

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

**March 7, 2013  
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
LSC 304**

**Members present:**

Nancy Baker (H&SS); Helen Berg (COE); Tracy Bilsing (H&SS); Kevin Clifton (FA&MC); Donna Cox (COE); Tom Cox (H&SS); James Crosby (H&SS); Mark Frank (COBA); Randall Garner (CJ); Richard Henriksen (COE); Joan Hudson (COS); C. Renée James (COS); Gerald Kohers (COBA); Dennis Longmire (CJ); Paul Loeffler (COS); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (FA&MC); Lisa Shen (NGL); Tracy Steele (H&SS); Stacy Ulbig (H&SS); Walton Watkins (FA&MC); Pam Zelbst (COBA)

**Members not present:** Don Bumpass (COBA); Diane Dowdey (H&SS); Debbi Hatton (H&SS); Bill Jasper (COS); Hayoung Lim (FA&MC); Joyce McCauley (COE); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Debra Price (COE); Doug Ullrich (COS); Ricky White (COS)

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

**Chair's Report:**

Chair Steele has confirmed from Kelli Leaf, Registrar's Office, that "number enrolled" on the IDEA forms comes from class rosters on Banner, not from Blackboard. This is important because the Registrar's Office has warned faculty that Blackboard's rosters are not accurate. For accurate rosters, professors need to go to Cognos or MySam.

May 10, 2013 is the last day for incomplete (X) grades from the fall semester of 2012 to have grade change forms submitted. This date was negotiated between Dr. Eglsaer, the Registrar's Office and the Senate. Chair Steele has asked that this date be publicized including adding it to the Academic Calendar Online.

*Meeting with Provost* – Provost Hebert discussed revisions to the Faculty Development Leave, and the suggested changes will be taken to the next level. President Gibson is concerned that the number of leaves might suddenly shoot up. We learned in the Texas Council of Faculty Senates meeting in Austin that Texas State had 59 this year.

The Provost was responsive to the proposed policy changes on proposed compensation on overloads and uncompensated teaching. Regarding payment for "over-size" classes, the Provost thought it was an interesting topic for discussion, as "over-sized" varies across classes and departments. There is risk that the administration will set class sizes (higher), rather than individual departments determining what appropriate class sizes are. The history department, for example, has learned that classes designated as "writing" should have courses capped at 35 students.

The Provost said that he had not attended the IDEA sessions intentionally. He will be watching the videos and has talked to people who attended. He wanted faculty members to feel free to ask questions during the meetings without fear that they were being monitored by administrators. Chair Steele indicated that faculty members were hoping that administrators fully understood what the IDEA Center representatives had to say. The Provost stated that that the administration will be looking to the faculty members to provide suggestions on how to move away from using IDEA scores for more than 30 to 50% of teaching evaluations.

*TCFS and TSUS Report* – Both bodies met in Austin on March 1 and 2, and were attended by Chair Steele, Chair-elect James and Permanent Representative Frank. The following items were of note:

- SHSU is growing more than other universities in the Texas State University System (system wide enrollment is only up approximately 1%)
- Tuition Revenue Bonds are possible this year. SHSU has asked for money for two buildings.
- A bill has been put forward by Rep. Lewis that would provide \$30 million to cover unfunded exemptions such as Hazelwood. If it passes, it would be distributed proportionally to affected universities. This would be a one-year only fix. We were told that in addition to fixing this funding problem, there was also talk of doing some research to find out why the forecast was incorrect when it was initially put forward.
- Unfunded Exemptions may have restrictions placed such as requiring a certain GPA, requiring full-time status, or requiring students who qualify for other programs such as the GI Bill or Pell Grants to exhaust those first.
- HB25- Outcomes based funding. Representative Branch, R-Dallas, spoke specifically on issues presently before the Texas Legislature. He has backed HB 25 which he expects to pass, but it would be more like HB 10, in that ten percent of formula funding would be distributed based on 16 criteria including retention and graduation rates. He is optimistic this will pass. According to Provost Hebert, this will help SHSU since we do well in these criteria.
- Contingency faculty. These are lecturers and possibly clinical faculty, but not part-time adjunct faculty. There was a major discussion of protecting their rights. We were given a survey to fill out in advance, but they did not provide a clear definition or idea of what type of faculty contingent faculty may be. SHSU did not provide very good data for that reason. The issue is one of their rights: Can contingency faculty serve on faculty senates? What are their roles within their departments? TCFS will address this at a later meeting.
- Post Tenure Review – SHSU's own Debra Price and Frank Fair discussed the origins of this policy. TACT and TCFS will conduct a state-wide survey on how it is being implemented across campuses.
- Agenda for TCFS – You do not have to be a member of the board for TCFS to give suggestions for the Agenda for the TCFS meetings. SHSU needs to explore this for future meetings.

**Approval of Minutes:** February 21 minutes were approved.

**Core Curriculum Report:** None.

**Committee Reports:**

*Academic Affairs Committee (see attached).*

The two-day IDEA visit revealed a number of shortcomings and opportunities for faculty and administrator use of this rating system. Most notably, the representatives for IDEA indicated that SHSU's use in FES system is inappropriate. Senators expressed concern over the degree to which these student ratings have counted and continue to count towards pay raises and promotions. Suggestions about how to approach administrators were proffered.

One suggestion was to suggest a ranking system that involves, for instance, a portfolio of teaching accomplishments and philosophy or in-class observations by an experienced teaching evaluator. *Given that, according to policy, no more than 50% of the teaching score can be related to IDEA data, chair's evaluations of teaching performance must be based at least in part on some other metric with no consideration of the IDEA results.*

It was mentioned that different departments use different numbers from the IDEA form, and indeed some department chairs use whichever number is highest. This practice was deemed arbitrary and unfair, and faculty should know in advance whether the scores used are the raw scores, adjusted scores, compared across disciplines, etc. The use should be the same across the board. One complication is the frequent changes in administration, and new chairs or deans might apply a different method. Given the strong impact this evaluation system has on the lives of faculty members, it was felt that Faculty Senate should endorse a specific system in order to keep the bar from shifting across departments and across time.

Senator Longmire is currently serving on the Faculty Evaluation Committee, which has met to discuss the possibilities. He outlined the following issues and recommendations:

- The committee encourages university-wide use of IDEA for *formative* use in pre- and post-tenure review.
- There is no evidence that chairs or other administrators actually sit down with faculty members to review these scores and discuss what can be done/improved.
- The committee discourages use of scores on competitive/comparative basis.
- Senate must insist on a plan to ensure that everyone is using the same scores.
- The committee is investigating the use of the short form for online classes, perhaps developing a university-wide list of questions that relate specifically to the online environment.
- Idea should not account for more than 50% of a faculty member's teaching evaluation. Furthermore, FES 1 should not include ANY reference to IDEA.
- The committee strongly discourages development of a university-specific instrument because it will simply cause a different set of problems.

Faculty Senate then discussed these points, raising the question about using the short form not only in the online classes, but also for the “brick-and-mortar” classes. There is a specific question in that form that does not appear on the long form: “My background prepared me for this class.” The student's response to this question actually changes the score, and given the college-readiness of many students in various areas, it is a highly relevant question. Another disadvantage of using the long form is that students get “survey-fatigue.” There are over 40 questions, and often students fill out several evaluations in a 1- or 2-day span. After thoughtfully answering a few questions, some students simply do the “straight-slate” evaluation or even make patterns on the page. The reality is that very few questions are being used to compute the score, while the remaining questions are meant for formative use, which seems to be a rare occurrence across campus.

The short form is 16 questions long – only one sided – and the back is reserved for comments. SHSU could write its own questions to supplement the short form, but our own Office of Institutional Research would have to interpret the data. Furthermore, it was unclear whether the short-form scores would be lower than the long-form scores. However, given that SHSU has no data on the short-form, it was generally felt that a clean slate would be acceptable.

There was much discussion about the validity of scores and the error bars. Comparisons for scores that differ by less than 1 or 2 points are actually statistically invalid, as the uncertainties are so great. However, virtually every score is within a 2-point range, and some departments have ranked faculty based on the decimal point.

After the discussion, there was a motion made to amend Academic Affairs Committee report to delete the item that suggests SHSU create its own evaluation system. The motion was passed unanimously, and the amended report also passed (1 abstention).

**Old Business:** Regarding legislation about guns on campus, the Student Government Association has taken on the issue and is currently crafting a strong statement to be sent to state lawmakers.

**Adjournment:** 5:01 pm

**Next Meeting:** March 21, 2013, with special guest Provost Jaimie Hebert.