

University Faculty Senate Minutes October 17, 2002

Members present: Terry Bilhartz, Mary Lynn DeShazo, Mary Gutermuth, Deborah Hatton, David Henderson, Joan Hudson, Ann Jerabek, Gerald Kohers, Valerie Muehsam, Debra Price, Sam Sullivan, Kandi Tayebi, Gene Young

Member absent: Bill Abbott (personal), Joanne Ardovini-Brooker (grant writing), Leonard Breen, Ted Creighton, Marsha Harman (grant writing), Jeff Harwell (professional conflict), Penny Hasekoester (professional conflict), Joe Kirk (class conflict), Paul Loeffler (grant writing), Holly Miller (class conflict), Victoria Titterington (class conflict), Tamara Waggener (grant writing)

Processes Relating to Faculty Senate Questions

Guest speaker, Dr. David Payne, Vice President for Academic Affairs, answered questions the Faculty Senate raised about processes concerning the following items: Summer Grant Changes, Online Evaluations, TSUS Distance Learning Guidelines, Internal Guidelines for Faculty Compensation on Distance Education, and the Promotion and Tenure Policy. He stated that the administration wants to maximize faculty input.

Summer Grant Changes

Dr. Payne explained the process that was used to develop the new summer grant policy. On April 26, an ad hoc committee formed by Gordon Plishker and composed of the University Research Council*, Robert Rice and Dick Eglsaer met all day to make recommendations on changes to the research enhancement program. On May 22 and June 26 the deans discussed the proposal and forwarded it to APC. On August 7, the APC unanimously approved the proposal. Since the proposal was passed during the summer and the Faculty Senate did not have a chance to discuss the proposal and make recommendations, Chair Muehsam expressed concerns to Dr. Payne. A new proposal to address those concerns was made by Dr. Payne on September 23.

Online Evaluations

The standing Faculty Evaluation Committee studied the issue for almost one year and made a recommendation to Dr. Payne on July 23 that all evaluations be online. The proposal was discussed informally through the summer with each dean and the Faculty Senate leadership. On September 11, the proposal was discussed at the Council of Academic Deans and met with disagreement. One dean had major disagreements and two deans expressed concerns regarding implementation. On September 25, the Council of Academic Deans agreed to charge the committee with developing a strategy for implementation of online evaluations. Dr. Payne agreed that the implementation plan would come back through the Faculty Senate and through APC before approval.

TSUS Distance Learning Guidelines

The request for changes in the guidelines was an annual request from the Board of Regents. The change actually helped get faculty compensated, which was not possible under the old guidelines. Dr. Payne saw the guidelines as favorable to faculty and therefore did not foresee concerns.

Internal Guidelines for Faculty Compensation on Distance Education

The discussion on faculty compensation for distance education began with a request to compensate a faculty member in the College of Business Administration. The Council of Academic Deans recommended forming a committee to study distance education guidelines for compensation on August 23, 2000. The committee was composed of Brian Chapman, Robert Bruce, Steve Cuvelier, James Van Roekel, and Mitch Roth. Dean Chapman sent draft guidelines based on feedback from faculty, including a memo sent from Jim Olson, to the committee for comment. In March, discussions were held with a faculty focus group involved in distance education. On July 26, 2001, James Van Roekel sent all teaching faculty an e-mail with the proposal asking for comments. Although consensus could not be reached by CAD, the proposal was sent forward to the APC in order to pass an interim policy. Because of SACS, an interim policy was adopted on October 15 at APC with the stipulation that the policy would continue to undergo examination. The Faculty Senate is currently looking at the proposal.

Promotion and Tenure Policy

In September 2001, President Gaertner recommended revising the tenure and promotion policies. The Council of Academic Deans recommended forming a committee to develop a draft. The committee was composed of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dean Chapman, Bill Fleming, and Valerie Muehsam. The draft was discussed in the Council of Academic Deans and the APC and approved for distributing to faculty for input. The Faculty Senate is currently analyzing the document for recommendations. Discussion on the policy will continue until at least March 2003.

Restructuring of Colleges

Dr. Payne stated that the forums and input from faculty on the restructuring of the colleges has been productive. A decision on which proposal to accept will be made around Christmas. Final decision on whether the plan can be implemented will have to wait until after the budget is finalized.

Questions from Senators

Senators expressed concern that Faculty Senate recommendations are ignored resulting in a top-down governance. The example used for this was the online evaluation system. Chair Muehsam explained that the Faculty Senate had rejected online evaluations because of problems with implementation. The problem of implementation is being examined by the committee now. Dr. Payne stated that Faculty Senate recommendations are considered along with other recommendations.

Senators asked whether committees must bring recommendations to the Faculty Senate before taking them before the APC. Chair Muehsam explained that there are no procedures for this.

Senators expressed concern that important issues were developed during the summer session. Dr. Mary Gutermuth stated that the Faculty Senate can meet in the summer for substantive issues that need action. Dr. Payne stated that the day-to-day stresses during the academic year make it impossible to deal with all issues, so summer is used to

complete bigger projects. He stated that policies are inherently different now than in the past. Before, clear policies were passed with the intention that they wouldn't change. Now, policies are passed that may change even within two weeks. Change is a positive and constant process.

Senators discussed the summer grant changes, reiterating that the old summer grant program was a good program that helped recruit young faculty. The summer grants also helped faculty produce books, which allowed them to secure federal funding now. Dr. Payne stated that the funds were initially meant to be used to secure more grants and that the Closing the Gaps initiative affected how the funds needed to be used.

Hiring Procedures

Senators asked whether the university has a policy regarding appointments of deans. Senators expressed concern that deans, chairs, and faculty were being appointed without searches. It was decided that the Faculty Senate would look at the policies regarding appointments. Dr. Payne agreed to raise the issue of hiring practices at the Council of Deans. He stated that chairs serve at the discretion of deans.

Senators asked how merit was decided for chairs and other administrators. Dr. Payne stated that merit varies from college to college, but that he looks at merit recommendations to insure there is no gender and racial discrimination.

Dr. Payne agreed to meet with the senators who were unable to attend due to the grant writing workshop.

Chair's Report

Chair Muehsam reported that she met with President Gaertner to discuss the report on reduction in teaching load. Dr. Gaertner indicated that he supported a reduction in teaching load for those faculty actively involved in research. The President also indicated that he would appoint the ad hoc committee to study the issue and that he believed it was a good possibility that we could make this a reality at SHSU.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of October 3, 2002 were not approved because a quorum was not present by the end of the meeting.

Future Business

The Faculty Senate will need to recommend guidelines for the additional research funds set aside to continue the old grant program.

Respectfully submitted,

Kandi Tayebi, Chair-Elect

*The University Research Council consisted of Alessandro Bonanno (Dean nominee) Arts and Sciences, Sanjay Mehta (Faculty Senate nominee) Business Administration,

James Marquet (Faculty Senate nominee) Criminal Justice, Sylvia Taube (Dean nominee) Education and Applied Science, Benny Arney (Faculty Senate nominee) Arts and Sciences, Charles Friel (Dean nominee) Criminal Justice, William Kilbourne (Dean nominee) Business Administration, Beverly Irby (Faculty Senate nominee) Education and Applied Science, Balasundram Maniam (Faculty Senate nominee) Business Administration, and Christopher Wilson (Faculty Senate nominee) Education and Applied Science.