

## **Faculty Senate Minutes**

**February 9, 2005**

**Senators Present:** Jim Carter; Stacey Edmonson; Mark Frank; Mary Gutermuth; Marsha Harman; Deborah Hatton; David Henderson; Lady Jane Hickey; Joan Hudson; Gerald Kohers; Tom Kordinak; Paul Loeffler; Bill Lutterschmidt; Holly Miller; Philip Morris; Valerie Muehsam; Christopher White; Patricia Williams.

**Senators Absent:** David Bailey (professional conflict); Christopher Baldwin (professional conflict); Steven Cuvelier (professional conflict); Peggy DeMers (professional conflict); Jim DeShaw (professional conflict); Joe Kirk (professional conflict); Debra price (professional conflict); Gary Smith (professional conflict).

Chair Harman called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Chair Kohers reported from the Committee on Committees that the Committee Preference Forms would be sent to the Faculty soon. After some discussion, Senator Hickey moved that the preference forms be sent as e-mail and hard copy. The motion was passed with an amendment that Departments also receive one hard copy so that faculty could have additional access to the preference forms if for some reason they had not received them in one of the other formats.

Chair Kohers also noted that there are four new committees: Ring Committee; Faculty Diversity Committee; Underrepresented Minority Faculty Populations Committee; Women's Advisory Committee, Faculty.

Chair Harman reported to the Senate that the revised/new FES policy passed the APC on Feb. 2, 2005 and that the Faculty Senate had successfully worked with Provost Payne, Vice President Muehsam, Dean Brown, and the other Deans to draft a new FES policy that fairly represents the point of view of all members of the University community and one that should provide a fair and accurate measure of faculty performance.

Senators noted that recent changes in the FES policy include an increase in the percentage awarded for service.

The four course workload now counts service as 25% (equal to the other categories) and the three course workload now counts service as 20%. It is obviously important for all faculty to include service in their work schedules.

All Faculty members are encouraged to become acquainted with the revised FES policy as soon as possible.

The Faculty Senate once again addressed questions of Faculty reporting grades to students in a timely manner. The Senate noted that in a recent survey of Chairs, and in a recent examination of student evaluation forms, there is no data to indicate that there is a

current problem with the timely reporting of grades. However, the Senate agreed that students should receive feedback on grades within a reasonable time and that faculty should continually examine their policies regarding grading feedback to ensure that they are making every effort to provide students with appropriate and timely feedback. The Senate also determined that this is not a current problem and that there is no need for further attention to this matter at this point in time.

Chair Harman also reported that a revised Faculty Grievance Policy was passed by APC on Feb. 2, 2005. Chair Harman noted that one last minute change was made to the document that had been previously presented to the Faculty Senate. That change allows the University President to select all five members of the Grievance Hearing Committees from the pool of sixteen faculty members serving on the Faculty Grievance Committee.

The Faculty Senate voiced objections to this last minute change noting that the function of the Faculty Grievance Committee is quasi-judicial and consequently more effort should be made to ensure not only the objectivity of the Hearing Committees but also the appearance of objectivity as well.

Chair Harman reported that there is some concern that SHSU Faculty do not score as highly as they should on surveys of Faculty student engagement/interactions. Senators noted that there are several reasons for that outcome, one of which is a more honest reporting of Faculty activities at SHSU than sometimes occurs at other schools. Senators acknowledged that this is an area where Faculty might be able to do a better job, although there is also a belief that much of SHSU faculty student interaction is going unreported, and that with the stronger emphasis on service in the new FES policy Faculty have an additional incentive to ensure that their work with students is reported and recorded appropriately.

The Senate then engaged in a relatively lengthy discussion of the new IDEA student evaluation system.

Several Senators noted that errors had occurred in this first test of the new system.

Some faculty members did not receive all of their evaluations back and some faculty members were scored incorrectly on all objectives rather than only on those that should have been identified as essential or important.

There was also a general feeling that students did not “like” the new forms, but there is a possibility that this student reaction may have been a result of having to fill out two evaluation forms this year.

Senators also noted that there was little if any effort to provide a standardized presentation of the IDEA forms to students and that more effort should be made to control the environment within which the forms are filled out.

Senators recommended that Faculty receive the IDEA forms within a time frame that allows reasonable flexibility for the faculty to provide them to students in an appropriate relationship to other activities in a course, i.e. tests, finals, class reports, presentations etc.

Senators also recommended that procedures at the departmental level be formalized so that each faculty member and each departmental Chair and Secretary can have an adequate record of when IDEA forms are administered and received back into the departmental office. There should also be a more formalized process for faculty to determine the essential and important objectives of the course so that an accurate student evaluation for each course can be provided to faculty.

Chair Harman reported that the search for a new Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences will be continued through next year and that Interim Dean Thibodeaux will more than likely continue as acting Dean during the continued search process.

Committee on Committees Chair Kohers offered five nominations for the parking Appeals Committee and all nominations were accepted to be sent to the President.

Senator Kohers suggested that it may be time for the University to review the current and longstanding promotion stipend amounts.

Senator Edmonson noted the need for faculty to be aware of the recent number of property thefts taking place across campus and for faculty to be particularly alert and careful in helping to protect University property.

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:55 p.m. for a reception with Administrators sponsored by the Faculty Senate to celebrate the cooperative work on the new FES and Grievance policies.

Respectfully Submitted

Jim Carter