

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

April 13, 2017

3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Austin Hall

Members Present (16): Burcu Ates (COE), Jonathan Breazeale (COBA), Donna Cox (COE), James Crosby (CHSS), Brandy Doleshal (COSET), John Domino (CHSS), Diane Dowdy (CHSS), Donovan Haines (COSET), Michael Hanson (NGL), Debbi Hatton (FAMC), Renee James (COSET), William Jasper (COSET), Karen Miller (FAMC), Melinda Miller (COE), Anthony Watkins (FAMC), Ryan Zapalac (COHS)

Members Not Present (13): Irfan Ahmed (COBA), Donald Albert (COSET), Donald Bumpass (COBA), William Carroll (CHSS), Madhusudan Choudhary (COSET), Jennifer Didier (COHS), Karla Eidson (COE), Andrea Foster (COE), Randall Garner (CJ), Santosh Kumar (COBA), Eric Marsh (FAMC), Stephen Rapp (CHSS), Stacy Ulbig (CHSS),

Called to Order: 3:36 PM in Austin Hall by Chair Donna Cox.

Special Guests. Drs. Joyce McCauley, Lee Miller and Sanjay Mehta

Topic: Faculty Community and Civic Engagement Self-Evaluation Rubric

Dr. McCauley lauded the efforts of faculty across all disciplines and the work being done at SHSU engaging our community. Dr. Mehta then distributed a “Faculty Community Engagement Matrix” [the “Matrix”] – intended to measure or assess community engagement along nine dimensions – three each for the areas of teaching, scholarly activity and service. He motivated the original design and construct of the assessment matrix. Dr. Miller reiterated that Community Engagement is not necessarily an independent concept. Rather, it is woven into our efforts in many aspects of existing faculty job duties.

Dr. McCauley then solicited feedback from the Senate on the document and its usefulness. One Senator asked Dr. McCauley about the document’s usefulness in the sense that Community Engagement is not one of the tenets used at the university for promotion, tenure and merit. There is an initial concern that work in the area of Community Engagement is not given the weight or credit as traditional teaching, research or service. Dr. Miller reminded the Senate that the purpose of the Matrix is to help faculty and supervisors identify how impactful certain work is.

Dr. McCauley asked the Senate for its endorsement of the matrix as a best practice and a tool available campus-wide. One Senator asked if it was the intent of the visitors to eventually incorporate the matrix into policy. Dr. McCauley said they are just putting forth the Matrix as a “guideline” to be adopted – or not – by some or all of the individual colleges or departments. Several Senators offered their individual support, but Dr. Cox asked for time to discuss the matrix and take formal action – if that is the desire of the Senate.

Drs. McCauley, Miller and Mehta excused themselves from the meeting, and Dr. Cox solicited discussion from the Senate on the Matrix. Several Senators immediately mentioned their

hesitation with the Matrix taking on a life of its own and becoming a blanket expectation for *all* faculty – not just for those who chose to pursue Community Engagement. Other Senators were concerned that engagement in their communities (not Huntsville) would not receive the same weight or credit that work in the Huntsville community would receive. Another Senator mentioned that the addition of community engagement aspects to teaching and research also drain time resources and may diminish (rather than enhance) the teaching or research project. Several Senators expressed concern that the Matrix would ultimately become a mandate and a requirement. Another Senator asked “is this Matrix a justification for why someone’s teaching scores have dropped or someone’s research productivity has diminished?” Other raised concerns included the heterogeneous application of the guideline amongst programs and colleges. Some Senators said that they cannot do their job without Community Engagement. Other Senators said their disciplines do not lend themselves to Community Engagement at all.

Senators struggled to draft a statement offering conditional support of the Matrix. Four or five efforts were made to draft an agreeable statement that supports use of the Matrix – but not its misuse.

By the time the discussion on the Matrix was completed, a quorum was no longer present.

Chair’s Report

Dr. Eglsaer agrees with including self-plagiarism language in the policy on academic dishonesty – citing a case where a faculty member submitted the same article under three separate names to three different journals and submitted the three separate articles as part of their promotion packet.

Dr. Cox then relayed portions of a discussion with Dr. Eglsaer on salaries and merit pay for 2017-2018. Several Senators indicated that they would address their questions to Dr. Eglsaer on his visit to Senate on April 27.

Committee Reports. None

New Business. None

Adjournment: 5:03 PM