

Minutes of  
THE FACULTY SENATE  
OF  
ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The Faculty Senate met Wednesday, May 2, 2007, at 3:30 p.m. in Room 300 South of the Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center. The following members were present:

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

Dr. Brenda Montgomery was absent.

CALL TO ORDER  
APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES

President Jackson called the meeting to order and asked for action on the April 11, 2007, minutes. Motion by Dr. Roberts, seconded by Dr. Buford, to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion carried. There being no amendments or corrections, motion by Dr. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Ihde, to approve the minutes as distributed. Motion carried.

President Jackson thanked the committee for agreeing to change the time to 3:30 p.m. She reported that Dr. Hamm would not be able to meet with the group today but noted that any questions relating to release time for the Senate chair could be addressed during discussions following the dinner at Lake Point on Thursday evening.

OLD BUSINESS:  
ACADEMIC  
INTEGRITY/  
STUDENT HONOR  
CODE

President Jackson asked Dr. Kirkconnell to report on this issue. Dr. Kirkconnell stated that he had not been able to speak with the SGA President but had talked with Dr. Biller, who had advised that Leslie Miller is now the SGA President, not Cody Hill. Dr. Kirkconnell noted that Ms. Miller would have to be “brought up to speed” on this issue; however, he reported that Dr. Biller’s impression of the issue relating to a student honor code was that the students in general were “lukewarm to lukecold” on the idea. Dr. Kirkconnell emphasized that implementation of an honor code would be a major philosophical change for the institution and students should not be given “veto power” over the initiative. He also observed that the students should ultimately manage such an initiative and would need to be “on board” at some point.

Dr. Philpotts commented that implementation of an honor code should be decided by the faculty and that management by students is a separate issue. He suggested that the Senate vote on the issue of implementing an honor code. Motion by Dr. Robertson, seconded by Dr. Roberts, to lay on the table for action his motion previously tabled at the March 14, 2007, meeting relating to implementation and wording of an honor code as follows: **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. Honor Code wording: 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.* Motion carried. After discussion, consensus was to work with the SGA in the fall on the management of such a program.

RELEASE TIME FOR  
FACULTY SENATE  
CHAIR

President Jackson again noted that this issue could be discussed with Dr. Hamm tomorrow evening at the dinner.

President Jackson asked that the agenda be amended to include discussion of the budget and to discuss breaking a tie for an at-large position resulting from the standing committee elections. Motion by Dr. Robertson, seconded by Dr. Roberts, to amend the agenda to include these items. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:  
CURRICULUM  
COMMITTEE

President Jackson reported that a tie vote had resulted for the at-large position of the Curriculum Committee during the standing committee elections held in April with Mr. David Krueger and Dr. Chris Kellner both receiving the same number of votes. Motion by Dr. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Ihde, for the Senate to break the tie. Motion carried. Voting by a show of hands, Dr. Kellner was elected to the at-large position.

Dr. Robertson reported that the number of faculty participating during the standing committee elections was down somewhat from last year. Dr. Cannon suggested that the process take place earlier next spring. Dr. Philpotts commented that it would be helpful to have the academic schools the nominees are associated with listed beside the individual names. Dr. Mitchell asked that the percentage of eligible faculty voting in this election be included with the announcement of the election results to the faculty.

BUDGET

President Jackson reported that she had attended the final Budget Advisory Committee meeting today just prior to the Senate's meeting. She noted that tuition for 2007-08 will increase three percent and that a \$4 per credit hour infrastructure support fee will be implemented to help with construction and critical maintenance costs. President Jackson indicated that Academic Affairs had requested funding for promotions, Lake Point Conference Center, scholarships, non-work study, and faculty salary adjustments due to equity considerations. She also reported that utilities are projected to increase a substantial amount for the next fiscal year and that health insurance premiums are expected to rise a minimum of ten percent. She noted that Dr. Brown had asked for one percent to be taken off the top of the operations budgets for strategic initiatives. When questioned, she noted that Dr. Hamm had calculated equity raises for faculty using the same formula or method he had used two years ago, which brings all full-time faculty to at least 85 percent of market salaries when compared to comparable universities from both SREB 3 and 4 categories. President Jackson advised that a decision on the assessment fee and the CAAP exam had not yet been made.

STUDENT  
ATHLETES AND  
CLASS  
ATTENDANCE

Dr. Cannon reported that he had sent an email to both Dr. DeBlack, the faculty representative on the Athletics Committee, and Coach Mullins stating that the Senate was convinced that a problem with student athletes and class attendance exists and that it needs to be addressed. The Athletics Committee had met at noon today, and Dr. DeBlack had reported to Dr. Cannon that the committee had discussed the issue and would consider options over the summer and make a recommendation in the fall. It was suggested that whatever policy or procedure is put into place for athletes might also cover other student entities (e.g., band and choir) and their class absences.

OPEN FORUM

Dr. Roberts requested that during the fall semester the Senate investigate issues related to final exams being administered earlier than final exam week. He indicated his belief that more and more students are taking exams during the last regular week of classes rather than

during final exam week. Dr. Roberts noted this contributes to poor faculty morale as the faculty who give finals during finals week feel that they are working an extra week.

Dr. Philpotts stressed that this was an issue relating to oversight; he indicated that deans and department heads should be monitoring this situation more closely. Dr. Norton reported that this issue has been discussed in her department with the department head indicating that final exams should be given during finals week.

Dr. Mitchell reported that one of his colleagues, Dr. Peter Dykema, had conducted an informal poll relating to this issue of two of his world history sections with 63 students participating. Seventeen students indicated that they have an assignment or exam in all of their classes during final exam week. Of the remaining 46 students, 20 students indicated that they have one class that ends during the final week of classes; 20 students indicated that they have two classes which end during the final week of classes; three students indicated that they have three classes that end during the final week of classes; and three students indicated that they have more than three classes ending during the final week of classes. It was noted that it is the institution's policy that finals be given during finals week.

Discussion on possible remedies was held. It was suggested that a faculty member's evaluation also include information as to whether the faculty member gave a final exam and when. Dr. Mitchell recommended having each faculty member fill out a schedule or card indicating what the faculty member's activities for the final week of classes and during finals week will be which the department head would then have on record. Dr. Kirkconnell advocated involving the deans to ensure that the final exam policy is adhered to. It was determined that Dr. Hamm holds a one-day "deans retreat" each summer which is an all-day meeting to discuss issues relevant to the upcoming academic year and that the Senate could ask for this topic to be discussed during that forum. President Jackson asked Dr. Tim Smith, incoming chair, to ask Dr. Hamm to report to the Senate on this issue in August.

Dr. Kirkconnell distributed a list of possible topics to discuss during the Senate meeting and with Dr. Brown at the dinner meeting on Thursday. He commented that the Senate needs to be looking creatively at issues that will contribute constructively to the institution. He emphasized that there must be trust between the administration and the faculty and between the faculty and the students. He asked that the Senate members sign a sympathy card for Dr. Brown due to the passing of his mother. The list he distributed outlined various areas of discussion, including establishing a behavioral commitment pledge for the faculty (similar to the student honor code), banning cell phone use while driving on campus, designating the central part of the campus "vehicle-free," placing more signage around campus emphasizing careful driving and pedestrian safety, posting more 20 mph speed limits, discussing general education issues without "turf battles" ensuing, discussing healthy lifestyle initiatives, providing inspirational messages on the kiosk in front of Doc Bryan, and requiring a reading comprehension test for faculty hiring purposes. Dr. Kirkconnell noted literature relating to the quality of instruction of a faculty member being correlated to his/her performance on a reading comprehension exam. He asked that these items be discussed in more depth next year.

Dr. Cheryl Smith commented that the institution should put effort into healthy lifestyle initiatives and hope that the insurance company will recognize the efforts and not increase premiums so drastically in the future. President Jackson reported that one of the physical education department's adjuncts, Richard Kersh, works with companies and their employees to help reduce health insurance costs. It was decided to invite Mr. Kersh to attend a Faculty Senate meeting this fall.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/  
INFORMATION  
ITEMS      President Jackson reminded everyone of the dinner with Dr. Brown at Lake Point Thursday, May 3, at 6:30 p.m. She distributed a copy of an Athletic Facilities Use Policy recently approved by the Board of Trustees. It was noted that faculty contracts for 2007-08 will most likely not be distributed until the end of June.

Dr. Roberts expressed his appreciation to President Jackson for her service.

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

Respectfully submitted,



Shelia Jackson, Ph.D., President



Scott Kirkconnell, Ph.D., Secretary