr.s James and Baker what the mood is on campus among faculty and what issues or topics are coming up lately. Dr. James invited the senators to share their thoughts on this.

One senator stated that the COE is in its second full year with an interim dean and that faculty would like to see this stage concluded with a successful hire of a new dean. Members of the COE feel that having a new dean would help the COE move forward in addressing some problems that have been an issue for the last few years – during the end of the prior dean’s tenure and in the last two years of the interim dean’s leadership.

COE faculty members are frustrated with the slow pace of creating new courses and curricula – cutting edge proposals are not cutting edge by the time they become part of the course catalogue.

The President/Provost Roundtable on Curriculum

Dr. James reported on the recent roundtable on curriculum issues. Dr. James was distressed at the emphasis on certificates and competency-based curricula to fill needs that cannot be predicted. No one knows what the job market will demand in 10 years or 20 years, so turning a college curriculum into a job-training program or vocational school is not going to be useful. Dr. James worries that SHSU will be chasing the trend and always behind the curve, never ahead. We need to train people who can solve problems and think critically, not train people for specific jobs that may not exist. Other senators agreed with the points Dr. James made. Another senator said heading in this direction would reduce this college to a community college or a high school, in effect.

A senator said, “You can take an educated person and train them to do any job, but you cannot take a trained person and call them educated.” Several senators agreed vigorously with her statement.

One senator said he struggles with the pressure he sees students under to complete their degree as quickly as possible, so that they can keep their debt load minimal, while he knows that more than a year in his major is necessary to educate the students properly. Another senator pointed out that dual credit is a problem, too, because it causes 20 year-olds to complete an education degree and begin student-teaching in high schools before they are mature enough to handle it.

Several senators suggested drafting a statement for the provost and others, perhaps also for our website, to put our positions out there on curricula and the need to balance cost and speed with the quality of education. Dr. James agreed, pointing out that the provost is actively interested in knowing what faculty members think. Dr. James says she has sent him lots of feedback on the various roundtables, and while the provost has responded that he agrees, perhaps the Senate needs to weigh in as a whole. Dr. James suggested that we take some time to consider carefully what we would like such a statement to say, and perhaps discuss ideas or drafts of such a statement via e-mail.

Committee Reports

Academic Affairs Report

The Faculty Development Leave Policy (APS 800328) on the SHSU website is outdated. The AA Committee has some suggested revisions to the new policy the provost proposed.

The discussion rather quickly became complicated, with confusion over which changes proposed were new and which changes proposed were changing the document back to the version it was before the last round of Faculty Senate changes were made. Dr. James reminded everyone that the Faculty Senate changed the 2009 FDL policy and it became the 2012 FDL policy. We sent a revised version to Vice Provost Richard Eglsaer, and he sent one back with changes that contradicted what we had proposed.

One senator suggested we table this until Dr. Paul Loeffler can be present, as he will be able to explain the rationale behind some of the changes proposed by the committee. Another senator asked if we could have electronic copies of the three different versions of this policy sent to us, so we could compare them side-by-side.

A motion was made to table this until Paul Loeffler can be here.

Vote: 21 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Texas State University System Council of Faculty Senates Meeting Report

Dr. Baker gave a report on the Feb. 14 Texas State University System Council of Faculty Senates (TSUS CFS) meeting. A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

New Business

Students with Disabilities Policy

Dr. James asked for input on the policy; Vice Provost Eglsaer needs to know if we see changes needed.

There are specific details in this policy (current names, phone numbers, addresses) that should not be included in a policy.

Definitions 2.01B: “the term disability means in respect to an individual means a record of impairment” --- Why is the word misclassified included here? What does this mean?

Under #4.01 – Do faculty know they are supposed to include this (information on the SSD office) in their syllabus? Do chairs know they should tell faculty to include this? Another senator pointed out that there is a single link one can use to abbreviate most of the boilerplate policy statements in syllabi.

A question was raised about when a faculty member thinks a student is not using or is abusing the accommodation provided. Another senator suggested calling the Disabilities office for guidance. This appears to be covered in the policy.

Another senator asked, how does this translate to online courses? Is Blackboard ADA compliant? A different senator replied that DELTA helps with this; for example, a student who is hearing impaired is entitled to help from DELTA to translate lectures into text so she can read it.

Dr. James announced that Vice Provost Eglsaer wants feedback on this policy and the FDL policy as soon as possible.

There was a motion made to accept the Students with Disabilities Policy with minor revisions.

Vote: 19 yes, 0 no, 2 abstentions

Attendance at Commencement

A senator asked, what is the faculty obligation for attending graduation ceremonies? There has been conflicting information given out, and it is showing up on the FES form for CHSS, and being used against people in their third-year reviews and tenure reviews in some departments.

A couple of senators claimed that it is a policy that all faculty must attend all graduations unless they have received permission from their dean to miss; others have said their chair insists they attend one each year.

Dr. James will consult with the provost on this.

Annual Reviews, Third-Year Reviews, Tenure Decisions

Classroom observation of tenured faculty has been raised as an issue in one department; some departments are doing this (as part of peer assessment and mentoring of untenured faculty) and this involves untenured faculty submitting written assessments of tenured faculty, and vice versa, to form a reciprocal relationship.

A senator asked which senators have annual reviews in their departments, and how this process works in their departments. Another senator asked who evaluates FES annually -- a committee or the chair of the department? The senators' answers varied.

Problems with Banner

One senator announced that there is a problem with the Banner system displaying new courses that have been approved. If you have had a new course approved, you (or someone else – your department chair, for example) must request the course be added to the course catalogue the first time you teach it. Otherwise, the course will not be added to the course catalogue and will not show up as an option in which students can enroll.

National Book Awards Event

A senator made an announcement: the English department is hosting a National Book Awards two-part event featuring three finalists for that prize ; the two-part event will be held on March 30 at 4:30 pm and March 31 at 7 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 5 pm.

Revised 04-07-2014, 11:44 am

Nancy Baker

**Report on the Texas State University System Council of Faculty Senates meeting
Austin, TX
Feb. 14, 2014**

Dr. Perry Moore, TSUS Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, met with eight representatives from TSUS universities' Faculty Senates to discuss issues of concern and answer questions.

Moore clarified that the TSUS Board of Regents serve as volunteers. The regents are not given a stipend for their service, but their expenses are covered.

Moore gave updates on the presidential searches taking place at two universities this year (Sul Ross and Port Arthur).

On budget issues, Moore was optimistic that in the upcoming session the State Legislature would approve some proposed Tuition Revenue Bonds. Moore described at length the consideration currently being given to the idea of performance-based outcomes funding in higher education in Texas. Moore is on a committee devoted to subsidy formulas (how much funding the state legislature should give to universities), and this committee has been tasked by the Commissioner to devise a performance-based outcomes funding formula that they support unanimously. Moore explained the challenges involved.

Reviewing the changes to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as of the last legislative session, Moore's main point was that the THECB has been reminded that it is a coordinating board, not a governing board. He is currently proposing that any low-performing programs that the THECB sought to eliminate ought to continue, as the THECB had no data to support its claims that these eliminations would improve efficiency or quality.

Moore spent a considerable amount of time discussing "set-aside" programs, specifically "Be On Time" and tuition-funded, needs-based scholarships. "Be On Time" is a well-intentioned program offering financial incentives to students who complete their undergraduate degrees in four years or less, but in practice this program has proven to be problematic. Tuition-funded, needs-based scholarships were instituted as a way to shield low-income students from the deregulation of tuition, and in practice these scholarships have become extremely important to state schools. Moore worries that the flaws in the "Be On Time" program may cause scrutiny and elimination of the tuition-funded scholarships, which he considers far more important.

Moore offered his predictions on how the State Legislature may change this year due to several elections; his main prediction was that the legislature was likely to become more

conservative and therefore potentially less supportive of higher education.

In response to a question, Moore said he had no statement to make at this time on equal spousal benefits for same-sex marriages. Answering another question, Moore explained that student course fees have been cancelled because of a concern over being able to audit course fees (in other words, being able to prove that the money raised was spent on exactly the items for which the funds were raised).

The next TSUS CFS meeting will be held on October 24, 2014.