

**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

May 5, 2022

3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Remote via Zoom

**Senators Present (28)**

Samuel Adu-Prah (COSET), Mario Aschauer (CAM), María Botero (CHSS), Tim Brown (COE), Patrick Buzzini (CJ), Rhonda Callaway (CHSS), Mona Cockerham (COHS), Brandy Doleshal (COSET), Mandy Duan (COBA), Debbi Hatton (CAM), Damon Hay (COSET), Nick Lantz (CHSS), Victoria Lantz (CAM), Junkun Ma (COSET), Geraldine Monjardez (CJ), Sureni Mullegama (COM), Audrey Murfin (CHSS), Mary Petró (COE), Debbie Price (COE), Kevin Randall (COHS), Stephen Rapp (CHSS), Vlad Radoias (COBA), Karen Sherrill (COBA), Aneika Simmons (COBA), Kyle Stutts (COSET), Zachary Valdes (NGL), Anthony Watkins (CAM), Rebecca Wentworth (COE).

**Senators Not Present (3)**

Natalie Baker (CJ), Tamara Cook (COSET), Xiaobo Wang (CHSS)

**Called to Order**

3:30 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

The April 21 Meeting Minutes were approved as corrected.

**Senate Committee Reports**

1. **Academic Affairs Committee.** Senator Hatton (Chair of the AA committee) updated FS that members on their recommendations for the following policies:
  - **APS 210302 - Exclusion of Initial Core Mathematics Course** which allows a student to petition to exclude from their SHSU GPA their initial core mathematics course if the student does not successfully complete their first core mathematics course, and then subsequently changes their academic major such that a *different core* mathematics course is required. Members of the AA committee recommend that the policy be accepted. However, committee members also discussed two primary concerns - 1) approval of this policy not set a precedent for excluding additional courses from student transcripts, and 2) the number of student petitions, filed in a semester, does not create a burdensome workload for any office. Though Senate voted in favor of this policy, it was by a split vote (16 in favor, 12 opposed). There were concerns about the lowering of academic standards and that this policy may lead to excessive, similar exclusions for core courses in other disciplines. However, it was also considered that allowing students to take a different core mathematics course supports students who want to change their major (and all the academic implications of that decision), while still requiring them to take a different core mathematics course that would be included in their GPA.

- **APS 871214 – Procedures in Cases of Academic Dishonesty.** Committee members recommend adopting the policy with the following changes:

3.01 a - Insert the word “Academic” to clarify which dean will hear the student appeal. We feel this will alleviate student confusion as to the chain of review. Additionally, it follows the procedural form’s structure of levels of appeal:

1. Instructor
2. Instructor’s Department Chair
3. Instructor’s Dean’s Office
4. The Provost’s Office

a, the procedure chain list “department chair, then the dean and eventually to the Provost and Academic Affairs of his or her designated representatives.” However, the term “dean” has not been clarified to indicate academic which may lead to student confusion.

3.02 - Change wording to “Students are guaranteed due process and may appeal the Provost’s decision by following the procedure provided in *Student Guidelines*. The due process appeal is independent of the appeals process outlined in this policy.”

This change ensures accusations of academic dishonesty are reviewed by the chain of command in Academic Affairs, while retaining a student’s right to appeal disciplinary decisions through the Dean of Students office. Additionally, it follows the appeal structure established by the procedural form.

The Faculty Senate voted in favor of these recommendations.

- **APS 910312 - Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination**

The draft revision was reviewed by the Senate Academic Affairs Committee. Committee members recommended the adoption of the revised policy as it was submitted to Senate. Members thought the revised policy provides a clear pathway for students to regain good academic standing after being placed on probation. The committee also commended the development of UNIV 2001 and 3001, to provide structure for students needing support to be academically successful. The Faculty Senate voted in favor of these recommendations.

2. **Faculty Affairs Committee.** Senator Adu-Prah (Chair of the FA Committee) updated members of the senate that the FA committee reviewed the proposed adoption of this software and participated in a software demonstration. The rationale given to Faculty Senate for the potential purchase of *Simple Syllabus* includes:

- Course syllabi currently have a wide variety of formats and content—this makes it more difficult for students to navigate each syllabus and locate the information they need.
- Most course syllabi are not currently mobile friendly. Studies have shown that the majority of students complete at least some of their academic work on a phone or tablet.

- Compliance with HB 1027 (public posting of course syllabi) is currently time-consuming and inefficient.

After considering feedback from faculty, attending a demo session, and considering the cost involved in the purchase of the software, members of the FA committee recommend discontinuing all considerations by the university to purchase the Simple Syllabus software. The Faculty Senate voted (25 in favor, 1 opposed) in support of the committee's recommendation that the university does not pursue the adoption of Simple Syllabus. However, FS recognizes that there are some concerns with respect to accessibility and format of syllabi and would welcome the opportunity for collaboration in studying the issues with current syllabi and for putting together guidelines for syllabi design and deployment.

3. **University Affairs Committee.** No report
4. **Shared Governance Committee.** Senator Sherrill (Chair of the SG Committee) presented on behalf of the SG committee APS 210216 - Policy on Policies. Representatives from Faculty Senate worked with the Office of the Vice Provost to develop this policy and this policy proposal was reviewed by the SG committee. This newly proposed policy was developed to provide a more formal structure and set of procedures for the review, creation, and rescission of academic policy statements. In addition to establishing a workflow and timelines, a key feature of the policy ensures that in the event of major policy revisions or changes, faculty are involved in the drafting of such major changes - a significant step towards improved shared governance. The Faculty Senate voted in favor of adopting this new policy and commended its development.

In addition to these reports, two additional policies were reviewed by committees and their feedback was distributed to FS in the meeting documents. Members of FS supported the following recommendations made by this committee via a Qualtrics vote during the following week:

- **APS 860425 - Designation of Distinguished Professors.** After reviewing the policy and having questions/concerns addresses, members of the of the Faculty Affairs Committee recommends this policy to be adopted. Members of Faculty Senate voted via Qualtrics to support this recommendation.
- **APS 810814 - Tenets for Faculty Status of Academic Librarians,** was reviewed by Senator Zach Valdes, the sole representative of the Newton Gresham Library on Senate, who made a recommendation to Senate to support the adoption the policy with two small revisions: wording correction stating that Library Administration advertises positions in national professional websites (no longer journals), and the other being a change to the citation source that is referenced in the second paragraph of section 1.02. Members of Faculty Senate voted via Qualtrics to support this recommendation.

### Chair's Report

1. Update on policies on promotion & tenure, FES, merit, etc. Most of the recommendation were accepted. Except of chair of DPTAC being approved by Dean and Chair.
2. Senate Resolution in support of academic freedom & tenure. Both the President and the Provost support academic freedom and committed to support it.

3. Texas Council of Faculty Senates Meeting
  - a. Round-up reports
  - b. Senate resolutions across the state / TCFS Resolution
  - c. **Legislative Interim Charges.** Texas Senate Higher Education Committee will be reviewing “**Faculty Tenure:** Review the history of and current statutes and policies of academic tenure in Texas public higher education institutions. Review tenure dismissal policies at higher education institutions in Texas and investigate state policies or proposals that have eliminated tenure. Examine the role of faculty senates in representing faculty interests to the institution administration. Make recommendations to revise current tenure policies, and provide boards of regents with additional authority to review and address issues with tenured faculty. In addition, make recommendations on establishing guidelines for the role and representation of faculty senates at higher education institutions in Texas.” (<https://www.tact.org/post/senate-priorities-released-today>)
  - d. Salaries/Merit
  - e. Many provost and president searches across the state
  - f. Some schools expressed concern regarding bookstore contracts (similar to Bearkat Bundle)
4. TSUS Council of Faculty Senates Meeting with TSUS office reps
  - a. Tenure and Academic Freedom concerns
  - b. Book bundles, First Day® Complete, OERs concerns
5. Safety concerns expressed by faculty.
6. Cost of living concerns & merit it will depend on enrollment.

### **New Business**

Members of FS voted on two candidates for the next Chair-Elect/Chair of Faculty Senate: Samuel Adu-Prah (COSET) and Zach Valdes (NGL). After listening to each candidate’s statement, members of FS voted via Qualtrics and elected Samuel Adu-Prah (COSET) to serve as Chair-Elect of Faculty Senate in the 2022-2023 academic year and as Chair in the 2023-2024 academic year.

### **Adjournment**

5:07 p.m.