

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

April 23, 2026
3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.
Austin Hall

Senators Present (24) Hosam Abdelhady (COM), Michael Arrington (CHSS), Traci Austin (COBA), Emma Bullock (COSET), Patrick Buzzini (CJ), Jennifer Child (CHSS), Kevin Crouch (Associate Chair), Magdalena Denham (CJ), Debbi Hatton (CAM), Owen Kelly (COM), 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), Erica Pasquini (COHS), Berna Rahi (CHS), Rebecca Wentworth (COE), Darren Williams (COSET), Willow Yang (COBA)

Senators Not Present (5): Robert Alvarez (CHSS), Miltonette Craig (CJ), Andy Noble (CAM), Erin Owens (NGL), Xiaobo Belle Wang (CHSS)

Call to Order

3:40 PM

Special Guests Comments and Q&A

- Senate Chair introduced Dr. Benjamin Mitchell-Yellin, Director of the Teaching and Learning Center; Dr. Chelsea Smith, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students; Dr. Gene Roberts, JD, Associate Dean of Students and Director, Student Legal & Mediation Services.
- Dr. Mitchell-Yellin talks about what he and Dr. Roberts are offering to departments in terms of classroom management. Email Dr. Mitchell-Yellin about scheduling department visits.
- CTL working with the Provost's Office and President's Office to create an August forum for classroom discussion/management and new state laws. Panel will include variety of representatives from campus offices (like HR, UPD, Legal, etc.). It would also include break out sessions. August 17th.
- Senator asked if there is a set document that could be created for people who cannot attend. Senator suggested that some of the material go into the student code of conduct.
- Dr. Roberts talked about tools and access points so the Dean of Students Office can assist in classroom management.
 - Focus reports on behavior, not speech and what someone says.
 - Everything needs documentation and supported for the Dean of Students Office to act.
 - Senator asked if repetition of speech is behavior. Yes, it can be if it meets student misconduct.
 - Submit incident forms, includes file uploads for videos/photos/documents: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?SamHoustonStateUniv&layout_id=5
 - The university asks for contact between faculty and student (can be email) that documents the disruptions and ask behavior shifts.
 - Dr. Smith explained the Dean of Students Office must have “notice” (i.e., email or in person communication) in order to move forward on student issues.
 - Attach communications to report.
 - It can take 5 days for response to process forms.
 - If there is a physical threat, they get expedited (but call UPD).
 - You can have other students listed as witnesses.

- The Dean of Students Office functions to intervene and help students improve (restorative).
- Make sure syllabus lists classroom management policies. Detailed on the SHSU intranet.
- Dr. Mitchell-Yellin made clear about asking a student to leave needs to be based on behavior, not speech. Alternatives are pausing class, ending class.
- Dr. Roberts explained that it is incredibly difficult for the Dean of Students Office (or anyone) to remove a student from a class.
- Sometimes the legal response from the Dean of Students Office is that they cannot share information.
- Senator asked about online teaching and muting students. It also must be conduct related. Address Zoom speaking in the syllabus. Dr. Mitchell-Yellin offered a way to respond and talked about setting up standards with students at beginning of term.
- Senator asked about gendered aggressive/insulting language and if it is Title IX. The Dean of Students Office would rather have it reported than not.
- Dr. Smith said reporting/student meeting is often a deterrent.
- Senator asked about faculty training and Dr. Mitchell-Yellin asked for ideas and explained they are working on more information sharing.

Approval of Minutes

April 9 meeting approved

Senate Committee reports

1. Academic Affairs: APS 980204, Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty (vote)
 - Senator committee chair summarized policy discussion and asked for insights from faculty.
 - Senator asked about numerical standards and averages.
 - Departments likely will need to make rubrics if they do not have one.
 - Where did the number 3 come from?
 - Senators talked through the development of the policy and how it can help some standards.
 - Pushing for averages of numbers to capture a particular situation/year. But it can limit ability to deal with a serious concern in one area.
 - Chair clarified the policy on voting on policies in senate.
 - Senator asked about 3.01 and senators offered some comment about how the policy creates a trigger for improvement plans.
 - Vote: motion passes
2. Committee on Committees: update on Committee Preference Survey, Faculty Perception Survey
 - The committee preference is out, so push colleagues to fill out.
 - Fold in the website question as a standard continued question on the survey.

Announcements

Please send any nominations for next year's Associate Chair to Audrey Murfin before next week's meeting.

Next week's special guests: Jamilyn White, Director of Faculty Records and Reporting; Eric Owen, University Librarian; Mauri Smith, Director of Digital and Analytics

Upcoming meetings:

April 27: Senators Murfin and Crouch with Dr. Yenduri

April 28: Senators Murfin and Crouch with Dr. Gaillard

Adjournment: 5:00 PM.