

## FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

October 4, 2012  
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Austin Hall

Called to order at 3:30 p.m. in Austin Hall by Chair Tracy Steele

### **Members present:**

Don Bumpass (COBA); Tracy Bilsing (H&SS); Kevin Clifton (FA&MC); Donna Cox (COE); James Crosby (H&SS); Mark Frank (COBA); Richard Henriksen (COE); Joan Hudson (COS); Bill Jasper (COS); Gerald Kohers (COBA); Hayoung Lim (FA&MC); Paul Loeffler (COS); Dennis Longmire (CJ); Joyce McCauley (COE); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (FA&MC); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Debra Price (COE); Lisa Shen (NGL); Tracy Steele (H&SS); Stacy Ulbig (H&SS); Doug Ullrich (COS); Walton Watkins (FA&MC); Rick White (COS); and Pam Zelbst (COBA)

### **Members not present:**

Randall Garner (CJ), Helen Berg (COE), Renee James (COS), Jeff Crane (H&SS), Diane Dowdey (H&SS), Nancy Baker (H&SS), Debbi Hatton (FA&MC)

Called to order: 3:30 p.m. in Austin Hall by Chair Tracy Steele

Minutes for July 17<sup>th</sup> and September 6<sup>th</sup> approved with 2 abstentions. The minutes for September 20<sup>th</sup> will be addressed at the next meeting on October 18.

### **Chair's Report:**

The Chair and Chair Elect's scheduled meeting with Provost Hebert was cancelled due to the death of Dorothy Roberson, the Provost's Assistant and friend to the Senate. Senators discussed Dorothy's valuable contribution not only to SHSU but also to the greater Huntsville community. In respect of the family's request that "In lieu of flowers, the family has requested any donations be made to the Calvary Baptist Church Children's Choir, POB 1577, Huntsville TX, 77342," it was noted that Senators may wish individually make cash donations. The Senate will send a message of condolence to the family.

Chair Steele presented a request from a graduate student from another university to conduct a survey of SHSU Senators on the role of faculty in the budget making process. Senators declined based on their lack of expertise in this area after reviewing several of the survey questions.

Travel Reimbursement – A concerned faculty member reported to Chair Steele that several junior faculty members had failed to be reimbursed for university-related travel for reasons such as staying at a university dormitory for a conference (which was cheaper than a hotel and arranged by the Conference Organizers). In at least one case, the period for reimbursement flowed into the next fiscal year. Hence, it was

understood that in those cases, faculty were to be reimbursed by one-time payments which means that tax and other deductions would reduce the amount to be reimbursed. This issue was assigned to the University Affairs Committee. University Affairs was also asked to consider this in reference to the efficiency committee's report from last spring

Update: HAVEN LGBTQ Training Fall 2012 – Chair Steele e-mailed to Senators the announcement and application for Fall Training. For additional information, Faculty should contact training leaders Maryam Ilahi, Shannon Reed, or Jenna Wright at [org\\_haven@shsu.edu](mailto:org_haven@shsu.edu) or call (936)294-1720 for more information or to view the flyer<[http://www.shsu.edu/mailer/Haven\\_Flyer.pdf](http://www.shsu.edu/mailer/Haven_Flyer.pdf)>.

Chair Steele asked for questions to be submitted to Texas Council for Faculty Senates. Sheryl Murphy-Manley's Academic Affairs Committee has prepared several questions with particular focus on Low Performing Programs.

### **CORE Report:**

Debbi Hatton was ill, but filed a report and clarifications for deadlines for courses to be submitted for consideration for the CORE Curriculum. Senator Hatton's report was given by Chair Steele. Paperwork for the proposed CORE courses goes to Dean Tayebi. The paperwork is due on Oct. 22. Direct and indirect assessments are still under discussion. Debbi Hatton will send out further clarifications as necessary.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### *Academic Affairs Committee:*

The Senate accepted the Academic Affairs Committee's report (see document) presented by its Chair, Senator Sheryl Murphy-Manley. Chair Steele will put forward the Committee's questions on Low Performing Programs to be addressed in Austin at the Texas Council of Faculty Senates (TCFS). Provost Hebert will be invited to address the Senate to discuss "dissolving" faculty lines and other issues. The committee plans to investigate Online Instruction across the campus. The committee encourages anyone who teaches online and would like to discuss with the committee their experience are welcome to contact of its members. The Senate endorsed the Committee's recommendation that representatives from IDEA should visit the campus. Senator Price reported that the CAD had already approved this decision. The Committee has a number of issues that it wishes to put forward and the Senate requests that time be set aside for Faculty to meet with IDEA representatives when they are on campus.

#### *University Affairs:*

Committee Chair Tracy Bilsing noted that the certificate or sticker given to faculty or staff has attended the HAVEN LGBTQ Training. There is concern that individuals who do not post such stickers may be perceived as not being "safe" for students seeking support or advice. The Senate accepted the Committee's recommendation that David

Hammon, Associate Vice President for HR and Risk Management, to discuss hostile workplace issues with the Senate. Senator Bilsing will make arrangements.

*Faculty Affairs:*

Committee Chair Mark Frank reported the Faculty Affairs study of overloads and independent studies. The Senate accepted the Committee's recommendation that Vice President for Information Technology, Mark Adams, be invited to the Senate to discuss SHSU policy on the number of devices faculty are allowed and other issues related to IT. Chair Steele noted that Senator Hatton had submitted an item related to IT, specifically the Security Training then being carried out online by an outside company that often arrives in "spam" files. The Senate would like to discuss this with VP Adams also.

**Old Business:**

Senator Sheryl Murphy-Manley reported on the President's Roundtable held on October 3<sup>rd</sup> on Customer Service. Faculty discussed a number of areas where students deserve better customer service including insuring that their transcripts are accurate and shortening the lag time between when a professor posts course grades and when, days later, grades are available for review by students.

The Senate had previously voted to express support for a SHSU Food Pantry. Senator Baker who initially introduced the matter to the Senate, forwarded an article from "The Houstonian" dated October 2, 2012, noting the Senate's support.

**New Business:**

Senators reported ongoing issues with Degree Works and Banner. Of particular concern were errors that prevent students from being able to graduate.

Publicity for the Senate – It was agreed that the dates and times of the meetings will be updated on the Senate website along with the speakers once they are scheduled to appear. Senate meetings are open to Faculty and the entire SHSU Community (except during a closed session at the end of the meeting). This information will be given to Cathi Gillette to be included in Academic Affairs Weekly E-mail.

**Adjourned** at 4:40 PM

# **Academic Affairs Committee Report**

## **Sam Houston State University**

**Submitted by Sheryl Murphy-Manley, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee**

October 4, 2012

Members: Sheryl Murphy-Manley (CFAMC), Kevin Clifton (CFAMC), William Jasper (COS), Paul Loeffler (COS), Rick White (COS), James Crosby (CHSS), Doug Ullrich (COS)

### **I. Online Courses**

The Committee will explore issues concerning online courses this semester by:

1. Gathering information relevant to our charge from Distance Learning (we are constructing a list of questions)
2. Surveying the chairs of each department (our questions will be based on the data we receive from Distance Learning)
3. Inviting faculty who teach online courses to speak with us as a committee about their concerns

### **II. The issue of Graduate Support and Low-Producing Programs (LPP) in Texas is of primary concern for the Committee.**

A. The committee has constructed questions for Chair Steele and Chair-Elect James to ask at the Texas Council of Faculty Senates (TCFS) in Austin in October. We will first present our questions to Provost Hebert for his input, modifying our questions for the Legislature if needed. Our Chair has been asked (or will be asked) to forward questions that they would like answered during the meeting. They will be meeting with the chancellor and vice-chancellors and can get information specific to our system. They then can pose the same questions to the Coordinating Board staffers who will address the group in the afternoon.

B. Following the report from Chair Steele from TCFS, the AA committee will explore options about how to approach this topic, including inviting Kandi Tayebi and/or Provost Hebert to a future sub-committee meeting.

C. The following questions will be presented to the TCFS.

1. How are these LPP programs specifically determined? What is concrete in this determination, and is there flexibility in situations? Have the graduation requirements changed since this issue was last presented in 2010?
2. What has been considered concerning those graduate programs that contribute to departments in which much of the substantive undergraduate education is experience-based, and often provided by graduate students (science labs for one)? [For example in contrast, for on-line, coursework masters programs with little operational interaction between learning-community members, little mentoring occurs. The progress of the student

through these programs can be simply maintained through accumulation of courses/hours without the requirements for group work, sharing and serving, teaching and mentoring, or opportunities for leadership roles. Degrees can be obtained without group work in concert with others. However in disciplines such as chemistry, faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates gravitate toward research groups and the laboratories. Masters-level students are critical to the undergraduate lab experience, and undergraduate research opportunities. If we think of our service to students as one that presents opportunities for them, then we must prioritize these items that contribute to those opportunities.

3. Without quality master degree programs, even though low producing, the ability for SHSU to attract and retain excellent faculty will be hindered.

#### 4. Means of Assessing Programs

A. We think that the success of an SHSU graduate, once in the work field, can serve as an equal or alternative measurement of a program's accomplishments. Has the legislature considered this viewpoint, as opposed to solely relying on the number of students graduating in a particular number of years?

B. SHSU was ranked the third highest in the State of Texas in job placement for our students. We would like the Coordinating Board members to consider this success and other assessment parameters beyond numbers of graduates in a program. We believe attributes that employers want in their young professionals, and this "success" or "value-added" that our students acquire from SHSU, cannot be measured by numbers alone. We would like to know if THECB will consider using these other criterion as part of its assessment of graduate programs, and if not, can it please provide the rationale for its decision?

### **III. The administration of the IDEA system and the use of its data need to be examined.**

The Academic Affairs Committee is exploring how the IDEA system is currently being used, and what modifications might be necessary.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Academic Affairs Committee requests that the Faculty Senate ask the University to re-invite IDEA to campus for a public presentation and question/answer period about recommended ways to use IDEA on a campus like ours, in courses like ours, both on-ground and on-line, and to tell us about our comparative groups of schools, program by program. The Committee would further like to recommend that all Departmental Chairs be required to have training concerning the recommended ways to use the IDEA system in their departments. The committee also requests an update on the progress of the promised development of an assessment tool for online instruction.

**IV. The committee stated that it would like clarification on the issue of faculty lines.**

- A. Are faculty lines dissolving, and if so, at what level?
- B. Is this issue a matter of reporting budgets in a different way?
- C. Does this amount to a hiring freeze for departments with struggling budgets?
- D. What does this mean for departments and the hiring of new faculty?
- E. At the Faculty Senate Meeting on November 10, 2011, Chair Hatton reported that there was a new law ruling that “we” were not allowed more adjuncts or contingent faculty than 25% of FTEs. (Dean de Castro seemed unfamiliar with this ruling when asked about it informally earlier this week, although he speculated that the figure would apply University-wide. The committee would like to know details of this policy.)
  - 1. What is the status of this ruling?
  - 2. At what level does this apply? Department? College? University?

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Academic Affairs Committee would like to recommend to the Faculty Senate that they invite Provost Hebert to speak at a Senate meeting this semester to address the above questions, and others related to the issue that the Senate might pose, concerning the funding and distribution of faculty lines (existing and new).