

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met Wednesday, February 14, 2007, at 3 p.m. in Room 300 South of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center. The following members were present:

Dr. Cheryl Smith	Dr. Tim Smith
Dr. Carey Roberts	Mr. Rick Ihde
Dr. Jeff Robertson	Dr. Shelia Jackson
Dr. Jeff Mitchell	Dr. Trey Philpotts
Dr. Robert Fithen	Dr. Sammie Stephenson
Dr. Scott Kirkconnell	Dr. Hanna Norton
Dr. Brenda Montgomery	Dr. David Ward
Ms. Pat Buford	Dr. Andrew Cannon
Ms. Sarah Robison	

Dr. Jack Hamm was a visitor.

CALL TO ORDER
APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

President Jackson called the meeting to order and asked for action on the December 6, 2006, minutes. Motion by Dr. Roberts, seconded by Dr. Cannon, to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion carried. There being no amendments or corrections, motion by Ms. Robison, seconded by Dr. Stephenson, to approve the minutes as distributed. Motion carried.

REPORT BY VICE
PRESIDENT:
BANNER
IMPLEMENTATION

President Jackson asked Dr. Hamm for any comments. Dr. Hamm reported that he had met with the Academic Council last week to discuss the Banner Student implementation. At that meeting he had distributed copies of information related to the upcoming implementation which he had asked the department heads to give to faculty. Dr. Hamm stated that Banner Student will go live on April 9 in time for pre-registration for summer and fall, 2007, terms. He noted that the "question and answer" document was prepared to address questions received in Academic Affairs and to give perspectives on why certain decisions have been made thus far due to the Banner implementation. Dr. Hamm noted considerable strain on staff in the Registrar's Office, Admissions, Financial Aid, Institutional Research, and Computer Services due to the impending "go live" date. Training for faculty will be scheduled "just-in-time" and will take approximately one hour. He stated that training for department heads and departmental secretaries would be more extensive due to training related to actual entry of the course schedules along with registration training. He noted that a backup plan does exist where registration can be done in the current SIS system as a last resort. However, it is not anticipated that this will be needed.

Dr. Hamm asked for any questions. Dr. Cannon questioned whether the schedule of courses would be available online two to three weeks prior to registration due to advising needs. Dr. Hamm stated that he would look into this but believed that advising could be done early using the SIS system since the schedule of courses would also be loaded on that system. Dr. Cannon also requested a "cheat sheet" for faculty on using Banner. Dr. Hamm stated that this should be provided at the training sessions. Dr. Roberts questioned whether students would receive formal training on Banner Student. Dr. Hamm replied that he did not

see any way to provide that. Dr. Norton questioned when the mainframe would be disabled. Dr. Hamm noted that the mainframe would still be up and running until the contract on the software runs out in a few years; however, up-to-date information on students will only be available on Banner Student.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Dr. Hamm announced that the next Higher Learning Commission visit will be in 2010-11. He noted recent events have brought home the need to intensify planning and consideration related to this visit. He reported that two secondary education programs (English education and Foreign Language education) did not pass review by their respective national associations as required by NCATE. Dr. Hamm advised that he is currently attempting to determine how best to respond and the impact on students currently in these programs. Dr. Hamm observed that he did not believe there were real problems within these two programs but that institutions are frequently at the mercy of the accreditation report readers. He emphasized that all departments must assess their programs and document the results. Dr. Hamm stated he did not believe it was too early in the institutional accreditation process to begin considering issues relating to assessment as The Higher Learning Commission is very focused on assessment. He also encouraged faculty to become consultant-evaluators for The Higher Learning Commission.

Dr. Hamm reported that several bills relating to textbooks and campus bookstores had been introduced in the current legislative session. These include bills related to regulating the selection and use of textbooks and courses materials as follows: minimizing costs; prohibiting single use; requiring prompt notice of textbook adoptions; requiring textbook selections to be made by March for the fall semester; prohibiting customized textbooks and materials; regulating financial assistance to students; regulating textbook sales; prohibiting inducements from publishers to require textbooks; requiring course supplements to be sold to competing bookstores at cost; providing private retailers access to student sales; regulating the use of royalties; and prohibiting referrals to textbook websites that do not require payment of Arkansas sales tax. Dr. Hamm noted that at least some of these bills are expected to pass in some form.

Dr. Kirkconnell commented that faculty are well positioned to provide the administration “ammunition” to use in efforts to influence the legislature against the adoption of many of these proposed bills. Dr. Hamm cautioned that faculty could be perceived as being on the defensive by some legislators. He noted that both Dr. Brown and Phil Jacobs were working daily on these issues and he would check to see what assistance the faculty could provide.

OLD BUSINESS:
COURSE
EVALUATION
FORM Dr. Hamm expressed his appreciation for the work done by the Senate on the revised course evaluation form wording. He reported that the changes suggested by the Senate had been adopted, and the form was currently being printed for use at the end of spring, 2007. Dr. Philpotts questioned who looks at the course evaluation summaries. Dr. Hamm stated that these are normally retained in both the deans and department heads’ files.

GENERAL
EDUCATION
GOALS Dr. Hamm distributed a comparison of the general education goals and leading paragraph suggested by the Faculty Senate, the Assessment Committee, and what was agreed upon during a meeting in Academic Affairs with President Jackson and Dr. Roberts (chair of the Assessment Committee). He noted that the primary difference in the goals listed was the removal of the goal related to diversity. Dr. Hamm stated that the Assessment Committee had expressed doubt in the ability to successfully assess this goal. Responding to Dr. Philpotts’ question as to why this goal would be difficult to assess, Dr. Roberts noted that the Assessment Committee had felt that this goal could be assessed more easily as part

of the arts and humanities goal. Dr. Montgomery noted that the Assessment Committee had thought to make assessing diversity an objective within the arts and humanities goal. Dr. Roberts emphasized that assessment involves an attempt to “hit a moving target” since accrediting bodies and professional associations are constantly changing what is required relating to assessment. Dr. Hamm expressed his appreciation to the Senate for their efforts and left the meeting.

SEXUAL
HARASSMENT
POLICY

President Jackson reported that she had spoken with Mr. Pennington in December concerning the proposed changes to the sexual harassment policy. She reported that she had received an email from Mr. Pennington stating he had reviewed the changes and had concluded he could not support making changes to the policy as the policy could then become “legally suspect” and not defensible in a court of law. She stated that Mr. Pennington had advised that the faculty needed to be as far removed from the sexual harassment process as feasible. President Jackson also pointed out to Dr. Kirkconnell that his concern for the change in language concerning the filing of a false complaint (i.e., “false . . . with malicious intent”) was made from the perspective of the victim according to Mr. Pennington. Dr. Philpotts questioned why some of the changes which were more grammatical in nature could not be made. President Jackson stated that Mr. Pennington’s email had not included detail related to each proposed change. Dr. Cannon proposed asking Mr. Pennington to supply a brief about each proposed change. President Jackson stated that she would ask him to do so. Dr. Philpotts asked that it be impressed upon Mr. Pennington that some of the changes are efforts to clean up grammar. Dr. Roberts questioned if Mr. Pennington had commented on whether records are retained or destroyed if an individual is cleared of a sexual harassment complaint. President Jackson stated that she would ask this question specifically.

NEW BUSINESS:
ACADEMIC
INTEGRITY -- W! F!

Dr. Robertson noted that Dr. Gonzalez-Espada had brought this agenda item to the attention of the Senate. His letter describes implementation of a policy at Oklahoma State University where students caught cheating in a class are now being failed with a new grade of “F!” instead of just an “F.” If this policy were implemented at Tech, Dr. Gonzalez-Espada had suggested that, if the student then dropped the course, the grade posted would be a “W!” instead of just a “W.” The new grades posted to the student’s transcript would allow other instructors to note “a pattern of academic dishonesty.” Dr. Cannon pointed out that a process would have to be implemented so that the appropriate documentation would occur to have either the W! or the F! posted to the student’s transcript. Discussion was then held on various other methods of curbing academic dishonesty by students. Dr. Mitchell suggested having freshmen students sign something similar to an honor code. Dr. Norton noted that her use of Turnitin.com and emphasizing her use of this in her classes has helped with instances of plagiarism. Dr. Philpotts stated his belief that the instructor makes the difference on this issue and that the instructor’s policy regarding academic dishonesty should be listed on their syllabi and stressed by the instructor. Dr. Roberts noted that it is fairly easy for students to cheat in web classes. Motion by Dr. Kirkconnell, seconded by Dr. Roberts, that initiatives concerning methods by which to curb academic dishonesty on the Tech campus be considered by the Senators. Motion carried. President Jackson stated that the Senators should email their ideas to Dr. Kirkconnell for compilation.

PEDESTRIAN
SAFETY

Dr. Mitchell accessed the Tech campus map online and indicated two areas on campus of concern relating to pedestrian safety. He stated that the most serious concern was the crossing from the campus across Highway 7 to Whattaburger, noting that local drivers are not used to pedestrians crossing here on a regular basis. Dr. Mitchell stated that he had written the state highway department about this issue; they came and looked it over; and

they put up some additional pedestrian crossing warning signs. He observed that the most dangerous part of this crossing was from the island on the Whattaburger side across the access road which merges onto Highway 124. Drivers entering that curve on the access road cannot easily see pedestrians crossing from the island over into the Whattaburger parking lot.

Dr. Mitchell noted that the second area of campus he was concerned about was the curve behind Doc Bryan Student Services Building. He stated that at night the lighting does not allow a clear view of pedestrians crossing the road in that area. Dr. Cannon stated that the crossing from the Corley Building to the Art Building was also a dangerous area, especially with the diagonal crossing. Dr. Mitchell noted that the signs on Martin Luther King Drive have helped to slow drivers down on that street.

President Jackson indicated that she would speak to Public Safety concerning the lighting issue and the pedestrian crossing to the Whattaburger. Dr. Kirkconnell advocated placement of signs indicating that pedestrians have the right of way at all times; he also questioned whether the campus could outlaw motorists' talking on cell phones while driving on campus. It was stated that Arkansas already has a law banning motorists from talking on cell phones while driving. Another suggestion was to ban cars on the inside streets of the campus.

RELEASE TIME FOR
SENATE CHAIR

Dr. Philpotts asked the Senators to consider recommending that the Faculty Senate chair receive release time. After discussion, motion by Dr. Philpotts, seconded by Dr. Roberts, to recommend that the Senate chair receive a three-hour release each fall and spring semester. Motion carried.

REVIEW OF
CAMPUS POLICIES
RELATED TO
FACULTY

Dr. Roberts asked to table this item to the March meeting.

OPEN FORUM

Dr. Buford noted a request to include the Faculty Senate website as a link on the Faculty tab on the OneTech portal. Dr. Ward advised that faculty could establish these links themselves. Dr. Buford stated that she had also been asked to suggest labeling the link on the Senate's webpage to indicate that both minutes and agendas could be accessed through the link. Dr. Roberts indicated that he could take care of this.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/
INFORMATION
ITEMS

Dr. Fithen reported an item of information. He indicated that at another campus a student had been allowed to register in two courses at the same time, one of which was a prerequisite for the other. The student had failed one of the courses. The student had hired an attorney, and the failing grade had been removed from the student's transcript as it was determined the university was at fault due to an advising error. Dr. Fithen indicated his concern with this situation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shelia Jackson, Ph.D., President



Scott Kirkconnell, Ph.D., Secretary