

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

**April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013  
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Austin Hall**

**Members present:**

Nancy Baker (CHSS); Don Bumpass (COBA); Donna Cox (COE); James Crosby (CHSS); Diane Dowdey (CHSS); Mark Frank (COBA); Randall Garner (CJ); Richard Henriksen (COE); Joan Hudson (COS); C. Renée James (COS); Gerald Kohers (COBA); Hayoung Lim (CFAMC); Paul Loeffler (COS); Dennis Longmire (CJ); Joyce McCauley (COE); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (CFAMC); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Lisa Shen (NGL); Tracy Steele (CHSS; present electronically); Stacy Ulbig (CHSS); Walton Watkins (CFAMC); Ricky White (COS); Pam Zelbst (COBA)

**Members not present:** Helen Berg (COE); Tracy Bilsing (CHSS); Kevin Clifton (CFAMC); Tom Cox (CHSS); Debbi Hatton (CHSS); Bill Jasper (COS); Debra Price (COE); Doug Ullrich (COS);

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

**Special Guests:** Provost Jaimie Hebert

**IDEA Summary Report Discussion:** Provost Hebert addressed several items that were presented to him in the Summary Report of the IDEA System after the on-campus visit of the team from IDEA. The Provost emphasized that the IDEA system is not currently being used to its fullest potential and the University should not use it as the only instrument for decisions for tenure, promotion, and merit. The Provost stated that our policy is not necessarily the issue but rather the application of our policy. Further Provost Hebert stated that he is open to discussion about how to improve the use of the system.

With respect to the summary report from the Academic Affairs Subcommittee on the visit from IDEA representatives, Provost Hebert stated that he liked the suggestion to divide the teaching component of faculty evaluation into three components. He cautioned that it would not prevent chairs and DPTAC committee members from looking at a faculty members IDEA scores and/or comments and using it as the basis of their decisions. He suggested that revisions of the Faculty Evaluation Systems policy (Academic Policy 820317) would need to be independent of the IDEA scores. Provost Hebert stated that he liked the suggestion of the development of some kind of a portfolio component for a faculty member being evaluated. He also pointed out that these would vary based on the needs of individual colleges and departments. The Provost would also like well-defined guidelines for the DPTAC and Chairs.

A Senator suggested the starting point might be to define teaching and expectations for teaching as well as quality. The Provost responded by stating that the development of a rubric for evaluation uniformity might help with those issues. The Provost stated that he would like Faculty Senate to provide a list of recommended changes in the policies and guidelines so he can present them in the appropriate venues. He added that we cannot develop a fool proof process and there will be opportunity for misuse with any system.

Provost Hebert then asked the Senate if using the IDEA System for the student component of the Faculty Evaluation Systems was appropriate, and although the general consensus was that it was appropriate, the Senate did not understand the varying use of the raw or adjusted score. The Provost agreed and stated that the policy be uniform across the University.

A Senator asked the Provost if he was opposed to using the short form for IDEA. The Provost responded by stating he was not opposed and then asked the Senate if they would prefer the long or short form and what would be gained/lost by using the short form. Senators' responses included negating the boredom of the students with the number of questions, plus we would gain class time. Senators also pointed out that switching to the short form would result in a loss of data from the formative questions. Other Senators suggested that students may not be the best for answering questions regarding the formative portion. Alternative solutions involved in-class evaluations by department chairs and peers, but faculty workloads would increase with the use of required peer evaluation. It was also pointed out that attending a single class would not aid in the formative aspect of teaching evaluation.

The long form *could* provide the chairs with valuable information if they were to use the third page with the formative information. Chairs would need proper training in the interpretation of the third page. Another Senator felt that it was the faculty's responsibility to know how to make use of this information.

The Provost stated that there are two goals: to create a more equitable system in teaching evaluation, and to help each other improve in teaching. Provost Hebert stated that he would like a policy that faculty believe in, and said that he would not impose a deadline so that Faculty Senate could take the needed amount time to create suggested policy changes. Further he suggested that the Senate could hold town hall meetings and that he would support us in this effort.

The Provost was asked about his approach to using evaluations for merit, tenure and promotion. The Provost stated that he first would read the letters from the Dean and the Chair. If everyone is in agreement, he makes his decision in line with that information. If, however, there are differences in opinion, split votes, etc., then he request more information assesses based on a bigger picture. Provost Hebert stated that it is the responsibility of the faculty, chairs, and deans to review details, and that he is not likely to question their decisions.

**Drop Deadline:** The Provost stated that he thought the University Affairs committee's suggestion of the drop deadline occurring at the end of the twelfth week of a long semester was an excellent solution. He also stated that it is not going to solve every issue but that it should address most of them. He suggested that it should be a hard date. A Senator suggested that a soft date during the tenth week with a two week appeal window would be preferable. During the 2-week period between the "soft" date and the "hard" deadline, appeals could be heard. Provost Hebert agreed but also stated that there would still be some exceptions, but that our policies should be designed for general issues. The Senate identified that online classes are another issue that would need to be addressed. The Provost stated that he would take this issue to the Council of Academic Deans. The Provost brought up the idea of allowing students who drop to evaluate the class, with the explicit understanding that information resulting from such an evaluation (or survey) would not be used for any other purpose except to give the professor of that course feedback.

**Evaluation of Chairs & Deans:** Provost Hebert stated that there are varying ways to implement the policy (APS110511, May 2011) on evaluation of chairs. He stated that the annual evaluation should include everyone in the department because everyone should have input. The Vote of Confidence should be taken every three years by the tenured, tenure track and clinical faculty. The dean of the college or chair of the DPTAC should call the meetings to take the vote. There is not currently an instrument such as IDEA that is being used and primarily consists of a discussion by the faculty. The information and vote coming out of that meeting should then be used by the dean of the college to make the retention decisions.

Dean evaluations are different because they are classified employees by the state so they fall under Human Resources and are evaluated by their chain of command which means they are evaluated by the Provost. The Provost stated that he sends forms to the chairs of the departments for their input and he uses the online survey that the faculty senate puts out each year. The Provost suggested that faculty make sure

the chairs of the departments know how they feel. It was suggested that either a “state of the college” survey be created or Senate add to the current list of questions related to deans in the annual survey. The Provost felt that the deans need to be encouraged to promote the vision for the colleges.

A member of the University Affairs Committee asked the Provost if he had put together a committee to work with IT@SHSU. The Provost stated that he had not but that as part of the budget process the Deans met with IT to determine what IT would fund. He also stated that an academic committee was needed to look at policies, procedures and other issues for IT.

**Final Comments:** Provost Hebert thanked the Senate for taking on important issues. The Provost stated that if we take our time to get faculty input and buy-in that Senate will have made a tremendous contribution to Sam Houston State University.

**Committee Reports:**

Committee on Committees: Senator Kohers stated that the Excellence in Research Award Committee and the Excellence in Service Award Committee needed chairs. He stated that the committee had not yet met and would need to work on an abbreviated schedule to select recipients of the awards. The Senate recommended that the chair of the Research Council Committee be asked to serve in the role of chair of the Excellence in Research Award Committee.

**Adjournment:** 5:10 pm

**Next Meeting:** April 18, 2013, with guest President Dana Gibson.