

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

5 December 2013  
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Austin Hall

**Members present:**

Nancy Baker (CHSS); Tracy Bilsing (CHSS); Jonathan Breazeale (COBA); Don Bumpass (COBA); Kevin Clifton (COFAMC); James Crosby (CHSS); Mark Frank (COBA); Randall Garner (COCJ); Richard Henriksen (COE); Joan Hudson (COS); C. Renée James (COS); Mark Klespis (COS); James Landa (CHSS); Hayoung Lim (COFAMC); Paul Loeffler (COS); Dennis Longmire (COCJ); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (COFAMC); Diana Nabors (COE); Lisa Shen (NGL); Stacy Ulbig (CHSS); Mary Anne Vincent (COHS); Anthony Watkins (COFAMC); Matteo (IT) was also present. Jeff Littlejohn (CHSS); David McTier (COFAMC); Doug Ullrich (COS); Pam Zelbst (COBA)

**Members not present:** Helen Berg (COE); Madhusudan Choudhary (COS); Donna Cox (COE); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Debra Price (COE); on leave: Tom Cox (CHSS).

**Called to order:** 3:30 p.m. in Austin Hall by Chair Renee James

**Special Guest:** Jacob Chandler

**Approval of minutes:** November 7 minutes approved.

**Chair's Report**

**Academic Calendar**

Dr. James updated the Senate on the question of whether SHSU could start two days earlier in the fall and thus cancel the two days of class held Thanksgiving week. Dr. James informed the Senate that there is no problem with starting the fall semester on a Monday, rather than a Wednesday (as is currently the case). However, SHSU counts semester class hours by weeks AND hours – so, if SHSU cancels Thanksgiving week classes, we will be one week short of the number of weeks necessary for a full semester.

A senator asked if SHSU could align its calendar with other universities' and colleges' calendars, in which they count weeks (including finals week as one of their weeks). A different senator responded by saying that SHSU used to count hours only, but now SHSU counts hours and weeks. The question rose: could SHSU complete its alignment with other Texas colleges' and universities' calendars, by counting only weeks?

Special guest Jacob Chandler volunteered that the fall semester start date was moved from Monday to Wednesday in order to accommodate students' need to handle administrative or registration-related tasks on the first day of class. Dr. James pointed out

that the students now do this on the first day of class anyway, regardless of what day of the week it is.

### **FES and IDEA**

Dr. James announced that the Faculty Evaluation Committee is going to draft a new FES policy.

Dr. Longmire said that the Faculty Evaluation Committee is busy revising FES 1 (Chair's Rating of Teaching Effectiveness) and FES 2 (Student Rating of Teaching Effectiveness) to more closely correspond with feedback received during the university-wide meetings held in the Fall semester. Dr. Longmire also reports that the provost is planning on holding another series of Town Meetings during the Spring to vote on options for a new FES 1. Once revision of the FES 1 is complete, the provost has asked to have the committee consider how to word guidelines on "collegiality."

The issue of collegiality keeps coming up, Dr. James stated. She reminded everyone that the provost does not want collegiality to be quantified (numerical scores). The provost wants guidelines.

Dr. James told the senators that the provost has said that the tenure and promotion policy is repetitive, contradictory and disorganized, and will need refining and clarifying.

Dr. James mentioned that she had been asked if the Tenure and Promotion policy had changed recently. She informed the senators that the change that has occurred is that the new college (the College of Health Sciences) has been included in the policy, and also Dance and Theater will be split into two separate tenure units, rather than one.

### **Non-Disclosure Agreement**

Dr. James invited Jacob Chandler to speak about the current status of the NDA. Chandler said that the e-mail that went out re: NDA in effect "retired" the old version of the NDA training, so the new version of the NDA could be sent out. The new NDA training will be available to people who did not complete the old training. If you did complete the old training, you will have to self-register for the new training to replace the old training. The new training will be available very soon.

### **Overload Policy**

Dr. James reported that Faculty Affairs looked at the overload policy last year and collected survey data. The data the deans have provided to the provost does not match what the faculty provided via the survey. The provost has asked the Council of Academic Deans to look at why the two numbers do not match and to reconcile them. Once the data has been clarified, the Faculty Senate can move forward with standardizing how to assign and compensate overloads across campus.

### **Pressure to conform**

Some concerned faculty members have raised the issue of pressure being put on faculty to contribute to SHSU's Annual Fund. Dr. James asked the senators if they had

experienced undue pressure. One senator said her department has more adjuncts than tenured/tenure-track faculty, but the adjuncts are counted as faculty who do not give (despite their obvious financial hardship). Another senator said his department sends harassing e-mails insisting on 100% faculty giving. Several senators said the data is used as a talking point in lobbying the State Legislature and in the *US News and World Report* ranking of universities. Another senator suggested the university offer a parking rebate dollar-for-dollar in the amount of contributions to the Annual Fund.

### **Fines for Late IDEA evaluations**

Dr. James announced that the provost said no faculty will be fined for lateness in submitting IDEA evaluations, contrary to what one faculty member was told.

### **Developmental Leave Policy**

Dr. James sent everyone the Developmental Leave Policy. However, the policy is now a moot issue because the policy went to the Academic Policy Council and Dr. James was informed that we cannot remove the section on benefits that Faculty Senate wanted to remove. According to SHSU's interpretation of state law, if you are off for a full semester, full-time, your benefits are covered by SHSU. If you are working half-time and off half-time for a year, then you must cover your own benefits entirely.

As Faculty Senate requested, only the leaves the Faculty Development Leave committee approves will be called a Faculty Development Leave; if the deans wish to fund someone's leave that was not approved by the committee, it will not be called a Faculty Development Leave. Fulbrights and other leaves will not be called Faculty Developmental Leave, but instead alternative leave.

A senator said that the Faculty Development Leave committee is currently filled with people chosen by faculty vote (and we get low turn-out in faculty voting), whereas other, similar committees are chosen by appointment. This senator asked if the Faculty Senate could change the Faculty Development Leave committee's staffing to appointment, not vote. A different senator asked why we need this change. The senator who raised the issue said people tend to vote along departmental or college lines. Discussion ensued. It was decided to wait a year and see how the process in place works this year and whether the issue should be revisited next year.

As soon as Dr. James gets the current version of the policy, she will send it out to Faculty Senate for review.

### **New Business**

#### **Defunct or Non-functional Committees**

There are many university committees that exist but do not meet for one reason or another (example: no chair, no one calling a meeting, no assigned tasks to do).

Some committees' chairs are appointed, and some chairs must be elected by the committee members. The latter is a particular problem if the chair is the one to call the meetings, as the committee must meet before they have a chair who can call a meeting. The Standing Tenure committee is one that is having a problem calling a meeting.

A senator suggested that perhaps having a chair and a chair-elect of all committees would prevent this problem.

Another senator said that there are committees that do not meet unless there is an issue in need of addressing; perhaps this why some do not meet regularly.

One senator asked where a complete list of committees can be found, including who is on them and what the description is for each committee's purpose. Dr. James said the Academic Affairs Committee Book lists all of this information.

### **Committee on Committees Report**

Three items need attention.

The Excellence in Service committee is in need of a new member, as one of the members has left SHSU. The Committee on Committees would like to recommend Donovan Hines as the replacement member for that committee. The Senate approved this unanimously.

There are two proposed new committees the Committee on Committees would like the Senate to approve.

After a brief discussion, the Senate approved the new Online Course Development Support Committee with 24 ayes, 1 no, 0 abstentions.

The Computer and Technology Standards Committee has been proposed to provide an avenue for formal feedback from faculty university-wide to advise IT on purchasing technology for faculty. The senators discussed the advantages and disadvantages to having such a committee. A senator asked if there is a general advisory committee on technology in general; Jacob Chandler says yes, but it has lost some members and has not met in a long while. (Chandler referenced the IT Project Planning Council and the IT Governance Council. The two are listed, but one is more recent than the other, and neither one is meeting.)

Changes were proposed to the language of the Computer and Technology Standards Committee proposal ("effective communication **on** faculty concerns" should be changed to "effective communication **of** faculty concerns" and "include one faculty member" should be "include **at least** one faculty member"). The Senate voted to approve the new Computer and Technology Standards Committee with a vote of 22 ayes, 1 no, 2 abstentions.

Dr. Mary Anne Vincent mentioned that there exists a Teaching, Learning, and Technology Group (TLT Group) that was started 20 years ago and has since become a

global, non-profit organization for professors to explore what kinds of IT materials would be useful for their organizations. SHSU can get a subscription to this group; this could be useful for the committee advising IT purchases.

Dr. Vincent suggested the following websites for those who are interested in learning more about the TLT Group:

<http://tltgroup.org/about/history.htm>

<http://tltgroup.org/subscribing.htm>

[http://tltgroup.org/Flashlight/FL\\_subscriber\\_materials.htm](http://tltgroup.org/Flashlight/FL_subscriber_materials.htm)

A senator asked what one does when a Blackboard listing of classes and instructors needs to be updated (in the example cited, the faculty lists include dead people and people who have left SHSU). Another senator recommended that Stacy Scott of DELTA be contacted for help with this.

The Committee on Committees asked if the Archives Committee could be disbanded. The Archives Committee has not met since 2003. This committee is on the Committee Book, but Faculty Senate does not recommend people to be appointed to the committee. Dr. Shen, the chair of the Committee on Committees, said that the purpose of the committee was originally to develop archiving standards and collection policies, which have been done. There is a Library Advisory Committee that could fulfill whatever purpose the Archives Committee might have. Dr. Littlejohn opposed this idea. He explained that the archives are having problems right now: the hours are much too short for full use (1-5 daily, no weekend hours), and there are multiple staff members. Dr. Jeff Littlejohn would be willing to meet with the Archives Committee to discuss concerns re: the hours of operation, and the need for active recruitment of new collections to be acquired from the local community. (Current members of the Archive Committee include: Dr. James Olson, chair; an archivist; a director of the Physical Plant; the director of the Sam Houston Memorial Museum; and the chair of the Walker County Historical Commission.) Dr. Jeff Littlejohn and Dr. Nancy Baker will talk to Dr. Olson about the Archive Committee.

### **The Faculty Senate Website**

A senator asked if the Faculty Senate website is up-to-date. Dr. James reported that pieces of it are updated, while other parts need to be updated. Dr. James said if you go to the Faculty Senate listing on the Committee Book, you will see that the chair is listed as Debbi Hatton and the list of senators is outdated; Graduate Studies is supposed to maintain this list. It needs to be updated. The first senator asked why Graduate Studies is in charge of updating the Committee Book, and Jacob Chandler said he thought it was simply assigned to the Graduate Studies Vice President as part of their portfolio of responsibilities.

Dr. James stated that she needs to talk to Karen Whitney to get updated merit pay statistics for the website.

**Intellectual Property**

An open meeting of the Faculty Affairs Committee with Rhonda Beassie, our SHSU lawyer, regarding intellectual property rights and other legal issues will occur on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 1:00.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:59 pm.

*Revised 02-03-2014 10:55 am*