

THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met Friday, February 8, 2008, at 3 p.m. in Room 300 South of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center. The following members were present:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Dr. Tim Smith | Dr. Hanna Norton |
| Dr. Glen Bishop | Mr. Rick Ihde |
| Dr. Jeff Mitchell | Dr. Sammie Stephenson |
| Ms. Sarah Robison | Dr. Scott Kirkconnell |
| Dr. Cathy Baker | |

Dr. Robert Fithen, Dr. David Ward, Dr. Pat Buford, Dr. Annette Holeyfield, Dr. Andrew Cannon, Dr. Trey Philpotts, Dr. Willy Hoefler, and Dr. Cheryl Smith were absent. Dr. Christine Austin, Ms. Tammy Rhodes, Ms. Leslie Miller, and Mr. Gary Logan were visitors.

As a quorum was not present, President Smith indicated that official business could not be considered. Noting that Dr. Austin and the SGA representatives present had made time to attend the meeting, he asked Dr. Austin to give her presentation concerning academic integrity and student honor codes. Dr. Kirkconnell asked if he could tape the presentation and received Dr. Austin's consent. A summary of her presentation follows.

Dr. Austin stated that one of her primary responsibilities at the University of Denver as Chief Student Judicial Affairs Director was the development and implementation of a student honor code. She noted that her research as a doctoral student was in the areas of academic integrity, honor codes, and judicial law. Dr. Austin indicated that implementation of a student honor code at a university "changes the culture, instills pride," and eliminates widespread cheating. She stated that an honor code provides a "framework" for governance and creation of policies relating to academic integrity and that efforts to curb cheating without this type of framework are not very successful. Dr. Austin advised that honor codes "create agreement and understanding" of the parameters relating to cheating for both students and faculty.

Dr. Austin noted that few campuses have "full blown honor codes" as these are difficult to implement for many state institutions who have never had this type of culture on their campuses before. The institutions implementing student honor codes in recent times have implemented "modified honor codes" which include a written code (which may or may not be signed by the student) and student governance with faculty advisement. She reported that it takes approximately six years before an honor code will become "an integral part of the culture" of the institution.

Ms. Miller, SGA President, questioned how an honor code keeps a student from cheating. Dr. Austin noted that many students don't understand what constitutes cheating and the honor code policies will outline what is defined as cheating on the university campus. She also commented that the culture created by having an honor code discourages cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty. She emphasized, however, that honor codes are not to be considered as "punitive measures;" rather, an honor code "enhances the distinctiveness of the institution" and attracts students.

Dr. Austin reported that a national coalition exists to promote academic integrity on college campuses, the Center for Academic Integrity. This entity, if requested, can send individuals to a university campus to measure the current level of cheating.

Dr. Stephenson questioned whether implementation of a student honor code increases the idea of tradition on the campus. Dr. Austin noted that existence of the honor code helps build the student's sense of identity with the university.

Dr. Mitchell stated that the Student Government Association needs to review this issue and then meet with the Senate to discuss whether the SGA is willing to consider implementation of an honor code on this campus. Dr. Austin stated that she would be happy to meet with the SGA at any time to discuss the issue.

Several senators expressed their appreciation to Dr. Austin for her presentation. Ms. Miller noted a better understanding of the issue after listening to the presentation and stated that she would invite Dr. Austin to a meeting of the SGA.

Dr. Kirkconnell noted that he would have the recording of the presentation placed on the Senate's webpage.

President Smith stated that he would call a meeting of the Faculty Senate for next Friday, February 15, in order to conduct business.

Pat Chronister
Recording Secretary's notes