November 2009 Faculty Senate Minutes

Faculty Senate Minutes 11-4-09

1.) The meeting was called to order by Dr. Clint Atchley, President, at 3:15. Present: Clint Atchley, Stephanie Barron, Mitzi Bass, Claudia Beach, Rafael Bejarano, Brandie Benton, James Duke, David Evans, Martin Halpern, Mike Kelly, Barbara Landrum, Brett Serviss, Mike Taylor, Jane Dunn, Kevin Durand, Linda Evans, Catherine Leach, Patti Miley, Ceyla Taylor, Allison Vetter, Opal Kelly (SGA representative)

2.) Dr. Vernon Miles, Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, discussed 1) the upcoming investiture of our fifteenth President, Dr. Charles Welch, on Thursday, November 12 from 12-1 in Arkansas Hall. The Honorable Mike Beebe, Governor of Arkansas, will be the keynote speaker. A cake and punch reception on the lawn will follow the ceremony. 2) Henderson State University’s Veterans Upward Bound program is now operational. VUB is federally-funded and designed to assist qualified military veterans enroll in postsecondary school. Henderson received a $250,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education to fund the program for the 2009-2010 school year. It is one of only three such programs in Arkansas. The program office is currently housed on the second floor of Foster. 3) Definite confirmation of the requested air traffic controller program for our campus is imminent. 4) Dr. Miles suggested that discussion revisiting the Intellectual Property Rights statement should be pursued. 5) He also requested that the Senate consider making a statement concerning online evaluations.

3.) The minutes of the October 7, 2009, were approved as corrected.

4.) Dr. Clint Atchley presented his report as follows:

President’s Report
4 November 2009

Meeting with President Chuck Welch—
I met with Dr. Welch on 2 November 2009 to discuss the issues. I asked Dr. Welch about the status of the Senate recommendation to appoint a University-wide salary study committee. He has turned this committee over to Dr. Vernon Miles, and we are to meet soon to discuss the appointments to the committee.

I also asked about the budget and the President’s recent forum. As you know if you attended the forum, HSU has lost all of its Category “B” funds totaling $7164 and 2% of its Category “A” funds as well as a few other funds. Along with a shortfall of $61,592 from fall tuitions, the total loss of funds is $486,684.59. While this is less than predicted (and there is still the possibility of further cuts), this is still a substantial sum. Dr. Welch and Bobby Jones were able to find savings to cover this shortfall via property insurance, health insurance, salary contingency, residence life, and food service. These savings allows us to cover the shortfall without having to cut into individual budgets. Students, faculty, and staff should not notice these cuts. The budget committee will meet tomorrow to discuss next year’s budget and to plan for the possibility of additional cuts. Bobby Jones is also seeking ways to use our stimulus money in case of more cuts.

Stamats, the company we have hired to revamp our webpage, was here on 13 October to seek input from students, faculty, and staff. Everything is proceeding according to schedule for the seven-month process. On 11 November the Advisory Committee will hold a conference call with Stamats over the webpage.

In the next two weeks, Dr. Welch will begin the process of replacing Billy Tarpley, the Director of Development. He will also advertise the legal counsel position for HSU.

Dr. Welch indicated that there will be a minimal increase of 2.3% in health insurance premiums for next year, but only for employees who have policies for employee plus spouse and/or children. There will be no increase for employee-only policies. There will be no increase in the dental insurance.

Dr. Welch also indicated that Bobby Jones is working on quotes for new roofs for all the building that are leaking.
5.) Reports of Committees
A. Executive Committee agenda as presented
B. Academics
The Academics Committee met on October 27 with four members present, Rafael Bejarano, Jane Dunn, Martin Halpern, and Michael Taylor, and discussed two issues.
- Revising the Faculty Handbook language on the conduct of student evaluations. The committee proposes in the attached draft revision wording to incorporate the conduct of evaluations in spring only classes and also giving faculty members the choice of in-class or online evaluations. The proposed wording is for the online evaluations to be conducted on an experimental basis. Results would be reviewed after two years. The actual conduct of the online evaluations in not detailed in the resolution but two criteria are listed: there should be an effort to maximize student involvement and individual student comments should be distinguished from one another so that faculty members can obtain accurate information on the views of individual student responders.

To address the concern about possible legal ramifications to continuing to use handwritten student evaluations raised by Dr. Miles at the last committee meeting, the committee decided that we should ask Dr. Miles to request a legal opinion on the issue. Dr. Miles did so request and President Welch is obtaining such advice.

When Dr. Miles and I met to discuss the issue, he indicated to me that, aside from the legal issue, he has some concerns about student privacy and about what might happen if a student alleged that a faculty member retaliated for negative comments on an evaluation. I mentioned to Dr. Miles that the tenor of our discussion in the Academics Committee was a desire to keep a system in place that is working if that is the faculty member’s preference.

Dr. Miles indicated to me that David Epperhart had two problems with our proposal. Mr. Epperhart continues to be concerned about employee workload, an issue he raised when he appeared before the Faculty Senate to discuss this issue. According to Dr. Miles, Mr. Epperhart also indicated that a dual system would make it impossible to generate statistical comparison data. It occurred to me as I was preparing this report to wonder how this was done last year for online classes but I was unable to reach Mr. Epperhart to clarify that issue today since he is out of the office until next Monday.

Mr. Epperhart thought one approach that might achieve faculty objectives was for faculty members to take classes to computer labs to complete the evaluations during class time. Although the committee did not realize this would be feasible in terms of lab availability, it seems unlikely that very many faculty members would want to give up the 30 minutes of class time it would likely take to shepherd students through such a process.

We discussed in the committee without coming to any specific conclusion an idea that might address Mr. Epperhart’s concerns and the concerns about online evaluations expressed by some faculty members at the last Faculty Senate meeting. At the University of Pennsylvania, two evaluations take place. Students provide handwritten comments in class and go online to the numerical evaluations. Students cannot see their grades until they complete the numerical evaluations. I believe that Dr. Miles was favorably disposed to this system except for the concerns he’s expressed about the handwritten comments. Some senators expressed concerns at the last Faculty Senate meeting that putting pressure on students to complete the evaluations might cause them to make more negative evaluations than they might otherwise make. My own view is that if it becomes the norm that this is how Henderson does evaluations, students will take it in stride as standard operating procedure. I believe that annoying pop-ups are likely to produce irritation and a skewed distribution.

The motion was made and seconded that:
Online evaluations should be conducted as a one year institutional experiment which will be run during two semesters and two summer sessions. Various methods may be used to remind students to evaluate
their classes, but no punitive measures will be in place. The last day of class before final examinations will be the last day that evaluations may be completed. After a full year of on line evaluations, reconsideration of the process will be given before any possible Faculty Handbook changes are made. The motion passed.

2. Board of Trustees policy on royalties from faculty-authored texts assigned to students by the faculty author. In view of the an opinion of the Arkansas Attorney General (see attached) that “the Arkansas Code contains no direct proscription against a professor’s receiving royalties generated by his students’ purchase of class materials, so long as the university’s policies with respect to the disposition of royalties gives priority to the students’ academic welfare,” the Faculty Senate requests the Board of Trustees revisit the policy it adopted on faculty royalties and consider a less restrictive policy. The current wording, according to a message from Dr. Sommer to Ellis College faculty members, is as follows:

Royalty Policy For Use of Personal Works
Presented to the Henderson State University Board of Trustees, October 11, 2007
Pursuant to the requirements of Act 106 of the Acts of Arkansas 2007, the following policy shall apply to the use or application of any royalties received by a faculty member from the sale of textbooks and course materials for classes taught by that faculty member.

First, it is recognized and acknowledged that there is an inherent conflict of interest when a faculty member requires a class to purchase and use textbooks and course materials authored by that faculty member when the royalty income from the sales of such books and materials inures to the benefit of the faculty member.

Second, to alleviate this conflict and still preserve the faculty member’s right to use his/her own textbooks and materials in teaching a class, any royalties received by the faculty member from the purchase of such required works by the students in the class shall be used by the faculty member for purposes or programs that directly benefit students academically.

Each faculty member will be responsible for reporting all such royalties and the intended or proposed use thereof to the department chair or the dean for approval. Failure to abide by this policy shall constitute grounds for academic disciplinary measures.

The motion was made and seconded that:
This discussion be tabled.
The motion passed.

C. Buildings and Grounds- No Report
D. Finance –No Report
E. Procedures-The following results of Faculty Senate Membership Ballots are as follows:

**Departmental Senators and Alternates January 2010-December 2011**

Nursing: Barbara Landrum, Senator; Pam Shurett, Alt
Physics: Basil Miller, Senator; Shannon Clardy, Alt
English, FL, and Phil: Pedro Lopes, Senator; Stephanie Barron, Alt
Art: Beverly Buy, Senator; Betsy Fulmer, Alt
Music: David Etienne, Senator; Martin McCain, Alt
Social Sciences: Megan Hickerson, Senator; Haroon Khan, Alt
Aviation: Troy Hogue, Senator; Jonathan Moss, Alt
Educational Leadership: Patricia Weaver, Senator; Shelton Buxton, Alt
Psychology: Rafael Bejarano, Senator; Todd Wiebers, Alt
Chemistry: Ingo Schranz, Senator; David Bateman, Alt

**At Large Senators and Alternates January 2010-December 2011**

Professor: Fred Worth, Senator; Angela Boswell, Alternate
November 2009 Faculty Senate Minutes

Associate Professor: Lea Ann Alexander, Senator; Duane Jackson, Alternate
Assistant Professor: Troy Bray, Senator; Nathan Campbell, Alternate
Instructor: Martha Dale Cooley, Senator; Julia Correia, Alternate

6.) Old Business
President Clint Atchley will appoint a representative to the Ad Hoc Equity Committee being formed by Dr. Chuck Welch, and he will appoint a representative to the Threat Committee being formed by Chad Fielding.

7.) New Business
A. A motion was made and seconded that:
The roof of Huie Library should be first priority when roof repair or replacement is undertaken on campus.
The motion passed.
B. A motion was made and seconded that:
The Board of Trustees should declare a State of Emergency because of Huie Library’s roof and that Huie Library’s roof repair and replacement should supersede all other roof repairs on campus.
The motion passed.

8.) The meeting was adjourned at 4:35.
Respectfully submitted,
Mitzi Bass
Faculty Senate, Secretary