

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

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

Senators Present (18) Irfan Ahmed (COBA), Michael Arrington (CHSS), Traci Austin (COBA), Lindsay Clark (COBA), Kevin Crouch (CAM), Magdalena Denham (CJ), Brandy Doleshal (COSET), Dustin Gross (COSET), Debbi Hatton (CAM), Owen Kelly (COM), Victoria Lantz (CAM), Kenneth McIntyre (CHSS), Ricardo Montelongo (COE), Audrey Murfin (CHSS), Jill Pagels (COE), Erica Pasquini (COHS), Zachary Valdes (NGL), Darren Williams (COSET)

Senators Not Present (12): Miriam Akoto (CHSS), Emma Bullock (COSET), Patrick Buzzini (CJ), Jennifer Child (CHSS), Miltonette Craig (CJ), Nick Lantz (CHSS), Kimberly LaPrairie (COE), Todd Primm (COSET), Bradley Seaberg (CHSS), Xiaobo Belle Wang (CHSS), Rebecca Wentworth (COE), Willow Yang (COBA)

Guests: Volha Minich (COSET)

Call to Order

3:30 PM

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the February 06, 2025 meeting were approved.

Senate Committee Reports

Academic Affairs Committee

- APS 810701 – *Instructional Overload Assignment*

Note: Minor Revision. Changes made to allow increased time for faculty to accrue overload credits. Minor edits from CAD.

The committee moved to accept the policy with a suggestion for a revision reinserting the language that tenure track faculty are “strongly discouraged unless no other options are available.” The policy passed with this revision. (All in favor, with one abstention.)

University Affairs Committee

- APS 990407 – *Student Resignations*

Note: Minor Revision. The Office of the Registrar and the Financial Aid & Scholarships Office provided minor revisions for better alignment with current federal regulations and SHSU processes. The committee moved to approve with one minor change, which is to add attending class as an attendance marker. The policy passed with this revision. (All in favor.)

Committee on Committees & Surveys

- The committee reported on progress in planning efforts to conduct 2024-25 *Committee Preference* and *Faculty Perception* surveys with targeted report distributions of May 1, 2025. The survey is coming along well. The committee now has the names of the chairs for the committee book. Senate discussed whether there had been any feedback about letting the deans see the results of the survey from last year. There were some thanks but no other feedback from the deans.

New Business

Senate Committee Assignments

Committee on Committees & Surveys

- Continue efforts to conduct 2024-25 *Committee Preference* and *Faculty Perception* surveys.

Unfinished Business

FES and Merit Following Non-Merit Granting Year

Follow-up to senate discussions regarding potential proposals for allowing significant accomplishments achieved in non-merit granting years to qualify for consideration in subsequent merit-granting years.

President White was not initially receptive to an averaging of scores; however, senate stills want an averaging of scores. President White will have Amanda Withers run models to see what would have had happened if we did this in past years. Averaging will likely lead to a flattening of scores, but many senators did not see this as a drawback, with some observing that an across the board raise will help keep up with inflation. Scholars don't have control over when their work is published, so this would ensure everyone gets credit for their work and reduce the temptation to try to time publications to get a raise. There was interest in hearing from Ms. Withers about the details of her model.

Chair's Report

Provost's departure

President White hopes to have finalists on campus close to the time of commencement. According to President White's remarks at a recent Coffee and Conversation, the search committee will consist of at least one FT faculty member from each college, as well as administrators. Provost Stephenson may come to see us for a final visit.

SB17, Academic Freedom and DEI

Senate Chair Valdes presented updates on discussions with administration pertaining to contingency planning associated with faculty grants and research activities. Senators were also concerned about the impact of the federal "Dear Colleague" letter on academic freedom.

Special Guests

We are finalizing the schedule for Spring 2025 special guests, including David P. Glaser, Chief Strategy Officer on March 6th, and Michael T. Stephenson, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, date pending.

Upcoming Events

Senate Chair Valdes and Chair-Elect Murfin will attend Texas Council of Faculty Senates, Austin February 21-22.

Discussion

Senators brought forward concerns about writing enhanced courses and the policy on overloads. Some colleges have 60-100 students in a writing enhanced course. Currently, there is no policy on this; instead it is left to the college's decision. There was once a discussion of moving from a procedure to a policy. Can we reopen that discussion?

Reallocation: Departments report that lines are not automatically being replaced after failed searches or retirements but must go all the way to Academic Affairs to re-justify the line.

Announcements

- Conversations with Administrators on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, 3:00 – 4:00 pm via Blackboard. Featured topic: The Future of the Polytechnic College.

Adjournment: 4:23 PM.