

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY
September 20, 2012
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Austin Hall

Members present:

Nancy Baker (H&SS); Helen Berg (COE); Don Bumpass (COBA); Kevin Clifton (FA&MC); Jeff Crane (H&SS); James Crosby (H&SS); Diane Dowdy (H&SS); Mark Frank (COBA); Randall Garner (CJ); Debbi Hatton (H&SS); Richard Henriksen (COE); Joan Hudson (COS); C. Renée James (COS); Bill Jasper (COS); Gerald Kohers (COBA); Hayoung Lim (FA&MC); Paul Loeffler (COS); Dennis Longmire (CJ); Joyce McCauley (COE); Sheryl Murphy-Manley (FA&MC); Dwayne Pavelock (COS); Debra Price (COE); Lisa Shen (NGL); Tracy Steele (H&SS); Stacy Ulbig (H&SS); Anthony Watkins (FA&MC); Ricky White (COS); Pam Zelbst (COBA)

Members not present:

Tracy Bilsing (H&SS); Donna Cox (COE); Doug Ullrich (COS)

Called to order: 3:30 p.m. in Austin Hall by Chair Tracy Steele

Special Guests:

Faculty Senate welcomed Maryam Ilahi, Psy. D., Counseling Psychologist, representing Counseling and Disability Services, and Shannon Reed, representing Residence Life.

They discussed workshops that will be offered for faculty and students to understand issues and questions regarding the LGBTQ community. One workshop will be offered to students, and another separate workshop will be offered to faculty. Each workshop will consist of three components: 1) providing historical context for LGBTQ issues, along with clarifying terminology; 2) an experiential exercise helping participants to feel what it's like to be different; 3) providing resources to help interested faculty and students become an effective ally. Training will last 1.5 hours for both groups. Faculty completing the training could choose to have a HAVEN sticker to indicate that they are a "safe haven" for students to discuss these issues. (n.b.: Flyers for the event have been posted around campus as of this writing).

Senators expressed concern that the student *perception* might be that a faculty member who does not possess a HAVEN sticker would indicate that the faculty member is *not* safe, and in fact is hostile. In addition, students with other issues might feel that they are not welcome in the office of a faculty member with a HAVEN sticker, since that faculty member is not explicitly declaring a safe haven for these other issues. Further, there is some discomfort that students might look to faculty members as counselors, when we do not all have such credentials. Dr. Ilahi assured Senate that the sticker indicated only that the faculty member was a safe haven and someone who could direct students to appropriate resources.

Senators pointed out that a similar discussion took place a number of years ago, including the issue of whether the perception that displaying a HAVEN sticker would naturally make some students feel excluded. Students and faculty should be made aware that the sticker – if displayed – indicates that the faculty member has some training, not that the office is a 'safe haven.' They should also be aware that the lack of a sticker does not imply that the faculty member is hostile.

Senators also requested data on what proportion of students felt faculty members weren't supportive, and suggested that a new study be done to find out if the perception of a hostile environment was data-driven or simply anecdotal. In addition, a study to determine whether "sticker = safe; no sticker = hostile" needs to be done.

Dr. Ilahi and Mr. Reed indicated that the dates for the workshops have not been determined exactly, but that they will likely occur near the end of October. An evening workshop will be held for students, while an afternoon workshop will be held for faculty. Both workshops will be limited to 25 participants, and faculty will be notified of these workshops via a website link. Depending on the success of these workshops, there might be some offered in the spring as well. It was suggested that an online workshop could be developed for online students.

Chair's Report:

1. Visioning and Planning Committee Update. The following Faculty Members were selected by the Administration for this committee, which met in late September to work with the administration on a long-term "vision" for SHSU: Mark Frank (COBA), Paul Loeffler (COS), Lee Miller (CHSS), Gaylene Armstrong (COCJ), Sheryl Murphy-Manley (COFAMC), Stanley Kelley (COS), Mary Nichter (COE), and Ken Hendrickson (CHSS)
2. Hard Copy of Budget – The Revised Recommended Budget of August 17 beginning on September 1 has been completed, 2012. The full report is 317 pages. There were no instructions given on whether or not this document may be e-mailed to anyone, but Chair Steele indicated that she could have it available in her office. It is also available on the library website.
3. Excellence in Teaching – Senate's three nominees for this committee (William Carroll (Political Science), Bala Maniam (Business and Finance) and Jerry Dowling (CJ)) were confirmed and letters signed the next day. In the process of passing on these names, Chair Steele met with Dawn Caplinger. They discussed the on-going review of functioning and non-functioning committees. Chair Steele informed Ms. Caplinger that the Senate's intention was to identify university committees that do not meet or that seem to have no real purpose rather than simply cut back on the number of committees.
4. Sept. 14th Meeting with Provost Hebert
 - a. E-College – SHSU will continue to pay Pearson for another two years for the E-College contract. In return, SHSU will gain access to Pearson's Tutorials (i.e. Math which students now purchase) which will appear in Student's Blackboard. SHSU Students would have access to all items in the My Lab Suite by Pearson.
 - b. CORE – Chair Steele thanked the Provost for posting information on the Workshops but noted that the dates and times were still not available at the CORE website; the Provost indicated that would be addressed.
 - c. A number of potential docket Items to be addressed by the Senate were discussed with the Provost including:
 1. Communication within SHSU – Regarding this issue, the Provost indicated that the President will meet with the Council of Academic Deans (CAD) and the vice presidents and associate vice presidents on alternating weeks. The information from these meetings will then be compiled and shared with Faculty Senate.
 2. Communication with the Community – Communication with both The Woodlands and Huntsville communities is good. Huntsville in particular has been helped significantly with cooperation between the nursing and allied health program and Huntsville Memorial Hospital. Despite the generally good state of relations, there has been some vocal opposition to the proposed Research Park. SHSU is commissioning for the first time a study of the economic impact of SHSU on Walker County.

3. Electronic Devices - Provost Hebert said the initial concern driving the limitation of faculty-assigned electronic devices (desktop computer systems, laptop computer systems, and tablets) was the notion that central control improves overall security. In order to get more than two electronic devices, faculty must currently submit an "exception form," which in Provost Hebert's interpretation means that a faculty member actually in need of the device in question. The Provost approves 100% of the applications if 1) the faculty and chair have signed off and, 2) funds are available within the Department or College.

4. President Gibson – On Wednesday, September 12, President Gibson spoke to the Budget Board. As it turns out, SHSU is now dead last in the State in funding, partially as a result of waivers and exemptions. President Gibson argued for a grant program to be established through THECB so that SHSU and other institutions can apply for reimbursements for certain fees and waivers. Should such a reimbursement program be set up, SHSU stands to recoup \$5 million. Specifically, HazLEwood exemptions cost SHSU \$2.7 million this year. The new "Legacy Clause" extends higher education benefits to dependents of Texas veterans, amounting to another \$1.2 million in waivers. For every dollar that SHSU receives from the State, \$0.40 actually goes directly into funding various waivers.

To cope with enrollment jump, SHSU added 248 sections, the tuition from which and the state funding for which almost covers the waivers.

President Gibson tried to make the case SHSU could not and should not sustain at the same level of other universities. The plan of incentive-based funding is once again under discussion at the legislative level. SHSU lost every penny of its incentive-based funding when the State of Texas withdrew its funding of this program. This action dropped SHSU to the bottom in State funding.

5. Space Utilization Problem (SUE) – There is a system-wide software program that computes a Space Utilization score based on the percentage of time a classroom is used as well as the percentage capacity used. There are two scores – one for lecture and one for lab – and the maximum attainable score by any institution is 200. SHSU currently operates with a SUE score of 176, but Provost Hebert believes that by using this software and restructuring, SHSU can improve that score.

6. Travel, Overloads – Provost Hebert indicated that all departments should currently have access via the COGNOS system to the completed approved travel forms that itemize what has and has not been reimbursed. He expressed dismay that some faculty members are coerced or feel coerced into uncompensated overloads. Regarding the IDEA system,

Assignments to Committees

Senators then discussed and voted on whether Senate wishes to investigate the following items. If so, which committee should be responsible?

1. IDEA – Senators expressed a need for the creators of the IDEA form to return to campus and explain why this is a valid instrument, the limitations of the instrument, and the ways in which it should be applied. The docket item was assigned to the Academic Affairs Committee.
2. Communication issues – both with administration and community. Communication from the upper administration consists of general town hall meetings, and the Senate consensus was that if faculty members choose not to attend to hear what is being

communicated, that is the problem of the individual faculty member. However, there are issues that are communicated from the President or Provost to the Deans, and this information does not make it all the way down to faculty members. Whether it is a problem with Deans or particular chairs is certainly worth exploring.

3. Graduate support – the stipends for graduate students and other graduate support issues will be addressed by the Academic Affairs Committee.
4. Parking (cost) – This issue was unanimously dropped and will not be considered during this session of Faculty Senate.
5. Investigate whether SHSU has a culture of intimidation, sexism, racism, ageism, etc., which can make it a hostile environment in which to work. Given the broad scope of this charge, there was a motion to amend the charge to investigate only the race issue. However, Senate agreed that the full issue can be addressed by the University Affairs Committee, and that committee will decide how broad an approach to take. Along the same lines, all HAVEN questions and concerns will also be looked at by the University Affairs Committee.
6. Smoke-Free Campus Rules and Enforcement – there are a number of questions about the role of faculty in the enforcement of this policy, given that the language of the policy designates faculty members as one set of enforcers. However, given that the policy does not outline any penalty for smoking on campus, faculty members are willing to let Student Government or Staff Council deal with the issue. Further, if students would like to push for designated smoking areas, students should be the drivers of such a policy.
7. Travel Reimbursement – it was agreed that faculty should be notified that they can question amounts reimbursed and see the itemization. There was concern expressed that the turnaround time between submitting paperwork and receiving the reimbursement has been growing longer over the years. This was not a universal perception, however, and rather than send this issue to committee, Senate indicated that we should simply publicize the right to question reimbursement and see the itemization.
8. Unpaid Overloads – The motion to address the issue of unpaid overloads was unanimously passed and the issue was assigned to the Faculty Affairs Committee.
9. Electronic Devices – It was felt that justifying a third electronic device via an exception form was 1) insulting; and 2) pointless if Provost Hebert almost uniformly approves them depending on chair approval and funds available. Several Senators expressed that this was time wasted by both parties involved. The requirement and use of exceptions was assigned to the Faculty Affairs Committee.
10. Barnes & Noble Luncheon - This issue will not be addressed by Faculty Senate.
11. Online course remuneration and quality – The question of how faculty members are compensated for developing and teaching online courses, and how the quality of these courses is assessed, has been assigned to the Academic Affairs Committee.

Texas Council of Faculty Senates will meet the last weekend in October. The Academic Affairs subcommittee has expressed a desire to submit questions regarding the Low Producing Program initiative that was enacted in 2011. If there are other concerns Senate would like to see addressed, please forward those to either Chair Steele or Chair-Elect James.

Core Report: Debbi Hatton provided a report from the Core Curriculum Committee. The deadline for submitting the proposals is October 22, 2012. At this point there is some confusion over whether the proposals go straight to the full committee or to the subcommittee. Clarification: There is a “send to” box in the proposal form. However, they will not be looked at by the full committee, but instead immediately assigned to the appropriate subcommittee.

Committee Reports:

1. Committee on Committees - Senator Kohers reported on vacancies in a variety of committees and which faculty members might be appropriate to fill those. All suggestions were unanimously accepted by Senate.
2. Other committee reports were deferred until the next Senate meeting in the interest of time.

New Business:

The President and Provost Roundtable Discussions will continue this year, the first one occurring on Wednesday, 26 September 2012.

Senator Baker handed out a proposal for an SHSU Food Pantry that would serve the needs of students struggling with food insecurity. Faculty Senate recommended support for the Food Pantry Proposal.

Adjournment: 5:08 p.m

Next meeting: October 4