

April 2008 Faculty Senate Minutes

Faculty Senate Minutes 4-2-08

Members Present: Clint Atchley, Lea Ann Alexander, Mitzi Bass, Rafael Bejarano, Angela Boswell, Troy Bray, Aaron Calvert, Steven Carter, Martha Dale Cooley, James Duke, Linda English, David Evans, Herman Gibson, Paul Glover, Maralea Gourley, Marty Halpern, Barbara Landrum, Catherine Leach, Jack Meadows, Patti Miley, Richard Miller, Jonathan Moss, Brett Serviss, Gary Smithey, Mike Taylor, Pat Weaver, Patrick Wempe, Hank Wilson, Sandy Denning Staff Senate Representative

Others Present: Pamela Bax, Paulette Blacknall, Nathan Campbell, Pam Davis, Randy Duncan, Kevin Durand, William Durand, Stephen Eaves, Brian English, Jamie Engman, Chad Fielding, David Gardner, John Graves, Julia Hall, Debbie Hill, Margaret Hoskins, Bobby Jones, Lou May, Hal McAfee, Wayne McGinnis, Jules Mollere, Vera Rideout, James Shuff, Carl Stark, David Stoddard, Celya Taylor, Kenneth Taylor, Mary Beth Trubitt, Charles Welch, Don Wells, Anita Williams, Fred Worth, Alan Wright, Doris Wright, Bob Yehl

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 pm by Senate President Dr. Angela Boswell.

Boswell introduced Dr. Charles Welch, Henderson's next president. Welch thanked the faculty for the excellent turnout. He stated that he comes to Henderson at least once a week and is meeting with Boswell approximately once a week.

Welch then began discussing the announcement for the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. He asked that the focus of the discussion be about the minimum qualifications for the position. If faculty had questions or comments about the rest of the ad, they were encouraged to email him. Welch told the faculty present that as President he wants to focus more the Henderson's image, vision, and budget along with a focus on the legislature and other external issues. He wants the Provost/VPAA to be the "second in command" and be the advocate for the faculty. Welch said the successful candidate must be a strong academic leader to balance his (Welch's) experience. The Provost/VPAA and all the other VPs will report to the President.

Welch said he wants to begin the search now instead of waiting a year to begin the search. He said he will probably need to spend a lot of time in Little Rock next spring during the next legislative session and he wants a permanent vice president to handle academic issues. Welch stated that the search and its timing is no reflection on Dr. Sommer and the job she is doing as VPAA. He also said he has no candidate in mind for the position and that he is not bringing someone from UACCH with him. Welch said the successful candidate must be someone he is comfortable with, who will move the university where he wants it to go, someone the faculty can live with, and someone who shares his opinion of shared governance.

Welch said the search will have to continue into the summer months, but there will be ample opportunities for faculty to participate including a question and answer session with the candidates who come to campus. He said he will meet with the presidents of the Faculty Senate and the SGA to determine how best to also have student participation during the summer. The search committee will be predominately, but not exclusively, faculty. There will be at least one staff member on the committee. The committee and Welch will each interview the candidates brought to campus. Welch stated that he and the committee will then meet to decide who will be offered the position of Provost/VPAA.

Discussion then began about the advertisement for the position. A copy of the advertisement was distributed and is attached at the end of the minutes. Welch said the ad would be placed in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, *the Chronicle of Higher Education*, and on higheredjobs.com. There was discussion about whether a candidate having experience as a department chair was enough experience for the Provost/VPAA position. Welch said he was more concerned about the experience of dealing with issues such as budgets, supervision of personnel, planning, and resource allocation rather than just a title.

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After discussion of the advertisement ended, Welch left the meeting.

Approval of the March Senate Minutes:

A motion was made and seconded to approve the March minutes with corrections. The corrections were to transpose the number of English and math sections for the transitional student cohorts and to delete the last sentence of the first paragraph of the Finance Committee report. The motion passed.

President's Report:

In addition to the copy of the President's Report attached at the end of the minutes, Dr. Boswell asked for feedback about online student evaluations of faculty. Discussion included:

- having the results available sooner
- the cost of additional software to create and report the results of the online evaluations
- whether or not students would take time to fill out the evaluations outside of class time
- if students who had stopped attending class but not dropped, would they fill out evaluations
- whether or not punitive action could be taken if a student did not fill out an evaluation
- and using online evaluations for online courses.

Boswell also asked for feedback on the registration of students on probation. It has been proposed that students on probation not be allowed to register for summer/fall courses until grades for the spring semester have been posted. Discussion included:

- advisors not being available after grades are posted and/or during the summer
- difficulty in registering if classes are closed especially after Heart Start sessions
- Some students don't know they are on probation. They don't check HSU email nor give current email addresses to HSU.
- registering without advisor's assistance and not enrolling in the proper courses

Committee Reports:

Academics Committee:

The Academics Committee distributed an academic integrity statement formulated by a previous Senate Academics Committee. A copy is attached at the end of the minutes. The Academics Committee will be looking at this statement and will present its final report on academic integrity at the Senate meeting on April 30.

Buildings and Grounds Committee:

A copy of the Buildings and Grounds Committee report is attached at the end of the minutes. The recommendation of the committee concerning campus lighting, see committee report, was passed unanimously.

Finance Committee:

The Finance Committee chair reported on the University Budget Committee meetings. At the time of the Senate meeting the budget contained a 2% cost of living raise and funds for the fourth year of the salary study. The budget included budgeting for 100 new students. Tuition will increase approximately 6%.

Operations Committee:

The Operations Committee presented a post-tenure review proposal. A copy is attached at the end of the minutes. After considerable discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to table the proposal.

Retention Committee:

The final report of the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Retention was presented to the Senate. A copy of the report is attached at the end of the minutes. After considerable discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to table the report.

Old Business:

There was none.

New Business:

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There was none.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.

PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Henderson State University invites nominations and applications for the position of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Henderson State University is a public institution offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs through the Matt Locke Ellis College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the Teachers College, and the Graduate School. The University also offers a registered nursing degree program, the only aviation degree program in Arkansas, and pre-professional studies. A member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, Henderson is ranked in the top tier among “Best Universities—Masters in the South Region” in the 2008 edition of “America’s Best Colleges” by U.S. News and World Report. Henderson is located on an historic and beautiful campus midway between Little Rock and Texarkana on Interstate 30 and has an enrollment of approximately 3,600 students. Additional information is available at www.hsu.edu

The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs is the chief academic officer of the university and is directly responsible for the administration, budgeting and staffing of all academic programs. The Provost supervises and coordinates the operation of the academic colleges/schools, the Huie Learning Resource Center, the Registrar’s office, International Students Program, TRIO Programs, and the Honors College. This position reports directly to the President and must work closely with the Faculty Senate and other campus shared governance bodies.

Minimum qualifications include

- An earned doctorate from a regionally accredited institution
- A distinguished record of teaching, scholarly achievement, and professional accomplishments sufficient to qualify for appointment at the rank of professor in an academic department
- Demonstrated academic leadership at the department chair level or higher
- A participatory leadership style with a commitment to collaborative decision-making
- A commitment to collaboration with external constituencies, including other universities and community colleges, K-12 schools, and business/industry partners
- Experience with strategic planning, budgeting, and instructional resource allocation
- Excellent written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills
- A commitment to and appreciation of diversity
- A commitment to civic engagement and community involvement

BENEFITS

Compensation is commensurate with the background and experience of the candidate selected. A generous fringe benefits package is included.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested candidates should submit a letter of application addressing qualifications, current resume/vita, official graduate transcripts, and references. Screening of applications will begin on _____ and continue until the position is filled. Applications and nominations should be submitted to:

Provost Search
Henderson State University
Arkadelphia, AR 71999

Henderson State University is an affirmative action/ADA, equal opportunity employer. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

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President's Report, April 2008

Report on meeting with President:

Dr. Dunn reported that the plan is to allow for faculty members to choose the option of 12 checks or 10 checks at the same time they sign contracts in the Spring. Once a choice is made, it cannot be changed for that year, but a faculty member can make a different choice the next year at contract time. Dr. Dunn also shared a "disquieting" note from the Governor's office regarding expected future state revenues: the governor has asked each university to prepare three budgets, one with a modest increase in state funds, one with no increase, and one with a seven percent cut. Private funds have been raised to complete renovations on Newberry House. And finally, scholarships will be stacked this fall exactly as they were last fall.

Report on meeting with Vice President Academic Affairs:

Dr. Sommer discussed the possibilities of conducting student evaluations of academic courses online and wants feedback from the Faculty Senate as to what we see as the advantages and disadvantages to each way of conducting the evaluations (hard copy versus online). Some issues she raised were that 30,000 forms costs \$1200 and the number of courses being evaluated is rising. Results of online evaluations could be released to instructors immediately upon the submission of grades. If all schools participated in online evaluations, then software could be developed specifically for that purpose (thus alleviating some of the problems that the School of Business encountered when they attempted online evaluations with only current course management software). Students could be encouraged to complete the course evaluations by delaying the ability to view their grades until evaluations are completed.

In a subsequent discussion with Dr. Sommer, she also wanted faculty feedback regarding students on probation and registration. Pam Ligon has proposed to not allow students on probation to register for summer/fall until grades for Spring have been posted.

Academic Integrity Statement

An instructor may dismiss or suspend from a class any student who is disruptive, who violates a University regulation, or who engages in academic dishonesty. Students who engage in academic dishonesty may be reported to the department chair and to the appropriate academic dean who will issue letters outlining the action taken to the student, the instructor, and the department chair of his/her declared major. If deemed appropriate, the student may be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs for university disciplinary action.

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to

1. a. any use of external assistance during an examination,
2. b. any intentional falsification or invention of data or citation in an academic exercise,
- c. and any form of plagiarism. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty include but are not limited to the following behaviors:
 1. a. using any part of another's work without acknowledgement of the source,
 2. b. using a paper in more than one class without the instructors' permission,
- c. using another's homework or take-home exams for academic credit without the consent of the instructor,
- d. and accessing or sharing restricted information through electronic means without the consent of the instructor. Students who violate any of the above will be subject to the following guidelines:
 1. a. The faculty member may assign a grade of "F" to the assignment.
 - b. The faculty member may drop the student from the class with a grade of "F" ; no "W" or "WP" grades will be assigned in these cases.

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c. Offenses of any of the above may result in the suspension from the University or other disciplinary action.

To determine academic integrity, a faculty member may use various means including plagiarism software.

Buildings and Grounds Committee Report to the Faculty Senate for April 2, 2008

Committee members: Lea Ann Alexander, Steven Carter, Barbara Landrum, Hank Wilson, and Brett Serviss, Chair.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee recently met on March 24, 2008 in order to continue discussion regarding various items that were brought before the committee regarding campus facilities, grounds, and security. A list of these items is as follows: 1. proper placement of paper advertisements on campus, and arrangement and composition of benches and kiosks along the mall walkway; 2. creation of a university designated faculty lounge; 3. maintenance improvement and security concerns at the airfield and Flight Training Center; 4. parking issues and signage in the parking lot at Foster Hall; 5. inaccessibility of the exterior doors to Foster Hall for handicapped personnel; 6. acquisition and placement of campus directories; 7. need for additional bicycle racks on campus; 8. campus-wide security concerns; 9. building security relating to improperly functioning doors and locks; 10. broken and destroyed lights on the pedestrian bridge; 11. campus lighting issues; 12. pedestrian safety at crosswalks; 13. illegal parking; 14. construction of stairs near Caplinger; and 15. vehicle ruts in grass.

General Report.

With most of the above listed items, resolution is still pending. However, it is important to note that numerous discussions with Bobby Jones have occurred regarding many of the items, and he is working with the appropriate Henderson personnel to adequately bring about a satisfactory outcome/resolution. Mr. Jones has assured me that resolutions will be forthcoming in the very near future. Once resolved, the Buildings and Grounds Committee will issue a detailed report covering what has been accomplished.

Mr. Jones has informed me that the broken and nonfunctional lights on the pedestrian bridge that crosses 10th Street were replaced recently, and that they were subsequently again broken by vandals. Some type of resolution to this situation will be forthcoming, and it may in part involve eliminating the lights that are directly on the bridge.

The designated pedestrian crossing along Henderson Street adjacent to Newberry House has been implemented with two street-located signs, each one adjacent to one of the two crosswalks. These signs indicate that it is Arkansas state law for vehicles to stop for all pedestrians on crosswalks. Mr. Jones has informed me that all of the crosswalks on our campus will have a like setup in the very near future.

John Corley and Harvey Grassi have been contacted regarding vehicle ruts on campus grounds, and John Corley, David Epperhart, and Johnny Campbell have been contacted regarding some problems pertaining to improper functioning doors and locks for campus buildings. John Corley and Harvey Grassi have informed me that they will remind the maintenance, grounds, and computer tech personnel to minimize as much as is possible the vehicle traffic on the grassy areas of our campus, especially when the ground is wet and ruts are easily produced.

Campus Lighting Recommendation.

It is the *very strong* recommendation of the Buildings and Grounds Committee to the Henderson administration and other appropriate personnel that: **1.** the entire lighting element/infrastructure of the Henderson State University campus be reevaluated and substantially revised based on lighting efficiency and the current deficiencies and problems presently incurred across the campus from inadequate lighting, and **2.** that the appropriate measures are taken in order to completely resolve the problems

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and deficiencies as soon as is reasonably possible. Inadequate and inefficient lighting is a campus-wide phenomenon, and thus there are numerous places around our campus, often times in proximity to buildings, pedestrian walkways, and parking lots, where lighting is grossly inadequate or essentially nonexistent (these areas are dark or nearly so). Such places substantially increase the potential for violence, vandalism, other unlawful activities, and accidents, which severely compromise the safety of Henderson employees and students, and the integrity and security of our campus as a whole.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee is aware that the cost of a complete revision of the campus lighting infrastructure is significant, but feels as though this is one of the foremost issues that should be addressed by the present and incoming administration.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Buildings and Grounds Committee,

Brett Serviss

Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair

Post-Tenure Review [draft]

Proposed addition to Faculty Handbook as Section III P, No. 7

Arkansas Act 1330 of 1997 mandated that state-supported institutions of higher education “work with the campus faculties to develop a framework to review faculty performance, including post-tenure review.” The given purpose of the Act was to ensure and enhance faculty performance and “productivity” and to “correct instances of substandard performance.” Henderson State University has developed a set of existing procedures to review faculty performance (Section P, Nos. 1-6, Faculty Handbook); this addition seeks to incorporate post-tenure review into those procedures, in accordance with the mandate of *Act 1330*.

The post-tenure review policy would become Section P. 7. The current section 7. would become number 8 and would be changed as written below.

In order to implement the policy below, each academic unit shall develop by May 1, 2009, written criteria defining unsatisfactory performance for the purpose of annual review. The post-tenure review policy would take effect August 1, 2009.

Faculty Handbook Section III. P

7. Post-tenure Review

Criteria, standards, and procedures for annual review of faculty are specified in policies set forth above. Faculty also have appeal processes as outlined in the *Faculty Handbook*. Annual reviews for tenured faculty will be used for post-tenure review. Academic units will define overall unsatisfactory performance for faculty within that unit. If a tenured faculty member receives two unsatisfactory reviews in sequence or three such reviews in five years, the faculty member, the tenured faculty within the academic department or unit, and the immediate supervisor shall prepare a professional development plan supported by appropriate resources. The plan, to be approved by the appropriate dean, shall cover up to three years with the possibility of a one-year extension.

During the time period of the professional development plan, progress toward successful completion of the plan will become part of the annual review process for the faculty member. When a faculty member receives two additional unsatisfactory reviews during the professional development plan period, the process for terminating the tenured faculty member with cause shall be initiated as specified in the *Faculty Handbook*.

8. Review of the Faculty Evaluation Program.

The Faculty Senate's ~~Faculty Concerns~~ **Operations** Committee, or other appropriate committee, will be responsible for reviewing the Faculty Evaluation Program. The committee will present its review findings to the Senate by the October meeting of each even numbered year. **The post-tenure review policy shall be reviewed by the Faculty Senate every five years.**

**Final Report of the Faculty Senate *Ad Hoc* Committee on Retention
ACADEMIC ISSUES**

1. Working to improve student academic skills from the time of Heart Start on

National data on retention collected and analyzed by the ACT indicate that there are several factors of moderate importance in predicting retention and three factors that strongly predict it. Those three factors are academic-related skills, academic self-confidence, and academic goals. Good advising might help students “level of motivation to achieve success” (academic goals) and “level of self-confidence (of being successful in the academic environment).” Even in good advising did help to change these partly psychological factors, there are other important reasons to emphasize it. The variable where the university has the greatest opportunity to intervene and improve outcomes, however, is academic skill development. Among academic-related skills, the ACT study lists “time-management skills, study skills, and study habits (taking notes, meeting deadlines, using information resources.” Assuming that students are appropriately admitted and have the capability of doing college work, focusing on improving skill development seems especially likely to assist students in meeting the requirements set by their instructors, persisting at Henderson, and graduating.

Recommendation - To help students develop the necessary academic skills for success, Heart Start should be expanded to a week-long institute. During the day, students will develop listening and note-taking skills by listening to lectures and taking notes on them. Students will develop critical reading skills by discussions of a common book distributed to them a few weeks prior to the institute. Workshops in developing a variety of writing skills would also be useful. Fun activities could take place in the evening.

It might be useful to develop a listserv for students and faculty participating in the institute. One of the real weaknesses of academic and community life and Henderson is that electronic communications between faculty and students is haphazard. Many students don't use their HSU email. This might begin a process of regular communication between student and faculty member that persists throughout the student's college career. If we were in a position to provide each student with a laptop, it would tend to equalize student access to opportunities for skill development and regular Henderson contact and ensure wide access to an ever-enlarging and complex world of information.

One possibility is the following: Have all freshmen and transfer students attend all day each day for one week before classes begin to instruct these students on study habits, policy, location of buildings, business office procedures, and registration for classes. This could be Henderson Seminar credit with the same instructors and then continue to meet once a week during the first nine weeks with the same instructor and the common book and any additional topics necessary. Several schools use this format.

Recommendation - As a follow-up to the institute, we should explore the possibility of increasing the Henderson Seminar from a one-hour to a three-hour class. [Note: We realize this proposal has some significant logistical issues that would need to be considered. It is essential that Lea Ann Alexander, as director of the Seminar program, have a very strong role in any changes, additions, etc. made to the Seminar program.]

2. Maintaining and strengthening academic standards

The ACT retention study indicates that ACT assessment score and high school grade point average have a moderate association with college retention. Maintaining our academic standards would be important to avoid a deterioration in our ability to retain students.

Henderson State University ACT data shows a strong connection between higher ACT scores and retention. Looking at 5 years of data shows that first to second year retention is higher as ACT scores go up.

Recommendation - Given the importance of strong academic skills to college retention, it would be advisable to strengthen our admissions standards by establishing a University College for any students

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who need remediation in all of English, reading, and mathematics. Such students show too little readiness for doing college work. All students in the University College will be classified as non-degree seeking students until completing all three areas of remediation. Due to their need of remediation, particularly in reading, great care should be taken in setting up the schedules of students in the University College.

One reason for instituting the university college concept on our campus for remediation is that if these students attend junior colleges, they might pass the classes but often do not have the quality educational background we require. The university college should include the "transitional student" cohorts and all students who need remediation in all three areas.

3. Improving Advising

A significant number of Henderson students have schedules during their first year that will keep them from making appropriate progress toward their degrees. Indeed, the fact that very few of our students graduate in four years indicates there are systemic obstacles toward student progress that need to be eliminated.

Student programs in the first year and a half need to be focused on meeting the requirements of the liberal arts core. Students needing to take remedial courses need to focus on those courses first so they can develop the skills they need to complete the liberal arts core. The focus on liberal arts requirements will be more easily achievable if we institute a new policy of having students select their major beginning in their third semester and if we establish an advising center (see below for more information on the latter proposal). The tendency in some disciplines to load students up with discipline-specific courses in their first two years will be significantly weakened. Until they select a major, students will be advised either by their Henderson seminar instructor or by an advisor from the advising center. [Note: We realize that, in some majors, this could be problematic due to sequencing of courses. In such cases, exceptions may be necessary.]

Recommendation - It is essential that all faculty and staff who are involved in advising be familiar with remediation requirements (remedial courses must be taken each semester until successful completion, no junior or senior level courses may be taken until all required remediation is completed, etc.) and enforce those requirements. It is also essential that prerequisites not be overridden.

4. Advising Center - Note that this section makes no specific recommendation about the structure of the advising center. It discusses the general concept of the center and recommends that the university select an appropriate group to design the center's structure, procedures and guidelines.

Academic Advising is the only structured activity on the campus in which all students have the opportunity for one-to-one interaction with a concerned representative of the institution. Academic advising is the very core of successful institutional efforts to educate and retain therefore is vital to an effective retention program. Academic advising should be viewed as the "hub of the wheel" and not just one of the various isolated services provided for students. Academic advisors provide students with the needed connection to the various campus services and supply the essential academic connection between these services and the students. In addition, academic advisors offer students the personal connection to the institution that the research indicates is vital to student retention and student success.

Successful academic advising programs cannot be solely responsible for retention rates on a campus. As the hub, advising is one piece of the retention puzzle. Retention efforts must focus on all components of the campus and building strong and effective connections between the advising program and the various components of campus. For example, financial concerns often affect student persistence. It is vital that advisors build strong collaborations with Financial Aid. Advisors need to be able to understand the policies and procedures that affect students' financial aid as well as have a clear understanding of how to refer effectively those students in financial need.

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Since student indecision as to major or career options is a primary factor in student persistence, our advising program should have a strong link to our Center for Career Development. Advising and career services should be, if possible, interrelated so that students see the connection between their academic planning and their career goals.

Residence life is another area where essential collaborations are needed with advising services in order to enhance student retention and persistence.

Academic advising is the direct link between the academic affairs and student services components of a campus that can build a culture of student retention.

Models for delivering advising services are categorized as one of three organizational structures:

- **Centralized:** where professional and faculty advisors are housed in one academic or administrative unit;
- **Decentralized:** where professional or faculty advisors are located in their respective academic departments;
- **Shared:** where some advisors meet with students in a central administrative unit (i.e., an advising center), while others advise students in the academic department of their major discipline.

According to the Sixth National Survey on Academic Advising conducted in 2003 by ACT (Habley, 2004), more institutions use a shared model of delivering advising services (55%) than use centralized (32%) or decentralized (14%) structures. This distribution is similar to that found in 1997 when the Fifth National Survey was conducted.

Variables to be considered in selecting an appropriate organizational structure:

According to National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), each of the three structures has benefits and drawbacks. Variables that should be taken into account include characteristics of the institution, the faculty, student population, scope of the advising program, and philosophy of advising.

- What is the **enrollment** at the institution? For a large college or university, an advising center, either the Self-Contained Model or one of the shared structure models, would be an efficient choice with respect to benefits from economies of scale.
- What is the **administrative structure of the institution** and what is the reporting line for advising? If the provost, vice president, or dean of academic affairs is responsible for advising, then faculty will very likely be involved with advising, either through a decentralized or shared structure.
- To what extent is the **faculty** interested in advising and willing to devote time to it? If the faculty are recognized and rewarded for advising, a decentralized structure is feasible. It is also cost-effective, as no space or funding is needed to establish an advising center.
- What is the nature of the institution's **academic policies, curriculum, and degree programs**? A wide range of academic programs, high program selectivity, and complex graduation requirements increase the practicality of a centralized or shared model. In a central office it is easier for a coordinator to train advisors, thus ensuring that complex policies and program options are understood and accurately conveyed to students.
- What is the **institution's mission**, and how does academic advising relate to the mission? If the institution and its programs are oriented toward career preparation, a decentralized structure such as the Faculty Only Model would be appropriate. Faculty, as experts in their field, may be better prepared to advise students on course selection, internships, and career options.
- What is the **composition of the student body** and what are their special needs? An institution with a sizeable proportion of under-prepared, undecided, or reentry students should devote financial and other resources to specialized advising that is effectively offered in a centralized or shared structure, such as the Split Model. On the other hand, if the majority of students are

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academically prepared and have declared majors, then a more decentralized structure would be appropriate.

All incoming freshmen, academically at-risk students, minority students, student athletes, and undecided students would be advised through the Advising Center and would remain until they officially declare a major and are accepted into a degree program. From that point, advising is provided by faculty advisors from the students' major department.

Advisors for the Center would be selected from those faculty and staff teaching Henderson Seminar. New advisors would receive extensive training, during which other advisors serve as mentors. A commitment to the liberal arts philosophy underscores the training. Each year, a half-day training and refresher workshop would be held for all advisors. Advisors would be updated on policy and procedure changes, new techniques and information, and personnel changes.

Advisors in the Center will assist students in planning majors and minors, understanding their degree plan and scheduling courses that will count towards their graduation requirements. After the initial required advising session students are encouraged to seek assistance from their advisor when considering adding or dropping courses. The advisor will give assistance to the student, but students have the final responsibility for the accuracy of their enrollment. Students who enroll without first meeting with their assigned advisor may be subject to sanctions including, but not limited to, the following: cancellation of the term enrollment and restriction from web registration.

Currently, Seminar instructors are compensated \$1,000 for the semester. It is understood by the instructors that they are the advisors to a group of students until those students declare a major.

5. Tutoring, Scheduling, and Alternative Forms of Delivery of Instructions

Recommendation - There are numerous opportunities for students to receive tutoring. Faculty should be aware of where those opportunities are and encourage students to make use of them. Great effort should be taken to be sure that all tutors are competent to tutor, recognizing competence to tutor is not demonstrated simply by successful completion of the course.

Recommendation - While mandating no specific changes, we recommend that all academic departments consider possibilities for creative scheduling (weekend classes, evening classes, etc.).

Recommendation - While mandating no specific changes, we recommend that all academic departments consider possibilities for alternatives to normal delivery of classes (distance learning, off-site classes, online classes, etc.).

INFORMATION ISSUES

The information subcommittee met to discuss the following topics:

- What is Henderson currently doing to disseminate information to faculty, staff, and students?
- What is working and what is not working with our current methods?
- What are some ideas to improve the process?

Why is this important for student retention?

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If students have questions or want to find out information about something, they will probably initiate the information search. We need to make the information easily accessible so they can find out the correct information in a timely manner. We also need to have knowledgeable faculty and staff to help them with the information or know where they can find it. Students get very frustrated if they are told the wrong information or experience the "Henderson shuffle" when trying to find out their needed information. Therefore, we have included a few ideas that will enable the students, faculty and staff to quickly find the information.

There is also a lot of very important information that students need to know but they will not initiate the information search process. Examples would be important dates and deadlines, scholarship information, CAAP exam information, registration information, etc. We need to find a way to make students aware of this information so they will not miss out on anything important or have the necessary knowledge to make an informed decision. Faculty and staff receive e-mails about this information but we need to somehow get the information directly to the students as well. We need to also consider the issue of student motivation. Students need to be motivated to check their e-mail, the HSU website, bulletin boards, etc. for information. We need to think of ways (lottery, vouchers, coupons, bonus points, etc) to motivate them to check out our information areas on a regular basis. For example, Henderson Seminar could be the starting place where students are assigned to check a specific area of the HSU webpage or check their HSU e-mail every week and send the professor an e-mail. Hopefully that would get them on a routine of doing it. Our committee would like to conduct student surveys and/or have some student focus groups to get their input on how we can resolve this issue.

Recommendations

To improve our university's dissemination of information, our committee's proposal includes the following ideas:

- **If university officials have important information for students, they should send it directly to students' e-mail accounts as well as the faculty and staff.**
- **While students have the option to forward their e-mails from their HSU e-mail account to their personal e-mail address, many students do not take advantage of it. Since many students do not check their HSU e-mail account, they could be missing some important information. We recommend that computer services offer to set up the forwarding option when students set up their e-mail account. We can have student workers or graduate assistants help them with this process. Another option is to somehow motivate students to do it themselves or show them how to do it in class.**
- **We feel that the HSU website is probably the most efficient way to disseminate information to our students, faculty and staff. However, we feel that the information on our website needs to be reviewed and updated frequently. There are also some other major revisions that need to be corrected in order to make our webpage user friendly. We have three other ideas that could improve the information dissemination on our webpage.**
 - **HSU could check into contracting with Google to use their search engine on our HSU website. We feel that Google is more effective than our current search engine because it can better help students find information with key words or part of a word.**

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- If we are unable to contract with another search engine or if we want to add another helpful component to our website, we discussed the idea of adding an information “Reference Guide” on the HSU webpage. This information site should be included in the “Quicklinks area” to make it very easy. The “Reference guide” can have an extensive index for most student situations and questions and notify them where they can find the information. For more common situations, the “Reference Guide” can have the answer. A lot of the information is probably already on the website, but may be difficult to locate. Therefore, the “Reference Guide” could also have a direct link to the information. For more detailed situations, it can list the person or department to contact or where they can find the information (section of catalog, specific website, etc.) Since information on the website can be updated a lot, there should be a way to highlight new information or links that have some changes made within their site. Since many topics can be called several things, we need to make sure that we cross-reference the topics. The “Reference Guide” can also have a FAQ area and a “contact us” function. In the “contact us” function, there could be a place for students to either e-mail a question to an “information person” or post a question to an “information blog”. The previous questions and answers can be posted on the blog site.
- We can have an interactive “campus and community calendar” link on our HSU webpage. This will allow students to have the control to look at certain dates or months to see important events or deadlines. The site could also contain an “important announcement” area.
- Something similar to the Wednesday Memo (perhaps "The Friday Flash") should be created for dissemination of information to students. It should have a link for important campus announcements and deadlines. We also feel that part of the issue of retaining students is getting them connected to our campus and our community. Therefore, this announcement should include events in Arkadelphia and surrounding communities in addition to the campus events. The chambers of commerce for surrounding communities (Arkadelphia, Hot Springs, Malvern, etc.) should be invited to submit items for inclusion.
- Angel and Reddie Connect – While some professors use Angel and other professors use Reddie Connect, maybe we could find a commonality to post important information where students will be encouraged or required to check on a regular basis. If important course information is posted often, students will be more likely to at least check the site.
- We should explore the possibility of putting campus announcements and information on Facebook, MySpace, etc.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

The committee was pleased with the recent efforts to work with students who have lost their scholarships. Giving such students an opportunity to regain their scholarships is a good step.

Recommendation - Increasing the number of academic scholarships (Board of Trustees Scholarships, President's Scholarships, etc.) must be a priority. Henderson State University should never lose a high quality student because "we have no scholarship money left."

FACULTY/STAFF ISSUES

Recommendations are as follows:

1. Recognizing that improving retention is everyone's responsibility, faculty should make use of the Early Alert System for identifying students who are at-risk of dropping out of college and fully fund and staff the system. If faculty are unable to use the online form, they should at least send an email to the Retention Office for the purpose of helping such students.
2. Promote a university policy to insure that faculty members have attendance policies written into their syllabi. Attention should be given to daily attendance in addition to penalties due to excess absenteeism. This could include an attendance grade sheet to be submitted to the chair of the department periodically.
3. Make an effort to staff our remedial classes with the best instructors for the best possible results.

Specific Recommendation - In the academic reading classes, Henderson State University should hire an instructor (non-tenure track) who possesses a Masters Degree in a related field with a K-12 Reading Specialist. By hiring a permanent individual with specific skills in the areas of diagnosing and correcting reading difficulties, it would give a sense of "consistency" to the academic reading program. Pretests and posttests should be utilized as well as diagnostic measures throughout the semester.

4. Address the problem with retention at the freshmen and sophomore levels within the core curriculum since this is the area most affected by loss of students. Increase dialogue among faculty, students, and administration on the subject of retention of freshmen and sophomore students. Possibly, provide a mentoring program by faculty for students in these two at-risk groups.
5. Students on Academic Probation should not be permitted to take more than 14 hours.

OBSERVATIONS OF PROGRAMS AT OTHER SCHOOLS

Recommendations - Some programs of the sort considered here are already in place. Some are not. In each case, Henderson State University should Institute the program, Improve the program or Inform students about the program.

- Tutorial services - Information should be readily and widely available regardless of whether the services are department based, coordinated by the retention office, or from some other source.
- Study skill workshops
- Adult learning resources
- First Year Experience program that goes beyond one available only to campus residents.
- Adult reentry program
- Freshman Convocation - one set up with a Freshman audience in mind, not simply requiring freshmen to attend an already existing program

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- **Encourage freshman leadership**
- **Freshman learning communities**
- **Facilities to make the campus more friendly to non-traditional students and commuting students**
- **Regular evaluation/improvement of the already strong Henderson Seminar program**
- **Freshman Orientation**
- **Departmental visits with prospects (perhaps during Reddie for Henderson Day)**
- **Work with city leaders to improve city services such as dining, entertainment, laundry, etc.**
- **Work with city leaders and businesses to make students aware of off-campus employment opportunities.**
- **Make more institutional work-study positions available. Positions could be anything from working in academic positions to assisting our under-staffed maintenance department by picking up trash around campus.**