

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

10 April 2014  
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Austin Hall

**Members present:** Nancy Baker (CHSS); Tracy Bilsing (CHSS); Jonathan Breazeale (COBA); Don Bumpass (COBA); Madhusudan Choudhary (COS); Donna Cox (COE); Mark Frank (COBA); Richard Henriksen (COE); Joan Hudson (COS); C. Renée James (COS); Mark Klespis (COS); Paul Loeffler (COS); Dennis Longmire (COCJ); David McTier (COFAMC); Lisa Shen (NGL); Stacy Ulbig (CHSS); Mary Anne Vincent (COHS); Anthony Watkins (COFAMC)

**Members not present:** Helen Berg (COE); Kevin Clifton (COFAMC); Tom Cox (CHSS); James Crosby (CHSS); Randall Garner (COCJ); James Landa (CHSS); Hayoung Lim (COFAMC); Jeff Littlejohn (CHSS); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (COFAMC); Diana Nabors (COE); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Debra Price (COE); Doug Ullrich (COS); Pam Zelbst (COBA)

**Called to order:** 3:30 p.m. in Austin Hall by Chair Renee James

**Minutes approved:** Minutes for March 6 and minutes for March 27 meetings approved

**Chair's Report**

**April 2 meeting with Provost**

Dr. James reported on the most recent meeting she and Dr. Baker had with Provost Jaimie Hebert.

Dr. James gave the provost the Faculty Senate approved report on the Faculty Development Leave (FDL) policy. She also explained to the provost the challenges we encountered in trying to vote on the report on-line, via e-mail, so he was made aware of concerns re: the Newton Gresham Library being unintentionally excluded from the policy in the effort to streamline the policy's language.

Dr. James reminded the provost that he had promised to hold a few town hall meetings re: the FES options, which he said he would do before the end of the spring semester.

Dr. James asked the provost about whether attendance at commencement (or lack thereof) can be used against someone in a third-year review or in a tenure/promotion decision. He said no. He said the policy on who should attend and how often is a college-level decision (made at the level of the dean).

One senator commented that there is a process for a faculty member to address being criticized officially for not attending commencement (or like matters). Within 90 days of an evaluation citing someone for not attending commencement, the person cited for non-attendance can file a grievance, and this will require an official response from the administration.

Dr. James informed the provost that, in response to the provost's and president's roundtable on curriculum, the Faculty Senate would like to craft a statement about our mission being about educating (not training) the future workforce.

### **Founder's Day invitation**

Dr. James announced to the senators that the 135<sup>th</sup> birthday of SHSU is on April 21, and during the following week the university has an official schedule of events to celebrate SHSU's founding. The commemoration of the university's founding is intended to start a new, annual tradition, to encourage alumni to return to campus and be more engaged with the university. All faculty members are encouraged to attend any or all Founders' Day events; there is a \$25 cost for the events held on April 26 (and a \$50 cost for the Sam Houston Society Dinner on the evening of April 25).

### **Endless Training**

Dr. James mentioned that the amount of training required of faculty has dramatically increased of late; this past week alone, she spent a day on a 17-page policy with a 56-question test. One senator mentioned that there are state laws requiring some policies, but the way in which SHSU chooses to carry this out requires more time-consuming "training" instead of reading and signing a policy statement. Another senator said that the "training" seems to be about limiting the university's liability. A senator said that he was no longer someone who had to do P-card training, yet he was required to submit a written letter stating this two years in a row, or risk his department's P-card being rendered inoperable.

One senator said he was required to do three of these in one 30-day period last semester, and this was an unreasonable burden.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Committee on Committees**

The Committee on Committees (CC) submitted a report regarding Academic Policy 900417 (Promotion and Tenure Policy), revised Nov. 13, 2013. A copy of this report is attached at the end of these minutes.

The CC report focused on collegiality, specifically. The committee's position on collegiality is that collegiality should **not** be created as a separate, fourth category (independent of research, teaching, and service) considered in tenure decisions. Rather, collegiality should be considered a component of the three categories of research, teaching and service. The burden of proof should be upon the department/tenure unit that someone has not met standards of collegiality in these areas, and the department/tenure unit is also responsible for defining what collegiality means. In this position, the committee agrees with the stance of the AAUP, which fears the potential chilling effect of collegiality requirements on untenured faculty's political views and their willingness to speak at departmental meetings and contribute new ideas. In effect, the CC report requests that collegiality be REMOVED from the tenure and promotion policy.

Senators discussed the pros and cons of: eliminating collegiality entirely; considering it as a separate, fourth category (after research, teaching, and service); and considering it as a component of all three categories (research, teaching, and service).

One senator pointed out that a separate evaluation of collegiality would allow for persecution of anyone who is a member of a minority group, who has unpopular political views, or anyone deemed "too different." This senator stated that the historical context of the creation of collegiality as part of tenure decisions was to keep ethnic minorities and women out of positions of power, and this senator fears that collegiality as a separate category would continue to be used for this purpose.

Another senator said collegiality allowed for an assessment of whether someone was a team-player and would be good in small group work for furthering the aims of the department and university. If someone wants to truly belong (be tenured), then there should be room for assessing whether that person has shown commitment to working well with others and the ability to do so.

Dr. James asked if anyone could think of examples of being "uncollegial" that would not be covered under teaching, research and service. None would.

One senator reminded everyone that TSUS attorney Rhonda Beassie had said collegiality could be cited as a reason for denying tenure only if there was tangible proof and a documentation of a lack of collegiality. To this end, a tenure unit should be able to argue that the faculty member under discussion was obstructionist. Another senator said she worries about a colleague being criticized for being selfish (choosing service that benefits oneself and rejecting any that does not help him/her) and this being seen as obstructionist. Yet another senator said the policy seems to require someone being collegial in a manner that could be documented, measured, or shown.

Two other senators raised the issue of protest or obstruction as a method for improving things. A senator cited civil rights activists as an example of people who could be considered obstructionist, when in fact they are seeking to make a positive change. The senator cautioned that we all are under pressure to conform, but we don't want to make

this pressure any stronger than it has to be.

One senator talked about an attempt to deprive him/her of tenure due to his/her refusal to engage in the routine of a group prayer before meetings. This senator worries that collegiality as a separate category could be abused for this purpose.

A suggestion was made to reword the policy to delete (5.01a4) collegiality as a separate category, but then include the word in 5.01a5 to read:

*The burden of proof must be on the department to demonstrate a lack of collegiality (not on the faculty member to demonstrate collegiality)*

**A motion was made to accept the Committee on Committees report, with the edit of the policy number.**

**Vote: 9 ayes, 3 nays, 4 abstentions**

**A motion was made to further amend Academic Policy # 900417 to define collegiality.**

**Vote: 13 ayes, 1 nay**

### New Business

#### **The Texas Council of Faculty Senates Report**

Dr. Mark Frank submitted a report on the Texas Council of Faculty Senates (TCFS) meeting (Feb. 28 - March 1, 2014). A copy of the report is attached to these minutes.

A panel on women in higher education proved enlightening, revealing a gender gap as one moved up the ranks from assistant professor to associate or full professor. Family-friendly policies were discussed, to encourage better retention of female faculty at the higher levels.

Faculty governance was another topic discussed in depth at the TCFS. Many senior administrators hold those positions without having risen through the ranks of academia, thus lacking a fundamental understanding of faculty concerns and experience.

The next TCFS meeting will look at intellectual property rights and developing a model intellectual property rights policy and a model shared governance policy that faculty senates can bring to their university administrations.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:59 pm.

The next (and final spring semester) meeting is on April 24.

*Revised 04-24-2014, 9:05 am*

## **Committee on Committees Report**

April 10, 2014

### **Recommended Position on Collegiality**

We support the AAUP's position on collegiality (<http://www.aaup.org/report/collegiality-criterion-faculty-evaluation>) and recommend removing Collegiality as a category of performance from the *Faculty Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Policy* (SHSU Academic Policy Statement 900417).

Collegiality measures a faculty's ability and willingness "to function as an effective professional in accomplishing of the goals of the tenure unit and the University" (p.9 of the current SHSU policy). Therefore, collegiality is not a separate criterion that can be evaluated independent of a faculty's performance in teaching, research, and service. In a well-constructed faculty evaluation, the collegiality of the faculty member would already have been assessed in the contexts of those three categories of performance.

Furthermore, within the context of teaching, research, and service, we recommend that any formal definition of collegiality should be determined at the department level, and the burden of proof of a faculty's lack of collegiality should reside with his/her department.

## Texas Council of Faculty Senates Meeting

February 28 – March 1, 2014

- Harry Kronberg (owner and editor of the Quorum Report) reported that he did not expect to see much movement with higher education issues in Texas despite the new changes coming to many state offices after this year's elections.
- Panel on Women in Higher Education
  - The STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) work force in higher education is still only 25% female. Similarly, women in leadership positions in higher education have plateaued at about 25%.
  - Data from 2011 was given on the gender breakdown by rank among universities in Texas.<sup>1</sup> The numbers are relatively balanced among Assistant Professors (45% female) and the non-tenured track (55%). However, Associate Professors and Professors are heavily male (37% and 22%). It was noted that the percentages are worse among the top research institutions.
  - Possible family-friendly proposals discussed included:
    - Reserved parking for expecting faculty and staff
    - Privacy rooms for mothers (located in most buildings)
    - Creation of a brochure with options/guidelines to help department chairs and deans working with faculty who will be first-time parents. Contents could include strategies for release time, alternative work schedules, etc.
- Panel on Shared Governance<sup>2</sup>
  - It was noted that many senior-level administrators (some of whom will serve on a President's Cabinet), have not come through the faculty ranks. They don't necessarily have the voice of the faculty, and may lack the experience to understand the faculty perspective.
  - The AAUP website now has its "red book" of AAUP approved academic policies freely available online.
- Issues and items agreed upon for the next meeting of the TCFS (October 23-24, 2014):
  - The TCFS will work on authoring a "Shared Governance Policy" to aid Faculty Senates in their negotiations with university administrators.
  - The TCFS, in conjunction with attorneys, will write a pro-faculty "Intellectual Property Policy" to cover copyrights, patents, and distance learning.<sup>3</sup> It is intended that this policy could serve as a template for Faculty Senates to use at their home university.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Frank

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<sup>1</sup> SHSU's breakdown: non-tenured track are 58% female, Assistant Professors are 49%, Associate Professors are 44%, and Professors are 25% female.

<sup>2</sup> In the ongoing debate over classifying department chairs as either administrators or faculty, an AAUP representative suggested the following rule: if the chair serves on a time-limited rotation basis, they should be considered faculty; if they serve without a time limit, they should be considered administrators.

<sup>3</sup> In the UT system, for example, faculty and administrators agreed to allow the university nonexclusive rights to use any online class materials for only one year after a faculty member has left or gone on leave.