

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

February 5, 2026
3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.
Austin Hall

Senators Present (24) Robert Alvarez (CHSS), Michael Arrington (CHSS), Traci Austin (COBA), Emma Bullock (COSET), Patrick Buzzini (CJ), Miltonette Craig (CJ), Kevin Crouch (Associate Chair), Magdalena Denham (CJ), Naomi Krawzik (COSET), Nick Lantz (CHSS), Victoria Lantz (Secretary), Kimberly LaPrairie (COE), Ali Mchiri (COBA), Hannah Menendez (NGL), Olga Minich (COSET), Ricardo Montelongo (COE), Audrey Murfin (Chair), Andy Noble (CAM), Erin Owens (NGL), Erica Pasquini (COHS), Berna Rahi (CHS), Xiaobo Belle Wang (CHSS), Rebecca Wentworth (COE), Darren Williams (COSET).

Senators Not Present (5): Hosam Abdelhady (COM), Jennifer Child (CHSS), Debbi Hatton (CAM), Owen Kelly (COM), Willow Yang (COBA).

Guests:

Amanda Withers, Chief Financial Officer and Senior Vice President for Operations

Special Guests Comments and Q&A

Senate chair introduced Amanda Withers, who explained financial operations at the request of the senate last spring.

Amanda Withers explained her role with finances, marketing, and other areas. She will be sharing the PPT with senate chair.

- Focused on budget breakdowns, classifications of funds.
- Revenue: Tuition and fees the largest. Detailed the state appropriations (short term, like the Polytechnic, and long term, like insurance and social security), formula funding for the medical school.
- 2026 budget: questions the office asks when building out the budget in relation to state support and enrollment, types of students (online and in person), fees, waivers, etc.
- Unit leads and chairs, deans, etc. have a timeline for individual budgets to financial/operations running January to August for the subsequent year.
- Formula Funding: General Academic (GAI), Health Related (HRI – only COM), State College (Polytechnic). Polytechnic funding based on contact hours, so receiving more funding than credit hour courses.
- Tuition and Fees: discounting breakdown for scholarships, grants, financial aids, etc.
- Financial Health: Growth in endowment funds. Strength in cash coverage.

Senator Questions:

- Specific classes cost and state funding: Amanda Withers explained that cheaper class to run, the less funding from the state. Supplement for tenure track professors teaching lower level classes.
- Axillary budget: The largest portion is building maintenance, dorms, food, athletics, etc.
- Relationship of axillary budget to building space issues: need of lab space and classroom space when other building are underused. Axillary buildings are operated by axillary funds.
- Next building to be proposed: A COSET building
- Administration budget: A lot of O&M for the campus comes from that part of the budget.
- Possible red flags of financial health: careful watch of endowment accounts, spending, enrollments.

- College restructuring: budgets are largely stable, and colleges have contingency money, so a large shift in structures do not overly affect monies.
- Place in the system/merit: financially well placed. Recurring funds is a smaller pool (1% of merit is about \$1.5 million of central recurring funding). Limited state sources for recurring funds.
 - Question: How do we reconcile new large administrative roles, which are recurring: Ms. Withers will give senate chair a rundown of admin roles breakdown for the university.

Approval of Minutes

Jan 22, 2025 meeting approved.

Senate Committee Reports

University Affairs Committee

APS 250409 Polytechnic College

Committee chair explained the discussion of the additions to the policy, talked about a lack of clarity in those additions. Committee was concerned there was an unclear structure for workload, faculty promotion standards, the FTE, the review scale.

Discussion:

- What policies overlap or fit that can match the faculty standards at the university?
- How can we have an explanation of contact hours (vs. credit hours) in terms of workload?
- What is the relationship to industry professionals, who historically we were told would be the instructors, in terms of working outside SHSU, teaching load, etc.?
- What is the timeline for this intern policy?
- Where does it say it is interim?

Chair clarified the options: reject, accept, ask for clarity

Vote to reject: rejected

Vote to invite Dr. Hargrave: pass

New Business

- Senator N. Lantz: Discussion of proposal for policy on classroom management
 - Senator N. Lantz talked through some examples of what is happening in classrooms, conflicted information from deans, support from Dean of Students office and TLC, speech and behavior, how to frame conduct (over speech).
 - A policy that helped clarifies language that does not fall under free speech, disruptive behavior, clearer guidelines and definitions, how can faculty reasonably respond.
 - What institutions have policies we can draw from? What other industries to pull from? Look at Texas institutions and campus speech in Texas Bill of Rights.
 - Behavioral intervention at the university that can be called in?
 - Chair will investigate if/how senate could propose policy and other means for senate to define as reasonable action in classroom.
- Senators brought up the lack of access to the web pages, prospective students not seeing information and impacting recruitment.
 - Following up on that: Salesforce and grad applications.

Chair's Report

Senators with anonymous questions for our guests are welcome to email them to Chair in advance of the meeting, or Associate Chair or Secretary during the meeting.

H-1B visa freezes—Provost to speak with counsel about impact and senate should be aware of faculty impact.

Announcements

- Faculty Senate Reception with President Alisa White February 10
- Coffee and Conversation with President Alisa White February 19
- Send head shots to Kevin Crouch for the website

Adjournment: 4:59 PM.