

Minutes of
THE FACULTY SENATE
OF
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

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

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

Dr. Cheryl Smith, Dr. Trey Philpotts, and Dr. David Ward were absent. Dr. Jack Hamm and Mr. Wyatt Watson were visitors.

CALL TO ORDER
APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

President Jackson called the meeting to order and asked for action on the February 14, 2007, minutes. Motion by Dr. Robertson, seconded by Dr. Roberts, to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion carried. There being no amendments or corrections, motion by Dr. Robertson, seconded by Dr. Stephenson, to approve the minutes as distributed. Motion carried.

REPORT BY VICE
PRESIDENT

President Jackson asked Dr. Hamm for comments. Dr. Hamm noted that Mr. Watson would be giving a demonstration of the Banner Student registration module and stated that this project is going well in anticipation of an April 9 “go-live” date.

Dr. Hamm distributed a summary sheet listing a number of bills of interest to faculty. Dr. Hamm indicated that the web address to view a bill is at <http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/>; he also observed that unless a bill has an emergency clause attached to it, the bill is normally not in effect until about 60 days after the legislative session is adjourned. If the bill does include an emergency clause, it would be effective with the governor’s signature.

Dr. Hamm reported that Senate Bill 203 (SB 203) has been sent to the governor after having passed both legislative houses; this bill would repeal the requirement that colleges and universities give the Rising Junior Exam.

SB 24 (now Act 175) mandates that colleges and universities make textbook and course material selections public no later than noon on April 1 for summer and fall terms and no later than noon on November 1 for spring terms. Dr. Hamm noted that this will cause the selection of textbooks for the upcoming term(s) to occur earlier in the semester; procedures will have to be put into place to adhere to this law. He indicated that there was a provision within the law to select a text after these dates; however, a justification would have to be made and reported to ADHE or some oversight committee.

SB 27 (now Act 105) prohibits the receipt of gifts, payments, or other means of compensation “as an inducement for requiring students to purchase a specific textbook for coursework or instruction.” Dr. Hamm stated that he did not see this as significant on this campus.

SB 30 (now Act 106) requires guidelines for royalty payments. Dr. Hamm noted that Tech has guidelines in place now, which will have to be reviewed, but stated that he did not see much impact for Tech.

House Bill 1730 (HB 1730) currently has 52 co-sponsors which indicates strong support for the bill. This bill would establish guidelines for “endorsed concurrent enrollment courses” which would be offered at no cost to the public high school student. These courses could be taught in conjunction with Advanced Placement courses. Dr. Hamm stated that the bill mandates certain instructor qualification, such as a master’s degree with at least 18 hours in the discipline. The offerings would include courses in math, English, science, and social studies. Dr. Hamm indicated his concern with this bill as the impact on Tech will be governed, at least in part, by how other institutions choose to approach offering these courses. If other institutions choose to offer a number of these courses, Tech’s recruiting efforts could be impacted.

Dr. Mitchell noted that students receive college credit if they pass the AP exams and questioned the need for the concurrent enrollment courses. Dr. Hamm responded that students may choose not to take the AP exam. Some public schools require the students to take the AP exams, but some do not. Dr. Mitchell noted the high remediation rates and asked if the legislature believed the concurrent enrollment courses would help with this issue. Dr. Hamm stated his belief that this legislation has developed as a result of problems with concurrent credit programs currently in place. He also noted that there is a genuine interest in trying to better prepare students to come to college and elevating the coursework available to the high school student might assist in that effort. Dr. Cannon questioned whether a limitation on the number of courses which can be transferred in should be considered. Dr. Hamm responded that the courses will be noted on the student’s transfer transcript as college courses; there would be no way of indicating that they were concurrent credit courses. President Jackson stated her belief that this bill is an attempt to “clean up” the previous concurrent credit programs and procedures. Dr. Hamm observed that this procedure “should be an improvement on what we have had.”

Dr. Hamm stated that HB 2055 would provide college credit to entering freshmen who have completed the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. He distributed a copy of a screen shot of the International Baccalaureate Organization’s website (<http://www.ibo.org/diploma/>) and noted there were four high schools in Arkansas and several in contiguous states already participating in this program.

HB 2489 provides college credit to entering freshmen who have completed the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, an Advanced Placement Program, or a College-Level Examination Program. Dr. Hamm noted that Tech already provides credit for successful completion of exams in AP or CLEP. He stated that the Admissions, Academic Standards, and Student Honors Committee may need to examine the possibility of credit for the diploma program.

Responding to a question concerning what Tech will do if the Rising Junior Exam is no longer required, Dr. Roberts indicated that the Assessment Committee is looking at alternative methods for measuring general education. He noted that students are currently charged \$10 per term as an assessment fee and this fee might be reduced depending on the cost of any new measurements. Dr. Roberts emphasized that the continuing problem with the Rising Junior Exam was the lack of incentives for students to do well, and he reminded the senators that The Higher Learning Commission requires multiple measures of assessment to stay in compliance with their assessment guidelines. Dr. Mitchell noted that the exam was originally tied to funding by the Legislature; Dr. Hamm responded it was his

opinion that this initiative had proved impractical and had never been pursued. The exam will be given this spring as scheduled since this bill does not have an emergency clause, and a decision will be made as to what to do before the fall assessment cycle.

Dr. Kirkconnell referenced SB 24 (Act 175) and indicated that legislators may be unaware of reasons why instructors might be compelled to adopt textbooks after the stated deadlines. He noted an example of being uncertain that a textbook publisher would have a new edition ready in time for classes to begin. Dr. Hamm responded that he would prefer the instructors to act in the best interest of the students in cases like these, and he would be willing to send a letter of justification to the appropriate entity if he needed to.

Dr. Kirkconnell noted that SB 27 (Act 105) could make it appear improper for a faculty member who served as a textbook reviewer to be paid. Dr. Hamm stated that in those instances the faculty member should not serve as part of the textbook selection committee which should resolve the conflict of interest.

BANNER STUDENT TRAINING FOR FACULTY

Mr. Watson gave a demonstration of the Banner Student self-service module which faculty and advisors will use to advise and register students beginning April 9. The self-service module will be available from the OneTech portal; training for departmental secretaries and department heads is tentatively scheduled for spring break week with training for faculty tentatively scheduled for the first week of April. The demonstration noted some helpful features of Banner, including the ability to post grades electronically, an office hours display, and a link to the course catalog (i.e., course descriptions). Mr. Watson then demonstrated the registration of a student into courses.

Emphasizing that this process could change, Mr. Watson noted that the ability to register a student by the faculty member meant that the faculty member would ask the student for their PIN (OneTech password). If the faculty member wished to advise the student and then have the student register themselves, then the faculty member would give the student an alternate PIN which is good only for a registration cycle (registration for summer terms and fall semester is one cycle; spring registration is one cycle). Several senators indicated reservations of asking the student for their PIN even though this is a password which can be changed by the student easily. It was then suggested that the faculty member could allow the student to sign on to the faculty member's computer themselves with their alternate PIN and then the faculty member could proceed to register the student. Noting the senators' concerns on this issue, Mr. Watson emphasized that this procedure was still being formulated and could change prior to the April 9 "go-live" date.

It was noted that this registration cycle will be "bare bones" with none, if any, of the "bells and whistles" turned on (such as prerequisite or corequisite checking).

Several senators indicated the need to schedule additional office hours for preregistering students for this registration cycle.

OLD BUSINESS: SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

President Jackson reported that Dr. Brown and Mr. Pennington are still reviewing the proposed changes to the sexual harassment policy. She hopes to have a report on this issue in April.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (INITIATIVES)

Dr. Robertson distributed two written motions for consideration: 1. In order to further promote an environment of academic integrity in the ATU campus community, I propose we initiate adoption of a university wide student honor code. A draft is proposed below. In addition I propose we send the draft to Student Government for consideration. 2. I propose

we recommend initiatives for the ATU administration to consider implementing: (a) adoption of a university wide student honor code; (b) publishing of honor code in student handbook; (c) honor code awareness to become a part of freshman orientation; and (d) honor code to become a part of faculty syllabi. Motions seconded by Dr. Cannon. Dr. Robertson indicated the draft honor code presented as follows: *I will abstain from all fraud in academic work. I will neither give nor receive aid on any form of assessment or assignment where such aid is not allowed, nor tolerate this conduct by any of my peers. I will deal responsibly with such acts when I observe them. By my conduct and influence, I will endeavor to build a high standard of honesty and truthfulness in all academic work and promote an atmosphere of integrity at Arkansas Tech University.* Dr. Kirkconnell distributed information from the University of Colorado - Boulder, Stanford University, and some student comments from his biology classes. He noted that an honor code was developed at the University of Colorado due to a student initiated effort. Dr. Kirkconnell stated that Duke University's Center for Academic Integrity was a definitive reference source for information related to honor codes and their implementation. He noted Stanford's policy adopted in 1921 and the inclusion of penalties for offenses to the code.

Dr. Mitchell stated that students have to understand that rampant cheating lessens the value of their degree. Dr. Stephenson noted there should be consequences for student offenses. Dr. Kirkconnell noted that this was an opportunity for the University as few universities in the state have an honor code. Dr. Roberts suggested proceeding with Motion No. 1 and waiting to see what the Student Government Association suggests before proceeding with Motion No. 2. Dr. Fithen suggested that Dr. Kirkconnell present this same information to the SGA. Dr. Roberts called for the question on Motion No. 1. Motion carried. Discussion on Motion No. 2 was tabled pending a response from the SGA.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

President Jackson reported that she had met with Steve Lawrence concerning the pedestrian safety issues presented at last month's meeting. Regarding the issue of the crosswalk from the campus to Whattaburger, Mr. Lawrence noted that this was under the state highway department's purview and the only suggestion would be to ask that motorists be made to stop at the stop light before turning right. He had indicated that a student committee is looking at lighting issues on campus. Speed bumps will be installed on the street running in front of the Library and the Corley Building, and stop signs are being installed on Glenwood to slow traffic down. President Jackson reported that she had asked for consideration of signs on campus indicating that pedestrians have the right of way.

Concerning the issue of banning cell phone use while driving on campus, Mr. Lawrence had indicated this would be difficult to enforce. Dr. Kirkconnell noted that there is a legislative bill being considered to outlaw cell phone use for motorists but stated that it may prove to be inadequate as there were provisions within the bill related to hands free units.

Dr. Kirkconnell stated that, if the bill is made law and no exclusionary clause is enacted within the law, Arkansas Tech could outlaw cell phone usage while driving on campus.

Dr. Cannon questioned whether the inner streets on campus could be closed.

Dr. Kirkconnell noted that the Senate could recommend a long term goal of making Tech a pedestrian campus. President Jackson stated that she would mention this to Mr. Lawrence. Dr. Cannon noted that the campus streets are also city streets and the city of Russellville might also have to take action concerning this matter.

NEW BUSINESS: Dr. Roberts reported that Dr. Brown has “pre-empted” him on this effort as a committee has been formed to review policies across campus. He asked that faculty let him know if they believe a particular campus policy is a “hardship,” and he will present the policy to the committee.

REVIEW OF CAMPUS POLICIES RELATED TO FACULTY

OPEN FORUM No items were presented.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/ INFORMATION ITEMS President Jackson reminded the senators that the April meeting will be at 3:30 p.m. due to the Rising Junior Exam in Pendergraft 300 south until 3:15. Dr. Roberts noted that the February minutes might not appear on the Senate’s website until next week as he will be out of town for a few days.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shelia Jackson, Ph.D., President



Scott Kirkconnell, Ph.D., Secretary