

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY
March 19, 2009

Members Present: Bill Brewer; Bill Edgington; Stacey Edmonson; Mark Frank; Emmette Jackson; Bill Jasper; Ann Jerabek; Gerald Kohers; Paul Loeffler; Andrew Lopenzina; Bill Lutterschmidt; Melinda Miller; Sheryl Murphy-Manley; Brian Oetiker; Debra Price; Tracy Steele.

Members Absent: Tracy Bilsing; Debbi Hatton; Darci Hill; Brian Loft; Joseph Neisser; John Newbold; Sam Souryal; Yan Zhang.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Edmonson called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the February 26, 2009 meeting were approved as amended.

Special Guest:

Dr. Heather Crowson, Vice President for Enrollment Management, our scheduled guest, could not attend again this week. Banner software is being installed.

Chair's Report:

- Two Academic Policy Council Meetings
 - Faculty research grants were announced as approved.
 - Academic calendars through spring semester 2009 have been approved
 - Promotion and tenure recommendations have been forwarded to the President.
 - SACS site-visit is Tuesday and Wednesday of next week. It is anticipated that the focus will be on the QEP, evaluation processes, and grant procedures.
- Senate Leadership Meeting with Provost Payne
 - The cost of building materials is down so that a Dean's is being added to the Fine Arts building. A split of the College of Arts & Sciences is anticipated.
 - Smith-Kirkley may be renovated through federal stimulus funds.

Questions and discussion followed on both issues. The timeframe for the new college possibly would be one year after the completion of the building. University budget for future years is consideration. Renovation of Smith-Kirkley will also allow for storage space issues that currently plans address with "temporary" structures

- Texas Council of Faculty Senates meeting in Austin
 - Senators Edmonson and Loeffler attended.
 - At the Texas State University System Council of Faculty Senates meeting that preceded the statewide meeting, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. Dr. Ken

Craycraft spoke. The focus of his remarks and the follow-on discussion was on-line, distance education. His vision challenges the universities establish a goal to offer 25% of each degree program through distance education. Parenthetically, Chair Edmonson reported that Sam Houston has hired a person from UTSA to lead our efforts in on-line course and degree offerings. Before concluding, Dr. Craycraft indicated that the System would be requesting full-formula funding in this legislative session and would not be supporting the issue funding through an end-of-course, headcount formula.

- At the full TCFS meeting, Dr. Judith Loreda (Assistant Commissioner, THECB) who heads the state P-16 program provided an update on this new college readiness testing/assessment and educator quality initiative that is attempting to create a “college-going culture” in the state. Another presentation by Dr. Murray Leaf (UT-Dallas) was on Shared Governance Models for Universities. At the business meeting on Saturday, senate representatives from the University of Houston presented a Handgun Resolution that was passed by the Council.

Handgun Resolution:

Whereas, allowing concealed firearms on university campuses threatens our ability to create and maintain a safe, open learning environment for students, faculty and staff.

Be it resolved that the members of the Texas Council of Faculty Senates oppose any legislation or initiatives that will overturn current prohibitions on concealed weapons on university campuses.

Faculty Senate passed resolution in support of the TCFS resolution to be forwarded to Dr. Payne. The resolution is attached as appended item-1.

- Academic Affairs Council on Friday, March 6th.
 - Senator Mark Frank represented the Senate as Drs. Edmonson and Loeffler were at the TCFS meeting. Dr. Frank provided a summary of that meeting.
 - His full report is appended as the second item following the formal minutes.

Old Business:

• Bookstore Survey

The Senate study was performed by the University Affairs Committee in response to a reported policy to “encourage” bookstore use. Only 600 of 2037 students surveyed did not use the LSC, campus bookstore. Only 10% of those who looked for a text at the Barnes & Noble facility could not find one. Student comments were not particularly favorable. Only 36 of 2037 students said they were “required” to purchase a text through LSC bookstore. A comment from the floor indicated that for athletes and ROTC students, their respective organizations may provide texts previously purchased through LSC.

Discussion followed concerning the role of a campus bookstore and implied obligations in terms of significantly representing the university to its visitors. The

survey should be shared with the LSC bookstore so they can improve service. There are examples in which faculty-requested texts were not ordered (ex: due to small number or “book being too expensive” to stock). The campus bookstore should be service-oriented toward faculty and students.

The Senate resolved that the report should be discussed with the Provost and sent to Student Services as well as to the LSC bookstore (Barnes & Noble). It was noted that a cover letter should accompany our report, stressing service.

- Calendar Committee Report

- At the last Academic Policy Council meeting Dr. Elgsaer announced we were going to a 14-week semester with alternate/innovative instruction for 3 content hours.
- The following additional recommendations had been made by Senate representatives on the Calendar Task Force as priority guidelines for developing the academic calendars.
 - Adhere to a 14-week semester;
 - Start the fall semester on the fourth Wednesday of August and the spring semester on the Wednesday after Martin Luther King Day;
 - Spring break “should” align with Texas Education Agency guidelines for public schools.
- The background report to the Calendar Task Force is attached (Attachment 1.)
- A motion to adopt these provisions as Senate’s position on calendar issues and a statement regarding academic calendar was made and seconded (Loeffler/Price.) Significant discussion followed. The motion was passed as revised.

Senate Recommendation for the Calendar Committee:

The Faculty Senate recommends that before adopting an Academic Calendar each year, the University Calendar Committee receive recommendations from the Academic Calendar Task Force. Membership of the Academic Calendar Task Force shall include representation from Enrollment Management and Faculty Senate, with at least half of the committee membership being Faculty Senate Members.

- A Policy Statement was presented for Senate consideration for adoption that addresses the concept of state-mandated, “45 contact-hours” as hours that students are in contact with instruction which will allow faculty to incorporate innovative forms of instruction to insure that the equivalent of “45 contact-hours” of instruction is being provided in each three-semester-hour course offered each semester. This Policy Statement was presented in the last section of their report as attached to the minutes.

Academic Calendar – Policy Statement:

To promote academic excellence, Sam Houston State University encourages innovative approaches to the mastery of learning outcomes. To this end, campus instruction will be enhanced with structured support projects such as

library instruction, service, field, and internet-based learning activities. Each faculty member will design curriculum-supported, out-of-class activities which will appear in the course syllabus and be subject to review. Assignments will require engagement by students and will be evaluated by the instructor. These exercises will serve as an opportunity for the students to bridge mastery of course content with application while meeting accreditation requirements.

- There was a motion for Senate to recommend the policy statement to the Calendar Committee for adoption. Discussion followed. The motion was passed unanimously.
- The Senate recommendation to the Calendar committee and the Policy Statement for the Calendar committee are included as appended item-3 and shall be formally transmitted to and discussed with Provost Payne by Chair Edmonson.

New Business:

• Guns on the SHSU campus

- The resolution by the Texas Council of Faculty Senates was brought before the Senate for consideration by Chair Edmonson.
- Discussion followed; a motion to endorse the resolution was made, seconded, and then passed unanimously.

The University Faculty Senate endorses the resolution of the Texas Council of Faculty Senates as follows:

Whereas, allowing concealed firearms on university campuses threatens our ability to create and maintain a safe, open learning environment for students, faculty and staff.

Be it resolved that the members of the Texas Council of Faculty Senates oppose any legislation or initiatives that will overturn current prohibitions on concealed weapons on university campuses.

• Safe Zone Designation

- The issue at hand developed from the initiative by Student Services to address the needs of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) community. Their Haven program proposes to identify “safe zones” with an identifying placard or sticker outside a faculty member’s door. The issue, brought to Senate by some faculty, is not related to the sexual orientation issue, but one of establishing a precedent that essentially is divisive within the campus community. The university supports and endorses many student groups, initiatives or organizations by promoting them as formal organizations and encourages faculty and staff to participate actively but does not allow faculty or staff offices to be identified with designators. An example would be university support of the student-oriented organizations like the Baptist Student Union without asking

faculty and staff to post their religious preference. Senate was asked to discuss the merits of the placard or sticker to “identify a location as a “safe zone.”

- Discussion followed. The sense of the Senate was that the stickers were problematic for several reasons in that purposeful identification or promotion of any one group or cause was antithetical to the university’s purpose, that the university does not want to segregate the campus between “safe” and “unsafe” zones, and that we in the university community do it want to offer the impression that faculty and staff who do not elect to engage in the sticker program are prejudiced in any capacity toward our students.
 - Several Senators offered draft resolutions which were subsequently referred to University Affairs. The chair was directed to share the Senate’s concerns with the Provost.
 - In addition to discussion of the narrow issue of placards or stickers concern was expressed concerning the general campus climate relating to diversity and the perception of discrimination against students because of their sexual orientation. The Senate feels that the whole campus should be uniformly safe, that we support the constructs of diversity, and that we should be a welcoming, open community that offers rich experiences and meaningful inquiry. Faculty Senate would like to know of student concerns that offer evidence to the contrary.
- **Computers for Retired Faculty**
 - Senate was asked to consider generating a resolution relating allowing retiring faculty the opportunity to “have” their computers when they retire. Discussion followed. The issue of computers appears to be one among several. The sense of the Senate is that this is an issue that should be negotiated by retiring faculty when determining their individual separation packages and that a specific recommendation to the administration would be inappropriate.

Committee Reports:

- Faculty Affairs:
 - Their report was postponed until next meeting.
- University Affairs:
 - No other report.
- Academic Affairs:
 - No report.
- Committee on Committees:
 - They will be meeting to make committee assignments.

Senate adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Loeffler.

Appended Item-1

Faculty Senate Resolution

Adopted: March 19, 2009

The Sam Houston State University Faculty Senate formally endorses the following resolution adopted by the Texas Council of Faculty Senates:

Whereas, allowing concealed firearms on university campuses threatens our ability to create and maintain a safe, open learning environment for students, faculty and staff. Be it resolved that the members of Texas Council of Faculty Senates oppose any legislation or initiatives that will overturn the present prohibitions on concealed weapons on university campuses.

Chair, Dr. Stacey Edmonson

Chair-elect, Dr. Paul Loeffler

Appended Item-2

Summary Report from the Academic Affairs Council Meeting on March 6th submitted by Senator Mark Frank, the Senate representative at that AAC meeting.

1 - Approval of The University Curriculum Committee's recommendation for approval of a new doctoral program (Ed.D with a major in Special Education) within the College of Education, Department of Language, Literacy and Special Populations. This approval included the approval of 8 new course offerings to support the new program (SPD 710, SPD 731, SPD 734, SPD 735, SPD 736, SPD 738, SPD 832, and SPD 833).

2 - Approval of The University Curriculum Committee's recommendation for approval of changes in 3 degree program titles within the College of Arts and Sciences: BS in Agriculture to BS in Interdisciplinary Agriculture, BS in Agriculture with a Program in Agriculture Mechanization to a BS in Agriculture with a Program in Agriculture Engineering Technology, and BS in Industrial Technology with a Program in Industrial Management to BS in Industrial Technology with a Program in Industrial Safety Management.

3 - Approval of The University Curriculum Committee's recommendation for approval of changes in 2 programs within College of Humanities and Social Sciences: MA in Speech Communication to MA in Communication Studies, and MA in Psychology with a Program in School Psychology to Specialist (SSP) in School Psychology.

4 - Approval of The University Curriculum Committee's recommendation for approval to change to add GEO, GEL and BIO 146 "Foundations of Science" to the core curriculum (Component Area III - Natural Sciences).

5 - Approval of The University Curriculum Committee's recommendation for DISAPPROVAL of adding Mass Communication and Society (MCM 130) to the core curriculum (Component Area V - Social/Behavioral Science).

Appended Item-3

Faculty Senate Recommendation
Sam Houston State University

Adopted: March 19, 2009

The Faculty Senate recommends that before adopting each year's Academic Calendar, the University Calendar Committee receive recommendations from the Academic Calendar Task Force. Membership of the Academic Calendar Task Force shall include representation from Enrollment Management and Faculty Senate, with at least half of the committee membership being Faculty Senate members.

Chair, Dr. Stacey Edmonson

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Academic Calendar - Policy Statement

To promote academic excellence, Sam Houston State University encourages innovative approaches to the mastery of learning outcomes. To this end, campus instruction will be enhanced with structured support projects such as library instruction, service, field, and internet-based learning activities. Each faculty member will design curriculum-supported, out-of-class activities which will appear in the course syllabus and be subject to review. Assignments will require engagement by the students and will be evaluated by the instructor. These exercises will serve as an opportunity for the student to bridge the mastery of course content with application while meeting accreditation standards.