

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

19 March 2015

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Lowman Student Center, Room 304

**Members Present (18):**

Nancy Baker (CHSS), Don Bumpass (COBA), Donna Cox (COE), James Crosby (CHSS), Mark Frank (COBA), Randy Garner (CJ), Deborah Hatton (COFAMC), Richard Henriksen (COE), Mark Klespis (COS), James Landa (COHS), Dennis Longmire (CJ), Paul Loeffler (COS), David McTier (COFAMC), Sheryl Murphy-Manley (COFAMC), Gary Oden (COHS), Dwayne Pavelock (COS), Lisa Shen (NGL), Stacy Ulbig (CHSS)

**Members Not Present (13):**

Irfan Ahmed (COBA), Helen Berg (COE), Tracy Bilsing (CHSS), Jonathan Breazeale (COBA), Madhusudan Choudhary (COS), John Domino (CHSS), Diane Dowdey (CHSS), Karla Edison (COE), Joan Hudson (COS), Jeffrey Littlejohn (CHSS), Diana Nabors (COE), Douglas Ullrich (COS), Tony Watkins (COFAMC)

**Called to Order:** 3:30 pm in LSC 304 by Chair Nancy Baker

**Minutes Approved:** Minutes for the February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved unanimously

**Special Guest:** Dr. Jaimie Hebert, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Provost Hebert's Visit**

**Undergraduate Admissions Policy (Academic Policy 840502) Revision**

Provost Hebert provided details about changes to the admissions policy, and apologized for the miscommunication from Academic Affairs to Senate regarding this policy.

Specifically, the undergraduate admissions standards were revised and approved by the relevant bodies, including the Faculty Senate, in 2012. However, the corresponding admissions policy document was not updated at that time. Therefore, when the oversight was corrected recently, the provost had intended to inform Senate of the correction. However, due to some internal miscommunication, this courtesy notice was initially presented to Senate as an urgent request to approve changes to the current admission standards.

Provost Hebert further reassured senators that he would never ask the Senate to consider and approve significant policy revisions within the span of a few days. Referring to the ongoing reviews of several other academic policies, he stressed that it was more important to make well thought-out revisions than fast ones.

The provost also addressed discrepancies in the original and the revised automatic acceptance rates. During the initial admissions standards review in early 2012, the original proposal was to

automatically accept students who are in the top 20% of their class. This 20% acceptance rate was approved by the Council of Academic Deans (CAD) and Faculty Senate.

However, it was then discovered that under the Texas Education Association (TEA) reporting standards, high school transcripts would only identify students by the top 10%, or by quartiles (25%, 50%, and 75%). Consequently, the proposed automatic acceptance rate was modified to the top 25%, which was then approved by the TSUS Board of Regents. The approved standards have been in use since the fall of 2013.

The provost also pointed out that recent assessment of SAT performance between students in the top 10% versus those in the top 10-25% showed no statistically significant differences between the two groups. There are also ongoing efforts to monitor the admissions and student performance data.

### **New Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) Policies**

On the other hand, Provost Hebert appreciated the quick turnaround by Senate in approving the 11 new policies from ORSP. The content of these policies is set to comply with required federal and state regulations.

One senator noted that the new policies could benefit from additional copyediting, as some of the adaptations from the official regulations languages were performed in a less sophisticated manner than desired. The provost acknowledged that the documents were composed quickly to gain compliance with new regulations, and additional wordsmithing will be done before the policies are finalized.

### **Firearms on Campus**

Provost Hebert noted that an amendment has been made to the open carry bill in the state legislature to prohibit open carry on college campuses, including sidewalks and roadways adjacent to campuses. SHSU and TSUS are opposed to both open and concealed carry on campus, and President Gibson has been actively voicing the university administration's position to legislators.

A senator who was in Austin to lobby against campus carry on behalf of the Texas Association of College Teachers (TACT) also pointed out that allowing firearms on campuses would create significant financial burdens on institutions. Specifically, a recent study estimated that campus carry would create \$1 billion of additional cost across institutions in the state. It has been noted that permitting campus carry would damage state institutions' ability to attract quality faculty candidates and diminish the quality of higher education in Texas.

A number of other senators also voiced support for prohibition of firearms on campus. The provost then asked Spencer Copeland, the Student Government Association (SGA) President, who was in attendance, for the SGA's view on this issue. Mr. Copeland responded that the

student body is deeply divided on campus carry, and, based on current campus attitude and past experience debating the topic, the SGA is not actively seeing a consensus at this time.

Another senator pointed out that in addition to the open carry bill, there are also mirroring bills in the House and the Senate to allow for concealed campus carry, with clauses specifically prohibiting public institutions to adopt regulations to prohibit or limit license holders from carrying handguns on campus. Also, the bill in the Senate is authored by the majority of senators.

Provost Hebert indicated that as the legislative session progresses, continuous efforts will be made to lobby against campus carry. Moreover, a resolution from the Faculty Senate supporting the prohibition of campus carry and local control on the matter would be very valuable for the SHSU administration.

### **Funding for Higher Education Institutions**

Overall, the provost is optimistic about the upcoming budget decisions during the current legislative session. There is significant support in both houses to pass the Tuition Revenue Bond (TRB) bill, which is the university's primary funding source for a new biological sciences building. There are also discussion to increase the proposed TRB amount due to bond rate changes and to allow for new TRB applications.

In addition, there are talks in both houses to double the amount of Higher Education Assistance Fund (HEAF) during its once-a-decade review this year. There is also consensus amongst legislators to provide more funding to support the Hazlewood exemptions. Overall, TSUS is hoping for relief for at least half of the exemptions from the Hazlewood Legacy Program.

Moreover, the university administration is anticipating the sunset of the Texas B-On-Time (BOT) student loan relief program. BOT was created to forgive the loans of applicants who are able to graduate within 4 years while maintaining a certain GPA. Every state institutions are required to contribute 5% of tuition revenue to the THECB-managed BOT fund pool.

However, BOT data shows that 31 of the 38 participating intuitions have been contributing more to the fund pool than the THECB have been paying out to their students. In the case for SHSU, the university has been contributing between \$2-3 million annually, while the total amount of forgiven loans averaged between \$10,000 and \$20,000 each year.

Legislators have acknowledged flaws in the BOT and are moving to end the program. Therefore, not only would the SHSU save 5% of its tuition revenue, but the \$240 million leftover BOT funds might be used to provide additional Hazlewood relief for intuitions. Furthermore, the provost would like to allocate part of the 5% recovered tuition revenue towards the federal work study program funding.

Senators also inquired about outcome-based funding and enrollment projections. Provost Hebert indicated there are some discussions to either allocate part of the existing budget for higher education towards outcome-based funding, or to allocate additional performance-based funds to

supplement the current funding model. As a top performer in any outcome or performance measures, SHSU would benefit in either scenario. Lastly, the university is anticipating a 2-4% increase in overall enrollment for the next academic year.

### **Faculty Evaluation System (FES) and Merit Policy Reviews**

Provost Hebert acknowledged that Dean Lyons, who was tasked alongside Dean Edmonson to revise the FES policy, had not reviewed all the reports already created for the revision efforts before visiting Senate on February 26. Nonetheless, all the related FES revision documents, including the proposed options for changes by the FES Committee of faculty, have since been shared with Dean Lyons, and the revised policy draft is underway.

On a related note, a separate group is reviewing the policy on merit. In particular, while there is consensus that merit pay increases should be performance based, and not applied equally across all faculty, the definition of merit is a topic of discussion in CAD. Provost Hebert believes that merit pay assignment should not be meritorious, or applied only to the top performers, and that all good performers should receive some amount of merit. On the other hand, some members of CAD believe that all performances should be curved and only performers in the higher ranges should receive merit pay increases. This discussion is ongoing.

Furthermore, some colleges are allocating merit raises by percentage of current salary, while others are awarding merit by steps, or set dollar amounts. One senator points out that percentage increase will only perpetuate existing salary inequity, since faculty with lower starting salaries would receive a lower amount of merit pay increase, even if their merit raise by percentage is actually higher than their peers'. Provost Hebert agrees with this assessment, but points out that, on the other hand, step merit assignments would exacerbate salary compression.

Overall, there is no single right way to determine merit pay increases, but the provost believes an open conversation to encourage more consistent practices across colleges is a step in the right direction. Moreover, the new faculty salary study would address existing inequities on campus, and alleviate some of the concerns over different merit assignment methods.

A senator asked how the provost plans to address potential inequity issues the salary study might uncover. Provost Hebert stresses the purpose for the study is to find these problems and resolve them. It might take multiple fiscal years to address any substantial issues, but the university administration is committed to resolve any salary inequities.

Recalling instances where no merit was available due to budget constraints, a different senator inquired how to address these non-merit years. The provost indicated the merit review committee is considering different solutions, including using moving FES averages instead of single year FES scores for merit calculation. Another senator suggested using market adjustment to alleviate the impact of non-merit years, although the provost indicated the budget for market adjustment is not substantial enough for such purpose.

## **Graduate Faculty Status Policy (Academic Policy 801014)**

Provost Hebert also briefly discussed this policy, which had just been submitted to Senate for review. One senator inquired about the rationale for different levels of graduate faculty status. The provost recalled SACS requirement for assessing faculty who teaches graduate courses as reason for creating this policy, although he also agreed that the multiple status levels might be more nuanced and complex than what was called for. Therefore, senators are encouraged to discuss further this topic and Dr. Baker will share the recommendations with the provost.

### **Chair's Report**

(Please see the attached documents for the full written report.)

Dr. Baker updated senators on a number of topics. First, Dr. Carlos Hernandez, Vice President of Finance and Operations, is looking into expanding the number of nursing mother's rooms on the three campuses. Dr. Hernandez is also verifying whether a room is available in the new Counseling Center. Secondly, the provost will confirm his approval for a one-course course release for the Faculty Senate Chair-Elect with CAD, effective starting the next academic year.

In addition, Dr. Baker has asked the provost to address reporting standards for outside employment for faculty. Provost Hebert indicated that, as the recipients of these reports, the deans have the discretion to set the specific reporting requirements for their colleges. However, the provost also felt that primary purpose of the paperwork is to inform, and outside employment requests should not be denied without compelling reasons.

Several senators were concerned about the specific requirement for full time adjunct faculty to request outside employment approvals, especially since requests in some colleges are routinely denied. Dr. Baker asked for senators to share specific examples with her, and will bring these cases to her next meeting with the provost.

A suggestion was made to include a question on the upcoming annual faculty survey to assess adjunct faculty's experience with outside employment reporting. However, after some considerations, senators concluded that the annual survey might not be the most effective medium for this assessment, and the Committee on Committees will look into other ways to survey full time adjunct faculty members.

### **TCFS & TSUS Spring 2015 Meeting Highlights**

(Please see the attached documents for the full written report.)

Chair-elect Shen attended the spring meetings on behalf of Senate, and shared highlights from the proceedings. In particular, campus carry was a hotly debated topic at the Texas Council of Faculty Senate (TCFS) business meeting. TCFS had unanimously passed a resolution during the fall 2014 business meeting to support the prohibition of firearms on campus. However, given the current legislative discussion on campus carry, some TCFS representatives wished to amend said

resolution to include a clause supporting local control. After a few rounds of lively debates, a motion to amend the 2014 resolution was defeated.

Referring to the TSUS Council of Faculty Senate's (CFS) decision to refrain from keeping detailed minutes during the council's meeting with TSUS Vice Chancellor Perry Moore, a senator expressed disappointment at the limited transparency.

Dr. Baker and Senator Shen both reassured senators that Dr. Moore has strived to maintain an open and relaxed environment for the CFS meetings. However, as a public representative for the system, he would have to be much more cautious and reserved in his remarks if all the discussions are recorded and made public. Moreover, the meeting attendees are encouraged to share written meetings summaries with their senates and colleagues.

**Meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm**

**Faculty Senate  
Chair's Report  
03-19-2015**

**Proposed Policy Editing Committee of Faculty**

I communicated to the provost the Senate's suggestion that a small committee composed of faculty experts and compensated for their efforts be given a summer to copyedit all academic policies so that they are clear, concise, and coherent as a whole body of policies. The provost liked this idea and said he would give it further consideration.

**Privacy Rooms**

The provost has talked with Carlos Hernandez (VP for Finance) about the need for more privacy rooms (for nursing mothers, diabetics, and transgendered members of the university community) on campus. If there is room on campus, immediate steps can be taken to designate additional privacy rooms. The provost will raise the issue at the next Cabinet meeting and seek approval. There may also be a second privacy room available currently in the Counseling Center.

**Daycare**

At the next Cabinet meeting, the provost will discuss the possibility of reinstating a daycare for university members to use.

**Admissions policy**

Chair elect Lisa Shen and I asked the provost why the admissions policy revision had changed from automatic acceptance of the top 20% (as Senate approved in 2012) to automatic acceptance of the top 25% (as shown in the revised policy sent to Senate in February 2015) of graduating high school seniors in their class. The provost explained that deans and administrators wanted the top 20% but that the Texas Education Association (TEA) had changed school transcripts for K-12 to show only the top 10% or top 25% (as well as those in the top 50% and the top 75%). Therefore, there was no way to ascertain what the top 20% would be (except via student self-reporting). Given the choice between automatic acceptance of either the top 10% or the top 25% (or not having any automatic acceptance offered), the administration at SHSU chose to go with the top 25%.

Since changing the SHSU admissions policy, there are promising signs that SHSU's new policy is achieving desired results: enrollments, SAT scores, retention rates and graduation rates are all on the rise.

**FES policy**

We summarized the results of Dean Lyons' visit to Senate and asked why Dean Lyons seemed completely unaware of the time-consuming and painstaking efforts of the FES Revision Committee in devising a detailed proposal for how FES could be revised. The provost said that Dean Edmonson had seen the FES committee's report. In the aftermath of Dean Lyons's visit with Senate, the provost met with Lyons to

make sure he was informed about the FES committee's report. The provost said that his charged to Lyons and Edmonson was to ask for input from CAD, COC and Senate on how to revise FES, which both deans have done. While Dean Lyons may have been unaware of the FES committee's work before, he is now informed.

The provost also wanted to emphasize that, when it came to the FES policy, he feels it is more important to take as much time as needed to achieve the best result rather than to seek to revise the policy quickly. He reiterated his support for holding Town Hall meetings with faculty once there was a draft of a revised FES policy.

### **Policy on Graduate Faculty**

The provost has asked Senate to review a proposed revision of the policy regarding which faculty members are permitted to teach graduate students. (I sent this policy out to all members of Senate via e-mail on March 4.) He emphasized that this was one of the policies where he would prefer that Senate take its time to do as thoughtful a job as possible. This policy is not driven by a need to comply with federal or system-wide policies. He envisions that deans will define "scholarly activities" for their individual colleges.

### **Outside employment paperwork**

TSUS says all full-time faculty must fill out paperwork seeking approval for outside employment, even if the faculty member is an adjunct.

The provost says it is at the discretion of the deans as to whether to require ALL faculty members to complete this paperwork, or only people with outside employment. However, if you do complete the paperwork stating that you do not have outside employment, and then later this situation changes, you are required to fill out new paperwork seeking approval for outside employment. (Your dean should allow you to fill out the paperwork a second time due to a changed set of circumstances.) The provost was interested to hear more about those who have spoken to Senate about routinely having all outside employment requests denied by their dean. He cautioned that, if a faculty member has a course release for some reason and then takes outside employment doing the very same work they have been released from, he would have a difficult time approving such a request without a compelling argument.

### **HEAF Funding**

The provost is cautiously optimistic that there will be an increase in HEAF funds for SHSU.

### **Guns on campus**

Chair-elect Shen and I asked the provost for his thoughts on the various guns-on-campus bills in the State Legislature this session. The TSUS Chancellor has publicly expressed opposition to having guns on campus. The provost said he personally also opposes "campus carry" and would prefer "local control."



**Chair elect course release**

The provost will inform CAD that the chair-elect in future will have a course release.

**Intellectual Copyright Policy**

The provost will look into whether TSUS has changed its policy regarding intellectual copyrights.

Submitted respectfully by Chair Nancy Baker via e-mail.

## TSUS & TCFS Spring 2015 Meeting Highlights

### Texas State University System (TSUS) Meeting

February 27, 2015

With Dr. Perry Moore, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Dr. Fernando Gomez, Vice Chancellor and General Council, and Dr. Sean Cunningham, Vice Chancellor for Governmental Relations

Dr. Moore and Dr. Cunningham highlighted several topics of interest from the current legislative session

- **Tuition Revenue Bond (TRB)** – The system is optimistic for a favorable outcome.
- **Higher Education Assistance Fund (HEAF)** – Under once-a-decade review; TSUS would like to see an increase in funding.
- **Hazlewood Exemption** – Legislators recognize the urgent need for increased funding and changes to the exemption requirements, although a viable proposal has yet to emerge.
- **Concealed Weapons on Campuses** – Our Chancellor, Dr. Brian McCall, supports local control.

Dr. Gomez addressed questions about specific sections of the System Rules & Regulations

- **Outside Employment (V.4.83)** – The reporting requirement only applies to employees who would be engaged activities outside of their “primary” (i.e. full-time) employment.
- **Grievance Process (V.4.44)** – The recent policy changes were intended to make the grievance process more efficient and effective, while still respecting the principles of shared governance.
- Definition of **Insubordination** – Refusal to follow the lawful and reasonable directives of a supervisor.

TSUS Council of Faculty Senates (CFS) Business

- Detailed minutes will not be kept for the System meetings to encourage open conversations.
- Mavis Triebel (Lamar Port Arthur) was re-elected as the President of the TSUS CFS, and Joy Velasco (Sul Ross Alpine) was elected Vice President.

### Texas Council of Faculty Senate (TCFS) Meeting

February 27-28, 2015

- **Faculty Salaries & Workload**  
A number of institutions are reviewing their workload policies and examining the internal and external equity of faculty compensations. In particular, the SFA Senate has just published an in-house study on faculty salaries (<http://www.sfasu.edu/facsenate/>).
- **Academic Bullying**  
Faculty Ombuds, or public advocate, was repeatedly recommended as a solution for resolving academic bullying and grievance issues during a panel presentation (please see examples from UT Austin <http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/ombuds/>, and UH Downtown <http://www.uhd.edu/academic/ombuds/>).
- The TCFS Executive Council will begin to contact faculty senates in neighboring states to encourage the development of more state or regional CFS, with the long term goal of establishing a national CFS organization.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Shen

Chair-elect, SHSU Faculty Senate