

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

April 01, 2021

3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Remote via Zoom

**Senators Present (27).**

Samuel Adu-Prah (COSET), Mario Aschauer (CAM), Natalie Baker (CJ), Maria Botero (CHSS), Siham Bouamer (CHSS), Timothy Brown (COE), Patrick Buzzini (CJ), Rhonda Callaway (CHSS), Brandy Doleshal (COSET), Jamie Durán (COE), Debbi Hatton (CAM), Damon Hay (COSET), Soo-Yeon Hwang (NGL), John Lane (CAM), Lee Miller (CHSS), Carolyn Moore (CAM), Geraldine Monjardez (CJ), Benjamin Park (CHSS), Dwayne Pavelock (COSET), Mary Petró (COE), Debbie Price (COE), Kevin Randall (COHS), Stephen Rapp (CHSS), Karen Sherrill (COBA), Aneika Simmons (COBA), Susan Skidmore (COE), Kyle Stutts (COSET).

**Senators Not Present (3).**

Valencia Browning-Keen (COHS), Kevin Lord (COM), Jan Taylor Morris (COBA).

**Special Guests.**

Dr. Drew Miller, Assistant VP for Student Affairs, and chair of the COVID workgroup.

**Called to Order.**

3:30 P.M., Remote via Zoom, by Chair Lee Miller.

**COVID Update – Dr. Drew Miller**

The university saw a slight increase in positivity rate following Spring Break. There are 3 to 4 students in the isolation housing, whereas there had been none in the preceding 2 to 3 weeks. The Health Center has worked through its backlog of people waitlisted for receiving a COVID vaccine. The university is switching over to the Johnson & Johnson vaccine since it is only one dose and there will not be the difficulty of scheduling a second dose after the semester ends when faculty & students are less available. The university received overflow of vaccine from the county. The workgroup is reviewing CDC guidance to inform fall 2021 planning. The workgroup is developing a survey of the campus community to gauge vaccine rate ahead of fall semester. The university cannot mandate a COVID vaccine unless the legislature passes a law that permits it to do so, no matter if you are faculty, staff or a student.

**Approval of Minutes.**

The minutes of the March 4 meeting were approved as corrected.

**Chair's Report.**

The Chair discussed the Chair's Report. Topics included the university budget hearings and the expectation of merit raises this year. We are to expect a policy on how it is to be distributed in mid to late April. Other topics included an update on the MID policy, questions about diversity training. Talent Management has training modules available on a voluntary basis. Other customized training is available on a case-by-case basis. See the Diversity & Inclusion website for more information. Diversity training can be strongly encouraged, but it is unclear whether or

not it can be mandated. More information will be sought. There was also a brief update on the Texas Council of Faculty Senates meeting, which the Chair and Chair Elect attended (virtually). Concerns across the state included continuing struggles adapting to COVID conditions, especially schools without a robust online presence. Intellectual property rights with respect to digital materials was discussed. Many institutions are hiring a “Chief Equity Officer.” There was discussion of ombudspersons, faculty handbook revisions, and merit. A number of campuses were not going to get merit. Some were getting only one-time merit payments. SHSU’s expected merit is indeed a raise.

The April 29 Conversations with Administrators (Dr. Angrove & Dr. Maynard) will be about the fall semester. Please send questions to Debbi Hatton.

### **Unfinished Business.**

Faculty Preference Survey: There were 240 responses, of which 73 said they did not want to serve. Of those remaining 56 left a response to the newly added survey question, and the rest did not respond to the question. Two respondents answered the new question by expressing a negative view of the question’s inclusion. Two faculty members contacted the Chair about the additional question added to the survey. Their concerns were that committee participation would be attributed to ascriptive characteristics, and that not answering the question could be used against a faculty member since the survey is not actually anonymous. Most respondents to the new question gave information that connected their work experience or goals to provide context for how they want to serve, rather than expressing any particular identity. The consensus among senators was that some form of the question should be kept in the survey. There was discussion about rewording the question to gather information on interests, experience and background, and to include an explanation of why this question is included and how the information gathered will be used and kept. A number of senators reported getting positive feedback about the inclusion of the new question.

One senator asked that the survey be reopened. The chair of the Committee on Committees and Surveys said the survey would be reopened until Monday.

Proposal on faculty and administrator hybrid positions: Faculty are needed to serve on a workgroup for this proposal. It is requested that senators reach out to faculty in their colleges to serve.

### **New Business.**

Hybrid Course Guidelines and Application: Faculty interested in teaching a hybrid course in the fall need to complete the new application to do so, even if they have already submitted a previous request.

Instructional materials policy: More time is needed to get more feedback from faculty. One faculty member expressed concern that the policy might include research materials. Clarity is sought. One senator expressed concern about the process used in policy reviews. Why is the university into the business of supporting a business? Faculty keep getting emails about choosing a textbook when they are not using a textbook.

Faculty Senate Chair Election Process: The Chair presented a proposal (attached) for the process to select the senate chair. The proposal was moved by Senator Callaway and seconded along with an agreement to conduct the election anonymously via Qualtrics in the last meeting of the semester, followed by a screenshare of the results. The motion was approved.

There was concern about the ambiguity in the Charter and Bylaws about whether or not a senator in their last term was eligible to run for Chair. It was agreed that the person can if they are reelected by their college for another term.

ORP Contributions: Concern about the ORP retirement contribution level was expressed. A formal proposal for the next meeting was requested.

Senator Pavelock asked members of the Faculty Senate to consider contributing to the university's Annual Fund Campaign.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 P.M.