

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING AGENDA
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

March 20, 2025
3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.
Austin Hall

Senators Present (19) Emma Bullock (COSET), Miltonette Craig (CJ), Kevin Crouch (CAM), Magdalena Denham (CJ), Brandy Doleshal (COSET), Dustin Gross (COSET), Debbi Hatton (CAM), Owen Kelly (COM), Nick Lantz (CHSS), Victoria Lantz (CAM), Kimberly LaPrairie (COE), Audrey Murfin (CHSS), Jill Pagels (COE), Todd Primm (COSET), Bradley Seaberg (CHSS), Zachary Valdes (NGL), Xiaobo Belle Wang (CHSS), Rebecca Wentworth (COE), Willow Yang (COBA).

Senators Not Present (11): Irfan Ahmed (COBA), Miriam Akoto (CHSS), Michael Arrington (CHSS), Traci Austin (COBA), Patrick Buzzini (CJ), Jennifer Child (CHSS), Lindsay Clark (COBA), Kenneth McIntyre (CHSS), Ricardo Montelongo (COE), Erica Pasquini (COHS), Darren Williams (COSET).

Guests: Volha Minich (COSET)

Call to Order

3:30 PM

Special Guest

Dr. Maria Botero, Professor and Philosophy Program Coordinator, Sam Houston State University, presenting on joint initiative with Academic Affairs to support mental health wellness for faculty and staff.

Senators are asked to share Dr. Botero's resources with their colleagues. Resources include a website of mental health support, including ways to access therapy; information on wellness, exercise, and social connections; and links to employment issues such as leave and workplace concerns. A flyer is being distributed to all faculty and staff. Information on student wellness is also included.

On March 31, faculty and staff will receive an email to complete the Healthy Minds Study survey. Responses are anonymous. The survey will be used to plan campus mental health interventions.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the March 6, 2025 meeting were approved.

Senate Committee Reports

Academic Affairs Committee

Discussion of APS 240305: Curriculum Development and Revision will be delayed until our next meeting.

Committee on Committees & Surveys

The committee reported on progress on efforts to conduct the 2024-25 *Committee Preference* and *Faculty Perception* surveys with targeted report distributions of May 1, 2025. The committee has received approval to reach out to the committees with questions about committee meetings and their work towards their charge.

New Business

Senate Committee Assignments

Faculty Affairs Committee

- APS 950531– *Undergraduate Degree and Certificate Requirements and Specifications*
Note: *Minor Revision*. Additions were made to account for embedded associate’s degrees and applied associate’s degrees (Polytechnic College).

University Affairs Committee

- APS 210216– *Academic Policies*
Note: *Minor Revision*. A revision to section 4 is proposed to address the frequent occurrence of policies coming up for scheduled five-year reviews despite having undergone review sessions in advance of this cycle. This change will improve efficiency of the policy review process.

Senate Discussion

Polytechnic College Academic Policy

Senate discussed Academic Affairs’ proposal of a single policy to streamline Polytechnic College’s policy process, bypassing the creation of a working group. Senators debated if this was a temporary solution and requested more information about the coming Polytechnic College. Other issues raised were the Polytechnic College’s representation on Senate and the implications of an exception to the Policy on Policies. Ultimately, senators sought more information before voting.

Watermark Faculty Profiles

Senate revisited discussion of Watermark faculty profile samples.

Senators had concerns about how the profile will source the information, reporting problems with Watermark CVs. Senators agreed that a poll on aesthetics would be fine, but were more concerned with functionality, and with faculty’s ability to choose what shows online. The final version must be editable by the faculty member because IT and SHSU Online will not be able to make changes fast enough.

Education Connects

Senators reported concern with Education Connects, the new interface for graduate recruiting. Senators reported names and contact information for graduate programs has been outsourced to a generic recruiting link without notice. Students cannot learn about our programs without giving up personal information, including their birthdays. Growing graduate enrollment is a big issue for the university, but senators expressed concerns that the university and Education Connects doesn’t have a good sense of what is needed at the college level.

Bank Accounts Hacked

Senators report some faculty direct deposits have been hacked. Faculty are advised to check their direct deposits.

Chair’s Report

Updates from meeting with Dr. White

Possible revisions to applicable FES scope for merit following non-merit granting years are still in data gathering process. Amanda Withers will talk to Senate Leadership about the data.

Senate Chair Valdes confirmed that faculty will have the opportunity to see the Resource Allocation Advisory Committee reports

Updates from meeting with Dr. Gaillard

Faculty Handbook: follow-up to 3/6/25 Faculty Senate discussion. Senate will try to update the handbook twice a year, with a focus on fixing broken policy links.

In relation to APS 240430, Dr. Gaillard looked into SHSU Online's Instructional Designer operational structure. SHSU Online reports that they have revised their organizational structure and it is no longer tenable for them to assign primary contacts because of turnover.

Recent Faculty Questions and Concerns

Regarding APS 820137, *The Faculty Evaluation System of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty*, there was a request for clarification regarding faculty deadline to submit FES Evaluation Pathway Selection Form (April 1st vs. July 1st). The April 1 deadline is correct. Senate Chair Valdes received information that the standards will apply to the subsequent calendar year. However, this conflicted with information from Senators that the standards will go into effect by September 2025. Request for clarification.

Faculty Senate Newsletter is scheduled for distribution week of 3/24 – 3/28

Announcements

- Coffee and Conversations with Dr. White on Monday, March 24, 2025 at LSC White Ballroom, 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Registration requested via e-mail announcement distributed on 3/13/25.
- Campus Open Forum: Monday, April 7, 2025; 2:00 - 3:15 p.m. at LSC White Ballroom.

Adjournment: 4:46 PM.