

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

October 8, 2009

Members Present

Chad Hargrave, Renee James, Sheryl Murphy-Manley, Paul Loeffler, Brian Loft, William Jasper, Hee-Jong Joo, Gerald Kohers, Leonard Breen, Melinda Miller, Mack Hines, Donna Desforges, Tracy Steele, Andrew Lopenzina, Darci Hill, Erin Cassidy

Members Absent

Deborah Hatton, Jeff Crane, Rebecca Bustamante, Mark Frank, Donald Bumpass, Carl Brewer, Ling Ren, Brian Oetiker, Emmette Jackson

Call to Order

Chair Loeffler called the meeting to order at 3:33pm.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 24, 2009 meeting were approved with changes.

Special Guests

No special guest this meeting. The executive committee agreed to try and limit special guests to every other meeting; however, exceptions can be made.

Chair's Report

Chair Loeffler and Chair-elect Frank had an informational meeting with Provost Payne on September 28, 2009. Topics of discussion included:

- The process of selecting the recipients of the three University Awards (Teaching, Research, and Service)
- Regarding H1N1, the faculty should be flexible with their attendance policy.
- Review/changes to Academic Policies.
- Provost Payne does not use the IDEA scores to determine merit, except on a case by case basis.
- Market adjustments for this year.
- The transition from Blackboard to E-College should be seamless.
- The \$25 million endowment is not one lump sum to be received this year, rather the amount is to be spread out over several years
- Low enrollment programs
- The new University Center building is approximated to be 100 to 125 thousand square feet with ~\$14 million allocated.
- Budget looks bad for this year and even worse for the following year with possible budget reductions.
- SHSU had a 2% growth in enrollment for Fall 2009. Compared to peer institutions, SHSU could have done better.
- Expanding distance learning looks to be very important.

There was no APC meeting this week, so nothing to report.

Old Business

Parking was discussed again and assigned to University Affairs.

New Business

Senate discussed merit/market adjustments for this year. Specifically, concerns were raised regarding how market adjustments were allocated to each college and also within each college. The Faculty Affairs subcommittee was assigned to determine what process was followed.

Concerns were raised as to why the faculty should be flexible with their attendance policy and swine flu, when there have been very few confirmed cases.

The administration of financial aid for this semester was discussed. A question was raised on how many students, particularly graduate students, opted to go elsewhere as a consequence of not receiving financial aid in a timely fashion. What effect did this have on small degree programs? This semester the conversion to the Banner system was said to be a cause for a lot of the problems. Dissatisfaction was expressed with the apparent impersonal interaction between the Financial Aid Office and students. The issue was assigned to University Affairs subcommittee.

The senate believes that the faculty must be involved with the review/changes to any of the Academic Policies. It was suggested that senior faculty would be a good choice in reviewing policies. The issue will be brought to Provost Payne and was also assigned to the Academic Affairs subcommittee.

On-line degree programs were discussed and the push by the Board of Regents and SHSU Administration to offer more of them. Concerns over class sizes and compensation were raised. Also, what is the effect of on-line programs to on campus and University Center classes. The issue is assigned to the Academic Affairs subcommittee.

Creating a University-wide math tutoring center was discussed and assigned to the Academic Affairs subcommittee.

Committee Reports: Committee chairs were to review each committee's assigned tasks and outline the plan of action for the semester.

Faculty Affairs committee

- 1) Goal: Examine the degree to which IDEA forms affect merit & promotion.

Objectives to meet this goal: Find other schools that use IDEA; find document from IDEA company that states how results should be used.

Look at how well H&SS's peer review worked as a means of determining teaching effectiveness.

- 2) What process was followed in this year's distribution of market adjustment, by College and within each College?
- 3) Goal: Look at faculty parking issues. (Moved to University Affairs)

Objectives to meet this goal: Compare number of faculty & staff personnel to number of faculty/staff parking spots; find out plan for faculty/staff parking in newly released 10-year master plan (supposedly, 3 parking garages are to be built !?)

- 4) Examine the process of awarding the three university wide faculty awards (Teaching, Research, and Service) each year.

University Affairs

Objectives:

1. Address the university parking situation and come up with suggestions for improvement.
2. Address the Barnes & Noble Bookstore issues and concerns that have been expressed by faculty. Perhaps invite them to meet with the Senate.
3. Discuss the safety issues involving street crossings and look at possible solutions.
4. Address faculty's concerns regarding Aramark's catering services and quality of food.
5. Address the issue of smoking close to buildings and come up with a suggestion for a solution.
6. Address apparent problems with the Financial Aid Office.

Academic Affairs

Investigate the possibilities of creating a university-wide math tutoring center.

“First, the background: In many classes, basic math skills are a necessity. Tragically, many students don't have those skills, despite having passed developmental math. If we attempt to refer them to our current Math Lab in Farrington, they are told essentially that if they aren't seeking help in a specific MATH class, they have to wait until all the MATH students are helped. Only then can a non-math student receive tutoring. Apparently this semester, we have 1800 students enrolled in developmental math, making the math tutoring center quite full at all operating hours. Moreover, the Math Lab is funded solely by the mathematics department.

It seems odd that SHSU has a reading center and a writing center, but no university-wide math center, particularly owing to the fact that OVER 10% of its student body is currently trying to pass high school math again.

At this point we are working on a variety of items related to this issue:

- 1) Creation of a survey of faculty to determine the demand for a math tutoring center. Bill Jasper and Hee-Jong Joo have completed a draft of this, which I've attached for your comments and suggestions;
- 2) Determination of possible funding sources for the staffing of the center (Darci Hill is working on this);
- 3) Finding out whether OTHER universities have such a center sponsored by the university itself, not just by the math department (Mack Hines is working on this);
- 4) Formulation of a letter to the administration outlining the need for and benefits from a math tutoring center." This letter will depend on the findings from steps 1 – 3.

Submitted by C. Renee James, chair of Academic Affairs subcommittee.

The amount of faculty involvement in planning online degree programs was assigned to Academic Affairs.

Committee on Committees

Due to time constraints, the Committee on Committees will report at the next meeting.

Senate adjourned at 5:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Gerald Kohers, Faculty Senator