

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met Thursday, March 10, 2005, at 3:00 p.m. in Room 325 of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center. The following members were present:

Dr. Kathy Pearson	Mr. Ken Futterer
Dr. Carl Greco	Dr. Brenda Montgomery
Ms. Peggy Lee	Dr. Trey Philpotts
Dr. Jeff Robertson	Dr. Sid Womack
Ms. Marti Wilkerson	Dr. Charles Busch
Dr. Shelia Jackson	

Dr. Joe Moore, Dr. Kevin Mason, Ms. Darla Sparacino, and Dr. Carey Roberts were absent.

CALL TO ORDER
APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

President Philpotts called the meeting to order and asked for action on the December 2, 2004, and December 7, 2004, minutes. Motion by Dr. Greco, seconded by Ms. Lee, to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion carried. There being no amendments or corrections, motion by Dr. Pearson, seconded by Ms. Wilkerson, to approve both sets of minutes as distributed. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:
STANDING
COMMITTEE
ELECTIONS &
ELECTRONIC
VOTING

President Philpotts announced that a sub-committee would oversee the election process for the elected standing committees; he asked Dr. Robertson and Dr. Greco to continue their service in this area. He asked for other volunteers, and Dr. Pearson indicated her willingness to serve. President Philpotts questioned when school election results would be available and received an indication that at least one school had not yet held elections. He then suggested that the third week in April might be appropriate to hold the campus wide elections.

President Philpotts noted that several details relating to the electronic election needed to be discussed. He emphasized that the faculty will need to be reminded of the new process; candidates will need to be notified that they can post platform statements; those faculty uncomfortable with Blackboard will need to be accommodated; and volunteers will need to count the votes. Dr. Greco stated that a computer in Pendergraft could be made available for the purpose of assisting faculty with the electronic voting; he noted that this service should probably only be available for one day of the voting time period. President Philpotts stated that an email could once again be sent campus wide, reminding the faculty of the new process and giving instructions on accessing and using the Blackboard site. He observed that he could also ask the department heads to assist by placing copies of the email in faculty mailboxes. It was noted that Senators should also encourage faculty in their schools to participate and be willing to assist them with the process. President Philpotts asked the Senators to let him know of any concerns or suggestions.

BUDGET
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

President Philpotts reported that he had asked Ms. Wilkerson, Chair-Elect, to attend the Budget Advisory Committee meeting in February as he had been away. Ms. Wilkerson stated that this meeting had been a preliminary meeting to discuss the budget. She reported that Dr. Brown had given the group legislative updates and had spoken about the public school facilities issue as having slowed down the progress of the Legislature. She

mentioned a couple of bills, one concerning merit scholarships and the other the transferability of courses, which Dr. Brown had reviewed for the group. Ms. Wilkerson commented that she believed that the bill relating to transferability of courses had been reworked somewhat and that it would not be as big of a problem as originally thought. President Philpotts reported that another Budget Advisory Committee meeting would be held tomorrow (i.e., March 11) and that he would attend this meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:
GENERAL
EDUCATION
TEXTBOOKS

President Philpotts asked Dr. Busch to give the Senate an update on the general education textbook issue (i.e., a desire to require common texts in large general education sections). Dr. Busch stated that page 12 of the *Faculty Handbook* contains a passage which commits the University to the concept of academic freedom based upon recommendations by the AAUP (i.e., American Association of University Professors). He stated that Dr. Jeff Mitchell had contacted the lead attorney of the AAUP concerning this issue and then read portions of the response received. Dr. Busch stated that the response indicates common texts should be used only in a small number of instances (e.g., physical sciences, foreign languages). He stated that the response had been sent to Dr. Tarver, Dr. Duncan, Dr. Hamm, and Dr. Philpotts. Dr. Busch reported that during a recent departmental meeting he had asked Dr. Tarver to ask Dr. Duncan why no faculty input on this issue had been sought and noted that this was in violation of page 2 of the *Faculty Handbook* concerning the concept of shared governance. Dr. Busch stated that Dr. Tarver made an inquiry but received no response. He then stated that Dr. Tarver had told him that the Deans Council is in the final stages of preparing recommendations concerning this issue.

Dr. Busch reported that he was in the process of editing three books, one of which is an "intro" text which he plans to use in one of his classes at a later time. He emphasized that instructors might not be able to use their own texts if everyone is required to use a common text. He stated that most universities allow instructors to use their own texts as long as they do not receive royalties. Dr. Pearson expressed her concern with this issue; she indicated that the Mathematics Department is continually running pilot remedial courses aimed at improving the success rate of these courses. These pilot courses use different texts than those required in the regular remedial courses, and she observed that a policy requiring all texts for a given general education course to be the same could hurt this process. Dr. Busch was questioned as to what is motivating the Deans Council to look at this issue. He stated that he believed the bottom line was money and issues relating to assessment.

After discussion it was determined that President Philpotts will ask Dr. Hamm to attend the next meeting and speak to this issue.

OPEN FORUM

President Philpotts reported that he had received an anonymous letter addressed to him as chair of the Faculty Senate. The letter had asked the Senate to look more closely at the CSP 1013, Principles of Collegiate Success, course approved by the Senate in April, 2004. The letter had questioned the academic rigor of the course and had also noted that students appear to be taking the course to retain their financial aid. President Philpotts reminded the Senate that the course had been approved but with quite a bit of debate. He also noted that two additional sections of the course, with a starting date of mid-term, were now being offered. Dr. Robertson stated that he believed the course was advantageous as far as an orientation course but that he did not approve of the three credit hours being awarded. Dr. Montgomery stated that one of her students had expressed to her how beneficial the course was for them; she also encouraged the Senate to find out more about this issue before denouncing the course. Mr. Futterer noted that the anonymous letter contained anecdotal information concerning the course and suggested that the Senate talk with Dr. Hamm on this issue also. It was also decided to have the original course proposal distributed to the Senators prior to next month's meeting for review.

Mr. Futterer asked that Dr. Hamm also address a possible review process for adjunct instructors. He stated that a procedure should be in place campus wide to assist in the search and hiring process for adjunct faculty. He noted that a practical problem is the current pay that adjuncts receive. Mr. Futterer asked that this item be on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/
INFORMATION
ITEMS

President Philpotts asked if there were any information items. Dr. Busch reported that he had received information from the Arkansas Tech University AAUP Chapter concerning faculty salaries. He reported that the Legislature sets a salary cap for every faculty rank. He then read from a spreadsheet the salaries of several of the Senators, noting for each what percentage of their salary cap they were receiving. He also read the salaries and percentages for several administrators. He then reported that Assistant Professors were, on average, making 65 percent of their salary cap; Associate Professors, 69 percent; and Professors, 73 percent. He noted that the President, Vice Presidents, and Associate Vice Presidents are making, on average, 111 percent of their salary caps. He stated that the AAUP is not concerned that the administrators are making too much money but that the faculty are not making enough.

Dr. Busch also reported that, based upon information received from two different instructors, he had checked the academic status of several football players. Dr. Busch expressed his opinion that the rules relating to suspension and probation of football players are not being followed as rigorously as they are for other students.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Trey Philpotts, Ph.D., President



Jeff Robertson, Ph.D., Secretary