FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY
February 14, 2013
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Austin Hall

Members present:
Nancy Baker (H&SS); Tracy Bilsing (H&SS); Don Bumpass (COBA); Donna Cox (COE); Tom Cox (H&SS); James Crosby (H&SS); Diane Dowdey (H&SS); Mark Frank (COBA); Randall Garner (CJ); Debbi Hatton (H&SS); Richard Henriksen (COE); C. Renée James (COS); Bill Jasper (COS); Gerald Kohers (COBA); Paul Loeffler (COS); Dennis Longmire (CJ); Joyce McCauley (COE); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (FA&MC); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Debra Price (COE); Lisa Shen (NGL); Tracy Steele (H&SS); Stacy Ulbig (H&SS); Doug Ullrich (COS); Walton Watkins (FA&MC); Ricky White (COS); Pam Zelbst (COBA)

Members not present: Helen Berg (COE); Kevin Clifton (FA&MC); Joan Hudson (COS); Hayoung Lim (FA&MC)

Called to order: 3:30 p.m. in Austin Hall by Chair Tracy Steele

Special Guests: Dean John de Castro, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, to discuss proposed to revisions to the Faculty Development Leave policy; Dean Michael Lacourse, Allied Health

Dean deCastro prefaced by stating that he thought that faculty development leaves are extremely important in encouraging and maintaining faculty scholarship, and he does not feel that SHSU does enough to assist faculty in this regard. The changes in the policy were, he said, an attempt to help more faculty kick-start scholarly activities, complete major projects, or even take their research into a different direction. However, there is a problem with funding. SHSU has historically funded only four or five leaves, which simply doesn't meet the needs for a faculty our size.

Dean deCastro then went point by point through the proposed policy changes (see attached). Major changes include 2.01b, which shortens the eligibility period to five years from seven between leaves. There was concern that the "5-year" condition meant that untenured faculty could be awarded a development leave the year before coming up for tenure, but the guidelines stipulate that faculty must be tenured faculty, clinical faculty, or professional librarians.

Section 2.02 was set up to allow colleges to fund leaves, thus allowing us to go beyond the limited resources that university provides.

Section 2.03 was altered to require the Faculty Development Leave committee to have representatives from each college so that different types of scholarly activity had a voice. Senators pointed out, though, that members of the committee are elected, and it is possible (even likely) that nobody will be nominated from a particular college. The response was that colleges need to be more persuasive in getting faculty to put their names forward for this committee.

Another major change in the policy was abbreviating the calendar. Historically, leaves have not been approved until the upcoming fall schedule was settled on. This made it quite difficult for department chairs to offer and cover scheduled courses. Accelerating the time line also gives the deans a chance to look at proposals that they support, but that were not funded by the university. Section 3.02g outlines how deans can supplement leaves for faculty members who did not make the cut.

Faculty Senate noted that there was a typo in section 3.01, which should state that administrative officers have only seven days to forward documentation, not fourteen. This should be fixed.

Dean deCastro reiterated that those who are eligible to apply are enumerated in section 2.01a. This list does include chairs and associate deans, who still have to perform scholarly activities for promotion. Administrative duties necessarily take away from this scholarship, so this gives those faculty members the opportunity to pursue scholarship while maintaining an administrative role.

Another major change is found in section 6.07. Historically, if a faculty member took a 50% full-year leave, this meant losing university benefits, a penalty that dissuaded many faculty members from applying for the full leave. However, the change in policy indicates that all benefits normally covered for a faculty member will be covered.

There are a few sections (notably the current 6.12 and 6.13) that allow for short-term discretionary leaves, such as grants or fellowships or other unique opportunities that might arise for a faculty member. These are SEPARATE from the Faculty Development Leave Process. Faculty members receiving, for example, a Fulbright would not go through this process, but instead through a less well-defined process that is unrelated to the one outlined in this policy. It was suggested that other short term leaves not falling under the FDL umbrella be explicitly mentioned in the first paragraph or even given their own policy.

A number of concerns were voiced by Faculty Senate, and Dean deCastro responded to them. The makeup of the FDL committee, might be fairer if all colleges and the library were represented. While this suggestion seems reasonable on paper, it becomes problematic in practice, however, because FDL committee members are elected by the general faculty. It is unclear exactly how we could ensure at least one member from each academic unit.

A question about allowing clinical faculty, but not untenured faculty, to apply for leaves generated a lengthy discussion about the exact target for this policy. Several senators suggested that allowing clinical faculty this particular type of leave would take away from tenured faculty. In addition, the one-year nature of a clinical faculty member's contract could become problematic should SHSU choose not to rehire that faculty member the next year. Dean deCastro indicated that he is in favor of removing the word "tenured" in 2.01a, opening the door to untenured faculty as well.

For leaves not already specified under the Faculty Development Leave policy, Senate asked who is responsible for initiating such leaves, and how faculty members who are not qualified for this leave would know that there are even other leave processes available to them.

In response to the concern that the "widening of the umbrella" to include leaves for untenured and clinical faculty, as well as leaves unrelated to Faculty Development Leaves, Senate pointed out that the policy was a response to legislative action to address absences from campus. Dean deCastro agreed that the policy was created in response to that code, but such a response does not mean that it cannot encompass additional leaves.

Another concern was that the current rewrite of policy indicates that deans are able to fund some proposals that are not funded by the University. The FDL committee ranks all proposals as "high recommend," "recommend," or "do not recommend," so the question was whether deans could override a "do not recommend" for faculty members that they simply favor. However, it was pointed out that any recommendations that Deans make AFTER the University leaves are granted must still be approved by the Provost. Thus the deans would not be personally selecting additional leave-awardees. In fact, the Provost still has full discretion to grant leaves via Section 2.04 for faculty members who appeal a

rejection. It was agreed that there are some procedural bugs to be worked out, but both Dean deCastro and Faculty Senate felt that expanding the pool of granted leaves would be beneficial.

The Faculty Affairs Committee was assigned the task of further reviewing the policy.

Approval of Minutes: January 24 minutes (as amended) were unanimously approved.

Chair's Report:

Chair Steele rapidly mentioned the upcoming IDEA visit and encouraged Senators to tell colleagues to attend a session. Also, new estimates for unfunded mandates (e.g. Hazlewood) raise the total from $22 million to $72 million statewide. Neither the THECB nor the Texas Legislature have discussed HOW these will be funded, however.

Regarding technology exceptions, the Provost was unaware that policy required departments to be charged $1000 for an exception, and said he would look into the matter. IT exceptions, HEAF, and other related issues have been assigned to the University Affairs Committee.

Several emails were exchanged between Chair Steele, Dr. Anthony Watkins, and Mike Steigerwald (IT) to clarify questions of exceptions, technology needs, and faculty contacts. The following is a distillation of those exchanges:

The main contact in IT for information regarding software (cost estimates, licensing & terms of usage, acquisition, etc.), computer replacements and exceptions is Mateo Zuniga at extension 4-4880. He is located in AB1-127 and directly reports to Mr. Steigerwald as the Manager of Technical Assets Management group (TAM). If there is ever any question about the program or its process, he is the one who can provide the most current and accurate information. We also are in the process of updating the IT@Sam website and our goal is to make the program and his area much more prominent and easier to navigate.

The correct timeframe for the replacement of computers is currently 4 years. This applies to both desktops and laptops, PCs and MACs. It was 3 years for some devices at one point in the past, but the current period is 4 years for all computing devices. Processes have been reviewed and procedures revisited to ensure the most current information is available for the service desk personnel to avoid miscommunication and confusion. For more information about the replacement program and the procedures to follow, see the current site information at http://www.shsu.edu/~ucs_www/Computer_Management/replacement-cycle.html.

We are in the process of evaluating additional options for mobile devices such as a "travelers" laptop PC and a Windows based tablet as an alternative to our I-Pad option. We have a few units to pilot and faculty members will be provided one of these for use (to replace a current machine) and feedback. If this device meets user requirements it may become the option for those who need "light and portable" vs. "powerful (CPU) and capable."

The requested data on the exceptions for fiscal year 2012 are as follows:
Total quantity of PCs purchased by IT campus wide =   965
Total quantity of exceptions - campus wide =   107
Total quantity of exemptions for Academic Affairs =   75 (out of 965) @ $126,741 of which $44,886 were for I-Pads (2nd device)
Total quantity of exemptions for the rest of campus =   32 (out of 965)
Total combined percentage which were exceptions =   11% (all campus)

Total combined percentage which were exceptions =   7.7% (academic affairs only)
The requested data on the exceptions for fiscal year 2013 (6 months to date) are as follows:
Total quantity of PCs purchased by IT campus wide =   604
Total quantity of exceptions - campus wide =   51
Total quantity of exemptions for Academic Affairs =   37 (out of 604) @ $51,833 of which $15,245 was funded by IT@Sam (under new rules)
Total quantity of exemptions for the rest of campus   14 (out of 604)
Total combined percentage which were exceptions =   8.4% (all campus)
Total combined percentage which were exceptions =   6.1% (academic affairs only)
There has been only one instance of the $1000 charge so far this year. The cost of the requested unit was $3,275 and the art department only paid $1,000.
In 2012 the colleges paid 100% of the cost of requested exceptions
In 2013 IT would fund the amount equal to the qualifying standard device cost (minus $1,000)

Committee Reports:
>   In the interest of time, no committee reports were presented. However, the Committee on Committees is soliciting suggestions for changes to the annual survey.

Adjournment: 5:01 pm

Next Meeting: February 21, 2013, with guest Dr. Kimberly Bell, who will discuss the upcoming undergraduate research symposium