

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

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

**Members present:**

Nancy Baker (CHSS); Helen Berg (COE); Tracy Bilsing (CHSS); Jonathan Breazeale (COBA); Don Bumpass (COBA); Donna Cox (COE); James Crosby (CHSS); Mark Frank (COBA); Joan Hudson (COS); C. Renée James (COS); Mark Klespis (COS); James Landa (CHSS); Jeff Littlejohn (CHSS); Paul Loeffler (COS); Dennis Longmire (COCJ); David McTier (COFAMC); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (COFAMC); Diana Nabors (COE); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Debra Price (COE); Lisa Shen (NGL); Stacy Ulbig (CHSS); Doug Ullrich (COS); Mary Anne Vincent (COHS); Anthony Watkins (COFAMC); Pam Zelbst (COBA). Matteo (IT) was also present.

**Members not present:**

Madhusudan Choudhary (COS); Kevin Clifton (COFAMC); Randall Garner (COCJ); Richard Henriksen (COE); Hayoung Lim (COFAMC); on leave: Tom Cox (CHSS)

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

The minutes from the September 12 meeting were approved.

New senators Dr. Jeff Littlejohn (CHSS) and Dr. Mary Anne Vincent (College of Health Sciences) were welcomed.

**Chair’s Report/Old Business**

**Excellence in Research, Service and Teaching Committees**

The Excellence in Research, Service and Teaching Committees should be meeting, and each should have elected a chair. Trying to determine if they are doing so has been difficult; their websites are not functional. There was much discussion over who would know what needs to be done and it was noted that there appears to be a lack of continuity in institutional memory and/or in who is ensuring that such committees are staffed, meeting, and so forth. Chair Renee James asked the Committee on Committees to figure out what is needed to get these committees running.

**Faculty/Administrator “dividing line”**

At the request of the provost, the senators discussed the issue of who is considered faculty and who is considered an administrator.

The following resolution was proposed: **Faculty should be defined by the academic policy statement that says those individuals who stand for post-tenure review or are**

**subject to three-year review or annual review by their department chair are faculty. Those who are exempt are administrators, as defined by this administration. (See policy #980204 Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty.)**

The resolution was passed unanimously.

### **FES Town Halls**

The Academic Affairs Committee submitted a preliminary report on the FES Town Hall meetings held on Sept. 11 and 17. The data collected from the meetings are still being organized, compiled and summarized. About 70-80 people (out of 400-500 faculty) attended the meetings, and 40 questionnaires were returned as of Sept. 24. Initial, tentative conclusions based on these meetings are: 1) changing the FES 1 and 2 is not a controversial issue on campus, 2) there is wide support for changing to the short form of the IDEA evaluation, and 3) there is support 2:1 for using the adjusted score instead of the raw score from IDEA.

### **Drop Deadline Date**

Chair Renee James conveyed to the Provost in her last meeting with him on Sept. 19 that Faculty Senate would like the drop deadline date to be moved from the last day of class to the 10<sup>th</sup> week of class, as he had previously assured the Faculty Senate in April 2013 would be done for Fall 2013. Chair James has followed up with the Provost a second time via e-mail, but received no response. Chair James then communicated with Julie Schwab (the provost's assistant), who does not know about the proposed change, and then with Dick Eglesaer, who has not responded. Chair James will address the issue with the Provost in her meeting with him on Oct. 3, and she will update us at our next meeting on Oct. 10.

### **Status of Faculty Development Leave and Faculty Workload Policies**

Dean De Castro's visit in February 2013 was when we last discussed the Faculty Development Leave Policy and, at his request, suggested changes. There seems to be no record with anyone outside of Faculty Senate as to what has happened to our proposed changes. The Academic Policy Council met in Spring 2013 and approved the changes, but has no minutes for that meeting; their last available minutes are from Dec. 2012. Faculty Senate changes to the Faculty Workload Policy are also missing. The Faculty Affairs Committee report from the Feb. 21 Faculty Senate meeting (and the minutes from that meeting) show the changes Faculty Senate proposed.

### **SHSU Master Plan**

The SHSU Master Plan from February 2013 can be accessed via google (search for "SHSU Master Plan"). The plan as of February does show the area recently contested between SHSU and a local property owner (see page 53 of the plan). Chair James recommends that all senators study the master plan.

## New Business:

### **President Gibson's Senate Christmas Party**

President Gibson's Senate Christmas Party has been rescheduled from Dec. 5 to Dec. 10 or 11. Please consider the two dates and let Chair James know which date is better. The President will soon need to know which date we prefer.

### **Streamlining the policy process**

The Provost would like Faculty Senate to come up with ideas for how to streamline the process of making, changing, and approving policy. He would like a more efficient line of communication established. He would like Faculty Senate to investigate how other schools handle the process. The Faculty Senate engaged in a vigorous discussion on this topic, prompted in part by the numerous policies the Faculty Senate has had input on that appear to have subsequently been lost or ignored.

The senators had a number of thoughts to offer on the topic of streamlining the policy process.

The Academic Policy Council (APC) should be required to meet monthly, not once per semester, so they are better able to track changes.

If the provost wants to eliminate APC, then the chair of the Faculty Senate should be allowed to be a voting member of the Council of Academic Deans. Otherwise, policy changes the Faculty Senate wants to see happen will continue to get lost.

The following recommendation was proposed:

**In light of the provost's request that Faculty Senate streamline the policy making process, the Faculty Senate offers a formal recommendation to the provost that the chair of Faculty Senate should be a voting member of the Council of Academic Deans effective Oct. 10, 2013.**

There were 21 who voted yes, 1 who voted no, and 4 abstentions.

Several senators expressed a great deal of frustration and deep concern that Faculty Senate is wasting its time working on issues (often at the request of administrators) that are then dropped, or on which our input is ignored. Two senators offered their past experience and concluded that Faculty Senate cannot become complacent about assuming the administration is responsive to Faculty Senate without being periodically reminded to be so.

Various hypotheses were put forward as to why Faculty Senate input on policy appears to have been ignored. Some of the hypotheses were: university-wide transition leading to chaotic and unreliable follow-through on the part of some administrators and committees; the administration lacking respect for the Faculty Senate; or a shift in focus on the part of the administration from academic concerns to growth.

The question of whether our recommendation offers enough in the way of a vision of a streamlined policy process was discussed.

A suggestion was made that perhaps Faculty Senate should ask for greater accountability in the policy process from administrators, with a specific timeline. This was discussed, and it was decided that we will discuss this with the provost when he attends our next meeting, on Oct. 10.

### **Faculty Affairs Committee Report**

Faculty Affairs submitted a report on DELTA related issues, along with a Nov. 29, 2012 Academic Affairs Committee report on DELTA issues addressed at that time in conversation with DELTA.

On the Faculty Affairs committee's report, the list of concerns for DELTA can be broken down into two categories. Items A, B, C, D, and J relate to compensation. The rest of the items on the list deal with technical issues. Items E, F, G, H, and I are questions that seem most pertinent to ask DELTA.

One senator asked, who authorizes DELTA to download a course from a previous instructor and semester, for use by a new instructor?

Questions of commission and ownership were raised regarding online courses. The issues of who controls the copyright of an online course and how instructors are compensated (and by whom – dept. chairs? deans?) were discussed and acknowledged to be murky. Additionally, it was noted that some instructors are promised compensation that never occurs (such as course releases, etc.).

On senator pointed out that online courses involve both instructional design issues vs. content issues. The evaluation checklist that DELTA completes for each online course (before the instructor is compensated) assesses instructional design, not content. However, DELTA is responsible for design, not content. Why are online courses being evaluated by design, which is their task, not the instructor's?

We need to ask about undergraduate evaluations. It's well known in CHSS that IDEA evaluations suffer in online courses – few students fill them out. This evaluation should be eliminated or recalculated. How pervasive is this problem? (For example, do 85% of online courses suffer from less than 30% of students filling out evaluations?) To what degree is an online course's evaluation different from an in-class evaluation? Another senator suggested that we look at IDEA's resources online that address this issue.

Please forward all DELTA questions to Dr. Donna Cox.

**Social Media Committee**

Faculty Senate needs to nominate two people. Dr. Paul Loeffler and Dr. Jamie Crosby were nominated.

The meeting adjourned at 5 pm.

Revised 10-04-2013