

November 2007 Faculty Senate Minutes

Faculty Senate Minutes 11-7-07

Senators Present: Lea Ann Alexander, Beverly Baker, Angela Boswell, Steven Carter, Martha Dale Cooley, Joyce Shepherd, Paul Glover, Catherine Leach, Gary Smithey, Patrick Wempe, Rafael Bejarano, Kevin Durand, Brian English, Martin Halpern, Maralea Gourley, Paula Leming, Rick McDaniel, Cindy Jackson, Don Wells, Fred Worth, Laura Storm

Senators Absent: Linda English, Mike Matthews, Jack Meadows, Hank Wilson, Beverly Buys, Troy Hogue, Georgine Steinmiller

Guests Present: Vice President Bob Houston, Vice President Gail Stephens

The meeting was called to order at approximately 3:15PM.

1. Discussion with Dr. Houston:

a. Faculty Evaluations: Who gets to see them, and when? Previously, they would go from David Epperhart in CCS to Academic Deans, then from Deans to Department Chairs. A possible solution for the future is for Lisa Buck in CCS to seal them. They could go to the Dean's office sealed, and then go to department chairs for whatever course of action the chair wishes to take.

i. Question: Why is it not reasonable for CCS to send them directly to individual faculty members?

Answer: Lisa's job is to compile them and release them to the appropriate location. It is to lessen the burden on her.

ii. Question: We (faculty) get evaluations much later than we used to. They also were mailed directly to us in the past.

Answer: Have the Senate make a recommendation as to the appropriate procedure to follow.

b. The Presidential Search Committee has narrowed the field to fifteen individuals. They will all be interviewed in Little Rock, and the committee will narrow the field down to a shorter list that the board will consider. The search process so far has been very smooth and the list of candidates is impressive.

c. NC issues: This is the first year that we have admitted a group of students that fell below our admission standards. We were concerned that they weren't really ready for college. We made a good faith effort by admitting them. Instructors in remedial courses only have the option to give a NC so that the students can either come back and take the courses again at HSU, or be able to go to a community college without the stigma of being on academic probation from HSU because of failing courses.

i. Question: On the NC form, it says that if the student receives a NC this semester, that they cannot receive a NC next semester. Is there any way to verify this in computer software?

Answer: I don't know the answer, but there needs to be a way to do so.

2. Discussion with Dr. Stephens:

a. Dr. Stephens opened her discussion by clarifying her role on campus and addressing comments from faculty regarding her "meddling in academic affairs" by stating that it is not her place to discuss classroom standards, and that she does not have the ability to change policies on her own.

b. Feedback on the transitional student program: We knew it was an experiment when we first implemented it. We have made the following observations:

i. They write about college in their journals for the Henderson Seminar course. When asked about how college is different from high school, many wrote that college is easier, and that they have more freedom here.

ii. We believe that they do not understand that they started out their college career on probation. They see themselves as equal to all other students. Other (non-transitional) students also tend to not take the issue of being on probation seriously.

iii. They were reluctant to get tutoring until mid-semester.

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iv. They wanted to take whatever course they wanted to at whatever time they wanted to. This might be due to some lapses in the registration process.

v. Involvement in organizations is a problem.

vi. Part of the contract was that they were to get grades regularly, and this has become a problem.

vii. Reading comprehension is a problem with many of them.

viii. If they flunk here, it means that they cannot go to school anywhere else.

c. Resolutions for these observations and issues:

i. The contract is going out with the letter of admission. The contract has been substantially changed. We are open to any suggestions from faculty for additions or changes to this contract.

ii. We do not want them to feel stigmatized by being in the transitional program, but we will have to try to cluster them together in remedial classes.

iii. We will almost have to tell them what their schedules will be. In a cabinet meeting, it was agreed that these students cannot be involved in athletics or other organizations such as band, choir, etc.

iv. Current transitional students have been advised individually to drop any classes where they will receive an F. That precludes remedial courses. The cabinet discussed what we can do to help this situation. The result of this discussion was to be able to request a grade of NC under certain situations in remedial courses.

v. For next fall, we will have the addition of a written essay on why the student should be admitted to HSU, and a second reading test will be administered before admission.

vi. Question: How can we know if a student has already received a NC in a course?

Answer: The instructor could receive this information in software via some type of symbol or indication that indicates that an NC has already been received.

d. Question: Some courses have extra-curricular activities involved as part of the course. The contract may need to be modified so that it excludes not only organizations but also these types of courses.

Answer: If faculty can provide a list of these courses, we can make sure that these transitional students are not enrolling in them.

e. Question: Mathematics and Computer Science Department eliminated the NC because the students will stop participating in the course when they realize that they will take an NC instead.

Answer: We have instances where students could be saved when they could not be saved since we do not allow dropping of remedial courses.

f. Question: We have been told repeatedly that the cabinet is not a policy-making body.

Answer: The cabinet does make policy with regards to administrative affairs.

g. Question: This is an academic matter, and it did not go through the proper channels. If we are making a change to the catalog, it should go through the UAC.

Answer: My concern is that this is something that we needed to look at now. The cabinet decided this matter.

h. Concern was expressed: Is this going to set a precedent of making policies mid-semester?

Answer (from Dr. Houston): Among the extra 200 students that we have this fall are the 70 transitional students we have admitted. We will not repeat this program many times if it is not successful. I can assure everyone that we have gone through proper procedures to make these recommendations. What prompted most of this is that we have to get our enrollment up.

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i. Question/Concern: Should we continue forward with this program? If we have to find ways to “not hurt” these students, it means that they were not ready for college. Lowering admission standards wrecks havoc with an academic institution. Many things seem to happen lately without consultation through proper channels as well.

Answer: This is a pilot program. Admission standards to HSU were not changed. We will have already admitted next fall’s class before we know how successful this year was. If we have not been successful, there will not be another iteration of the program.

j. Question: Once a class is offered for NC, the military will not pay for that class. Is this true?

Answer: Some scholarships require a student to enroll in and successfully complete X number of hours. If these students opt for a NC, then they are out of line with their own scholarship requirements.

k. Suggestions from faculty members for the transitional student program:

i. Have the students write the essay in a controlled environment, or we will not be able to tell who wrote it.

ii. We need to lower the reading level of the contract. We should remove the “edubabble” from the contract, and make it clearer as to what it means.

iii. In determining admission to the transitional program, just straight numbers will not quite work. If a student is low in reading comprehension, the student does not have a chance in college. What minimum level of reading comprehension should a student have in order to have a chance to complete the remedial English and Reading courses?

iv. Students also need a background in science to be successful in any of our science courses.

l. Dr. Houston : Many times, students with a 16 on the ACT will outperform students that receive a 17 or 18. It is those few that work hard and might make it that we want to give a chance to.

m. Dr. Stephens: We will have some wonderful success stories out of this program.

n. Question/Concern: We should also look at the social background of these students that are entering this program as well. How do we learn these things without invading privacy too much?

Answer: Sometimes we lose students with much better academic backgrounds as well. Social barriers are not common only to students in the transitional program.

o. Question: Is it the student’s option or is it the faculty member’s option to give a grade of NC?

Answer: This is a collaborative decision between both the faculty member and the student, but it is ultimately the faculty member’s authority to either grant the NC or give a grade of D or F.

3. The October Minutes were approved as amended.

4. The President’s Report was given.

5. Update on the Presidential Search:

a. We will meet for three days, spending one hour with each candidate.

b. We will narrow the field to somewhere between 3 and 8 candidates.

c. The Board will then decide from the narrowed field.

d. The Senate Executive Committee will meet and will express the sense of the Senate that a broader process is preferable and construct an instrument such that the opinions of the faculty at large can be provided to the Board after the on-campus interviews in a timely manner.

6. A motion to move directly to new business was approved.

7. A resolution to provide librarian ranks was passed as amended. The amended resolution is attached to these minutes.

8. A resolution regarding faculty evaluations was approved.

a. “The evaluation forms will be released by the Office of Computer and Communication Services directly to the instructor who will then provide a copy of each summary sheet to his/her immediate supervisor. Faculty evaluations shall be returned to the faculty no later than the first day of registration of the semester subsequent to the semester in which they were administered.”

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9. The issue of Computer and Communication Services making changes in the middle of the semester (namely Windows Vista upgrades planned for February 2008) was referred to the Operations Committee.
10. The following resolution was passed:
 - a. "Since the Cabinet is a policy making body, Faculty Senate resolves that a Faculty Senate representative be invited to and allowed at Cabinet Meetings."
11. A motion to adjourn was passed at approximately 5:20PM.

Resolution for Item 7 regarding Librarian Ranks:

Be it resolved that;

Henderson State University adopt a system of ranks leading to promotion and tenure that more accurately reflects librarians' duties and that allows fair advancement based upon achievement of a clear set of guidelines for each rank. Such a system shall be commensurate with librarian ranks at many colleges and universities nationwide, including the University of Arkansas—Fayetteville, University of Arkansas—Little Rock, and University of Arkansas-Monticello. (Among Arkansas public, four-year institutions granting tenure, only UCA and Henderson require a second Masters degree for tenure.)

The Faculty Handbook shall be amended as follows:

III. Appointment, Promotion, Tenure, Excellence Awards, Termination, and Annual Evaluation

B. Categories of University Personnel

1. Faculty Personnel – Regular Full-Time, Tenure-Track

- b. Tenurial ranks are those of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, *Assistant Librarian, and Associate Librarian.*

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D. Types of Academic Appointments

2. Definitions of Regular Academic Appointments

3. *Definitions of Librarian Academic Appointments*

- a. *Associate Librarian. An associate librarian holds a minimum of a Master's degree in library science from an American Library Association-accredited institution and performs technical processes and/or public service library work requiring full professional training in library science. Years of experience shall be only one of the criteria for classification as an associate librarian. A librarian holding this rank shall have made substantial contributions to library professional organizations and/or to the institution or library where employed, and achieved a high level of competence in bibliographical activities, in research, or in other professional endeavors. An associate librarian should have a documented record of effective performance which shows an increasing responsibility and continuing growth. The associate librarian will have five years experience as assistant librarian. An associate librarian is eligible for tenure.*
- b. *Assistant Librarian. An assistant librarian holds a minimum of a Master's degree in library science from an American Library Association-accredited institution and performs technical processes and/or public service library work requiring full professional training in library science. An assistant librarian holding this rank shall have an academic record and/or experience that indicate(s) a potential for successful performance as an academic librarian. An assistant librarian is eligible for tenure.*

4. Criteria and Notice of Standards

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III. Appointment, Promotion, Tenure, Excellence Awards, Termination, and Annual Evaluation

K. Criteria for tenure and promotion

2. Requirements specified in the definition of regular academic appointments

- c. The following practices in promotion will be observed under usual

conditions:

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5. To be promoted from assistant librarian to associate librarian, a person must have an earned MLS and 5 years experience as an assistant librarian.