

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

2 April 2020

3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Via Zoom

Present: Yuan Zhao (COM); Maria Botero (CHSS); Siham Bouamer (CHSS); Nick Lantz (CHSS); Benjamin Park (CHSS); Stephen Rapp (CHSS); Natalie Baker (COCJ); Bobby LaRue (COCJ); Donald Bumpass (COBA); Jan Taylor Morris (COBA); Jaime Durán (COE); Daphne Johnson (COE); Mary Petró (COE); Susan Skidmore (COE); Nancy Stockall (COE); Brandy Doleshal (COSET); Dwayne Pavelock (COSET); Damon Hay (COSET); Samuel Adu-Prah (COSET); John Lane (CAM); Carolyn Moore (CAM); Valencia Browning-Keen (COHS); Marianne Moore (COHS); Kevin Randall (COHS); Michael Hanson (Library); Lee Miller (CHSS); Mason Storrs (Houstonian).

Absent: Vlad Radoias (COBA); Kyle Stutts (COSET); Debbi Hatton (CAM); Kevin Clifton (CAM);

Called to Order.

3:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes.

Motion to approve March 19 minutes made by Hay. Second by Petró.

No discussion. Minutes approved.

Chair's Report.

SHSU staff member's positive test for COVID-19; HIPPA compliance.

Remember HIPPA compliance. County health departments are responsible for notifying people who came into contact with infected person. Since the employee lives in another county, both county health departments should have been notified. It is okay to advise people that someone they may have had contact with has tested positive if the infected person is not named.

Letter from Provost

Received March 25. Most everyone did receive it. (One exception.)

Tolling of tenure clock due to disruption of pandemic is optional. Staff yearly evaluations are canceled. No determination has been made about merit.

Letter grades will continue; not pass/fail.

IDEA course evaluations are canceled. There is no opt in option.

A different survey about online transition – we will see questions. The new instrument will NOT be used to evaluate faculty.

PACE is pulling together questions. Faculty Senate should see the draft.

Concerns that this will be used as IDEA scores have been used.

Provost is expecting Chairs and DPTACS will be understanding about faculty productivity during this time.

DPTAC perspective – challenging to weigh how COVID has impacted research comparatively. Allowing people a year option seems reasonable.

Suggestion that Senate reach out to DPTACs in the fall to check in about the process of evaluating people for 2020 teaching and research productivity.

Whether or not tenure clock should be tolled depends on type of research. Some can continue, others need labs, schools, etc. Research is discipline dependent and is also affected by personal situation.

Federal regulations are coming out to help clarify how evaluations should occur in some disciplines.

Once faculty make a decision to toll the tenure clock, how do they communicate the decision?

Faculty members should communicate their decision to their Chair and Dean.

What are the roles of the Chair and the Dean? The sense from Council of Chairs is that Chairs will grant any request.

Deans will be expected to grant requests.

It should be a quick process involving the completion of a form (like maternity leave).

Once consideration is that DPTAC decisions are based on sustained record of scholarship, not on one year, so the pandemic disruption may not have a major impact for some faculty members' productivity.

Student Government response to continuation of letter grades. The official student feedback is that they wanted an opt-in pass/fail option. Note that faculty also preferred this solution, but the message is that IT is unable to adapt our systems in time for that to happen.

Faculty notes that we were able to put all courses online in one week. Why can't this happen quickly?

Students will receive an explanation from the Provost about the decision.

Comment that technical limitations of IT shape how we teach. Is it a matter of IT writing a program?

Makes the academic advisory committee to IT even more important. Update on creation of committee: form to create the committee was completed. IT signed off, now in approval cue with Academic Affairs.

Faculty preference form includes a place for faculty to indicate interest in serving. We do have a liaison, Bobby LaRue, so we can communicate concerns to him at the moment.

CJ Dean is still talking about the possibility that pass/fail may still exist.

Meanwhile, the SHSU Online committee remains inactive.

Re-engagement alert update

What do students who lack hardware or connectivity do?

Faculty were sent an email March 26th – re-engagement alert. Set up a system whereby faculty identify students who had not returned since spring break to the Academic Success Center (ASC). Staff and peer mentors at the ASC then contacted students who had not re-engaged. This system closed on April 1st.

Computer centers are open. Loaner laptops available.

If you know of students still experiencing hardships, send an email to Brian Loft.

Mary Catherine Breen came to departmental meeting in COE to explain system to connect with students who are experiencing difficulties.

Suggestion to provide faculty who may be first time BlackBoard users with specific instructions about how to check whether students are engaging.

Need for expansion of assistance to students.

Question about how message was sent out. Faculty reported receiving it through the Deans and Chairs.

Faculty member in CAM reports not receiving Provost's letter.

Questions about why it was sent through so many people rather than direct emails.

Emails this important should come straight from Provost – cut out middlemen.

Clarification on freezing of faculty searches/service requirements.

Most frozen, but some were further along and those searches are continuing. Most critical positions going forward.

Lantz asks about searches that were already finished are not in danger, right? If offer was already extended, those are not in danger.

Finances are fine for now, but no one knows what fall enrollment will look like.

Reports that travel money was "taken." Ask for clarification.

We are still going to pursue questions about finances. Asking COBA for questions.

Suggestion: ask Carlos to come speak with faculty senate.

Report that the international studies money has not been returned. Housing money refunds are coming, so why is departmental money being taken?

Presidential search.

Presidential profile document and word cloud circulated.

Note that the feedback from Faculty Senate and from survey indicated that we want a President who is academically inclined. Large concern that the profile is not highlighting academics.

Document does not reflect academics to senate's satisfaction. Consensus was that the word cloud presentation was insufficient information about *how* feedback was incorporated into the profile.

Consensus is to request that all information from survey be made available to search committee to inform the questions and the remainder of the search process: a sole candidate will be announced, brought to campus during the 21-day public review process, portions of campus visit will be live streamed, input collected, after 21 days the appointment will be confirmed.

Proposed Faculty Review policies.

Will be worked on, but not now. Feedback from town halls has not been given to committee.

Faculty committee will be a part of the process when it is reactivated.

Perception Survey

Thank you to Brandy. Responses totaled 437 last Brandy looked. 54 in progress.

Looks like we have a decent return rate.

Reminder to complete it.

Discussion is scheduled for the April 16 meeting AFTER election.

Online discussion of perceptions survey is a challenge because of the comments section. Michael will share screen to avoid distribution of a PDF, please do not record. As always, you may take notes.

Reminder that copies of survey results are given to Chair, Chair-Elect, and Chair of Committee on Committees and people can refer to it during the year, may take notes.

Invitation to meeting on April 30. We hope not to have need it. It is such a fluid time, please save the date. We just don't know if we will need it.

Senate Chair-Election.

Walk through process: nominations accepted until April 9 at 5:00pm; slate circulated by April 10. If people nominated would like to produce written statements, those should be sent to Chair by Monday, April 13.

Election will take place at next faculty senate meeting on April 16.

Qualtrics survey secret ballot ready to go. Senators must have device that will allow them to participate in election. Chair will conduct the survey and announce the winners.

Will send out email with each step of the election.

Nominations.

One nomination – Damon Hay (COSET), accepted nomination.

Others: LaRue nominates Brandy Doleshal (COSET);

Brandy appreciates the nomination but declines saying that she can't accept right now.

Nominations will be taken until Thursday, April 9.

If you send in a nomination, please contact the nominee.

Guidelines for statements

Suggestions: Short. Spoken statements on April 16 – up to 5 minutes;

Written – no more than one page, 12-point font, submitted to Chair on April 13 for distribution;

Hanson moves that we accept guidelines for election statements as described.

Stockall seconds.

Friendly amendment: Candidates may choose either spoken or written statements or both.

Guidelines passed.

Question: Is this process for this election or for forever? Forever would require changes to Bylaws and Charter (2/3 vote of faculty) need to be revised. On the docket for the next year or two.

Morris moves to adjourn. Browning-Keen seconds. **Adjournment: 4:50 PM**