

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met Wednesday, April 14, 2004, at 4:00 p.m. in Room 325 of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center. The following members were present:

Ms. Peggy Lee	Mr. Ken Futterer
Dr. Sid Womack	Mr. Ron Robison
Dr. Annette Holeyfield	Dr. Jeff Robertson
Dr. Scott Kirkconnell	Ms. Darla Sparacino
Dr. Carl Greco	Dr. Trey Philpotts
Ms. Marti Wilkerson	Dr. Kevin Mason
Dr. Joe Moore	

Dr. Charles Busch and Dr. Kathy Pearson were absent. Dr. Jack Hamm, Dr. Jeff Mitchell, Dr. Susan Underwood, Dr. Glenn Sheets, and Dr. Mary Gunter were visitors.

CALL TO ORDER
APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

President Sparacino called the meeting to order and asked for action on the minutes of the March 10, 2004, meeting. Motion by Dr. Greco, seconded by Dr. Mason, to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion carried. There being no amendments or corrections, motion by Dr. Womack, seconded by Ms. Lee, to approve the minutes as distributed. Motion carried.

REPORT BY THE
VICE PRESIDENT

President Sparacino asked Dr. Hamm to address the Senate. Dr. Hamm reported that he had been able to partially address issues relating to feedback being given to promotion and tenure applicants during the fall, 2003, process. He had spoken to those applicants who had received negative recommendations during the promotion and tenure process and had been able to provide a certain amount of feedback, mainly by directing the individual to areas where additional work appeared to be needed for future success in a tenure and/or promotion application. Dr. Hamm noted that it was difficult to speak with applicants because he could not speak for the Promotion and Tenure Committee, nor for the deans or department heads. Some of the conferences were held with both the appropriate dean and the applicant, and he stated that these were useful sessions. Dr. Hamm stated that he will continue with this practice and will also continue to work with deans, department heads, and the Promotion and Tenure Committee on this issue.

Dr. Hamm reported that applications for admission for the fall semester are running at approximately the same rate as last spring with expected enrollment for fall at roughly 6,000 on-campus students. He stated that his office has projected that approximately 1,150 new students are needed for the fall semester in order to maintain the 6,000 enrollment.

Dr. Hamm stated that he had received some information from the Budget Office on retention of academic scholarships from fall to spring which may relate to previous discussions on grade inflation. In 2000-01, the freshmen scholarship retention rate from fall to spring was 45%. In 2001-02, it was 55%; 2002-03, 59%; 2003-04, 64%. Dr. Hamm noted that there was a 19% increase in the retention rate of scholarships by freshmen from 2000-01 to 2003-04. The overall retention rate for all scholarship students retained from fall to spring in 2000-01 was 59%. The overall rate from fall, 2003, to spring, 2004, was 74%. Dr. Hamm stated that this data should say something significant

about the ability of the students being recruited. He also noted that improving retention rates will have an impact on scholarships and will affect recruitment efforts.

Dr. Hamm reported that the budget process is on-going and that the 2004-05 budget should be presented to the Board of Trustees on May 20. He noted that faculty contracts will not be issued until after that date. In response to questions, Dr. Hamm stated that adjustments in tuition and fees will most likely have to be made in order to make the budget for next year. He noted that Dr. Brown is continuing to work hard on the issue of state appropriations and that he remains hopeful that there may be some help for higher education in the next legislative session.

Dr. Hamm stated that two priorities during this year's budget process have been a salary increase for faculty and funding for a faculty development program. The *Faculty Handbook* has three sections devoted to procedures for funding of faculty development opportunities: sabbaticals, summer fellowship, and faculty development. Dr. Hamm stated that discussions will need to be held with the appropriate committees to determine whether any revision of the *Handbook* is necessary in order to make the process clearer. He will also work on a systematic application process to be in place by next fall. Dr. Hamm noted that he is quite aware that much has been asked of faculty over the past several years due to strong enrollment and that many faculty have taught large sections and overloads. This fund will enable some faculty to request relief which has not been available before. Dr. Hamm stated that, as an example, with the faculty development fund paying for replacement adjuncts, he hopes to give some faculty the opportunity to have decreased course loads for one or two semesters in order to engage in faculty development activities related to their disciplines.

Dr. Hamm expressed his appreciation for the service of the Faculty Senate during this academic year and excused himself.

CURRICULAR ITEMS

The following actions were taken with regards to recommendations from the Curriculum Committee:

Department of Business and Economics:

- (a) Motion by Dr. Womack, seconded by Mr. Robison, to add MGMT 4203, Project Management, and MGMT 4213, Business Leadership, to the course descriptions. Motion carried.

Center for Leadership and Learning:

- (a) President Sparacino noted that the Curriculum Committee had added a prerequisite to the course description which she then read: Open to undergraduate students with no more than 30 earned semester hours or by permission of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Motion by Dr. Womack, seconded by Mr. Robison, to add CSP 1013, Principles of Collegiate Success, to the course descriptions. Dr. Underwood stated that this class is being proposed as an elective and will be offered to students to assist with the transition into the university setting and to improve and enhance critical thinking skills needed for success at the collegiate level. She noted several institutions at which this approach had succeeded in positively affecting retention and graduation rates. Dr. Underwood stated that she would be the instructor of record and would supervise graduate students in the College Student Personnel program for much of the actual classroom instruction. She also noted that only a few sections would most likely be offered for fall, 2004. Motion carried.

OPEN FORUM No discussion items were raised at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/
INFORMATION
ITEMS President Sparacino asked Dr. Kirkconnell to comment on the issue of grade inflation. Dr. Kirkconnell reported that the sub-committee reviewing grade inflation had requested assistance by the Director of Institutional Research who would not have time to perform the requested analysis until this summer. Therefore, the sub-committee will report back to the Senate in the fall.

President Sparacino reminded the Senators that the election of Elected Standing Committees will be held Tuesday, April 20, 2004, in Pendergraft 323 from 10 a.m to 1:30 p.m. She noted that the Results of the School Elections had been distributed in the Senators' packets and solicited volunteers to run the elections (i.e., 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. - Dr. Greco, Ms. Wilkerson; 11 a.m. to 12 noon - Dr. Womack; 12 noon to 1 p.m. - Mr. Futterer; 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. - Dr. Mason; 1:30 p.m. to count the votes - President Sparacino, Dr. Philpotts).

After discussion, it was decided that the Senate would meet in May only if business necessitating a meeting developed.

President Sparacino expressed her appreciation to the Senators for their willingness to serve during this year, especially noting Ms. Wilkerson and Mr. Futterer for their service on the Senate sub-committee. She also presented Ms. Chronister with a plaque in appreciation of her service to the Senate as Recording Secretary.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Darla Sparacino, M.Ed., President



Scott Kirkconnell, Ph.D., Secretary