

September 2008 Faculty Senate Minutes

Faculty Senate Minutes 9-3-08

Members Present: Clint Atchley, Lea Ann Alexander, Mitzi Bass, Rafael Bejarano, Angela Boswell, Aaron Calvert, Steven Carter, Martha Dale Cooley, James Duke, Linda English, David Evans, Herman Gibson, Maralea Gourley, Marty Halpern, Catherine Leach, Richard Miller, Brett Serviss, Gary Smithey, Mike Taylor, Pat Weaver, Patrick Wempe, Penny Whelchel, Hank Wilson, Sandy Denning Staff Senate Representative

Others Present: Paul Huo, Fred Worth

Call to Order:

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

Approval of April 30th Minutes:

The minutes of the April 30th Faculty Senate meeting were approved as distributed.

Discussion with Vice President Maralyn Sommer:

Dr. Sommer informed the Senate that state revenues were up. However, the university doesn't know if/when Henderson will get any of these monies. She also discussed enrollment figures with the Senate. Enrollment is up in Clark, Saline, and Union counties but down in areas with community colleges. Sommer suggested the Senate examine the possibility of holding registration for the fall term on Thursday and Friday and beginning classes on Monday to alleviate some of the problems of Monday classes not meeting for two weeks at the beginning of the semester. The earlier start date could be used later as a fall break. Boswell thanked Sommer for attending the Faculty Senate meetings and answering questions.

President's Report:

A copy of the president's report is attached at the end of the minutes.

Committee Reports:

Academics Committee:

The Academics Committee is working on an academic integrity statement.

Buildings and Grounds Committee:

A copy of the report is attached at the end of the minutes. Dr. Serviss asked that faculty email buildings and grounds concerns to any member of the committee.

Finance Committee:

No report. Faculty are asked to send items for the committee to Dr. David Evans, chair of the committee.

Operations Committee:

No report.

Procedures Committee:

The elections to select the Faculty Excellence Awards Committees will be held during September.

Old Business:

A motion to suspend the rules to complete new business before discussing the Retention Committee Report was passed.

New Business:

There was discussion concerning the minimum grade requirements in the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum. The issue was sent to the Academics Committee.

Boswell noted that three of the four faculty members who received the new faculty excellence award left the university shortly after being chosen. It was also mentioned that the awardees are chosen in the spring, but the monetary award is not given until the fall. In addition, the amount of the award is not the same as the other excellence awards.

A motion was passed to endorse changes to the Remission of Fees Policy. The changes were already endorsed by the Staff Senate. A copy of the proposed changes is attached at the end of the minutes.

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It was noted that a university committee is discussing online courses and policies concerning online courses. Faculty are encouraged to contact Dr. Patrick Wempe with concerns about this issue.

Old Business:

The Senate discussed the Retention Committee Report. Discussion of the report began in April; therefore, September's discussion began with the Information Issues section of the report.

Motions were passed to accept the following recommendations:

Information Issues:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- We should explore the possibility of putting campus announcements and information on Facebook, MySpace, etc.

The following items were tabled:

Information Issues:

- 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.
- 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.

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The tabled issues concerning the university web page and the following three recommendations were sent to an ad hoc committee.

Information Issues:

- 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.

The following recommendations received no motion to accept.

Financial Issues:

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:

1. 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.

The following recommendations received a motion and second to accept, but the motion failed.

Faculty/Staff Issues:

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.
1. Make an effort to staff our remedial classes with the best instructors for the best possible results.

There were no votes in favor of recommendation 3.

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A motion was passed to table further discussion of the Retention Committee Report and that discussion of the report will be conducted at future Senate meetings after new business and until 5:00 pm until discussion of the report is finished.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

President's Report, September 2008

Miscellaneous

As everyone knows, HSU has hired Dr. Vernon Miles as Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, and he will begin October 1. I was very pleased with the search process. Dr. Welch demonstrated a commitment to shared governance and faculty input from the beginning, taking the recommendations of the Executive Committee in appointing faculty to the search committee which was mostly made up of faculty, encouraging open forums with all the candidates to get faculty, staff, and student feedback, and in working with the committee to choose the final candidate. The committee considered the feedback from the forums very seriously, and, in the end, I believe we have hired an excellent candidate. I want to thank the committee (Angela Boswell, chair, Clint Atchley, Mike Taylor, Celya Taylor, Margaret Hoskins, Brett Serviss, Judy Harrison, Vikita Hardwick, Ivey Kelly) who put in a lot of hard work in the summer months for being one of the best and most hard-working committees I've ever served with, and I would also like to thank Dr. Welch for all the work he put into the search process as well as for the collegial way in which the final decision was made.

The responsibility for compiling the University Committee Handbook has been transferred to Doris Wright who has been waiting "to hear on a few more vacancies." However, in the interest of making it public sooner rather than later, they have decided to publish it with a few "TBAs". Karen Spradlin is finishing it up, and it should be on the web by the end of this week.

Meeting with President Chuck Welch

As of my meeting with Dr. Welch which was the second day of registration, enrollment numbers appeared to be up in sophomores, a little up in juniors, seniors, graduate students, and down about 30 in freshmen. He brought up the employee remission of fees proposed revisions and asked that the Faculty Senate address those changes. There may, however, be additional changes as there is discussion about possibly limiting number of hours that HSU will pay for in one semester.

Regarding faculty salaries, Dr. Welch is optimistic that there will be revision to the forecast and Henderson will receive 80-85 percent of Category B funds (we are currently only allocated 53.9 percent). At that level, we would probably be able to implement the faculty cost of living adjustment as well as for the staff who did not already receive it. At 86 percent we would probably be able to also implement the fourth year of the faculty salary study. We could hear anywhere between end of August and November about whether we will get those additional monies. Regarding the long term issue of poor faculty salaries, Dr. Welch has already raised the issue to Board of Trustees as something that needs to be addressed. He will be working with the new Provost to address the issue, but he doesn't know how quickly. (After the meeting, I sent Dr. Welch the AAUP reports showing how HSU ranks in the lowest category for every rank, the only Arkansas public school to do so.)

Dr. Welch also raised the issue of scholarships to the Board of Trustees. There is a state ceiling of 30 percent of tuition and fees that can be spent on academic and performance scholarships. We spent that and could give no more. The majority of that money was given in the top four categories of scholarships

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(Success, University, Presidential, and Board of Trustees); 50 percent of freshmen students received one of those four scholarships. He also explained that certain categories of scholarships do not factor into that 30 percent limit, including athletics, waiving out-of-state tuition for graduate students or students from contiguous states, transfer scholarships from two-year institutions, graduate assistantships, tuition waivers based upon age, military service, or occupation, and private scholarships. Seven percent of freshmen students were on athletic scholarships, and athletic scholarships makes up 18.7 percent of the monies that HSU spends on scholarships.

An appeal was made to Dr. Welch on the behalf of two students who had been admitted to the transitional program to allow them to participate in extracurricular activities. Coaches had signed national letters of intent in February with these two students assuming that they would be allowed to play even though the rules for the transitional program had been changed to not allow participation in extracurricular activities. At least one of the students had turned down scholarships to other schools because of the letter of intent. After much consideration and discussion with Vice President Sommer, Dr. Welch decided that it would be unfair to not allow the students to participate since they were promised that they could. And since it would be unfair to allow athletes in the transitional program a privilege others were denied, he made the decision to allow other transitional students (two students who wished to take choir) to also do so. Dr. Welch stressed that this decision was made due to the extraordinary circumstances and is not to be construed as a permanent adjustment to the transitional program. He added that the entire transitional program needs to be examined and reconsidered.

We also discussed the strategic planning that Dr. Welch had mentioned at the Fall Faculty retreat. He wants several committees as part of the planning process that will develop succinct, measurable goals. These goals will then be used to guide university decisions, including budgeting decisions. Dr. Welch will also be sending out a series of surveys to faculty, staff, alumni, and community about Henderson and changes that should be made. It may be that we review certain things that we are doing and decide to not change anything, but he would like input (via these surveys) into what things need reviewing.

Finally, Dr. Welch would like to hold a "faculty forum" once a semester to update faculty and give faculty members a chance to ask questions. This semester's forum will be Wednesday, September 24, at 3 p.m. in the Banquet Room of the Garrison Center.

Meeting with Vice President Maralyn Sommer

Dr. Sommer is gathering together statistics regarding summer school enrollments and compensation from last summer. She would like the summer school committee to meet again, analyze the information, and make a report. Since this summer school experiment needs to be tried two or three times to rate its success, she suggests that the summer school committee will make reports after each summer.

We also discussed compensation for online courses. A committee of four faculty members headed by Travis Langley has been meeting and researching the issue, and it will make a proposal.

I want to thank Dr. Sommer for making herself so available for the monthly meetings with myself, for coming so faithfully to the Faculty Senate meetings, and for being willing to answer any and all questions throughout the months she served as the interim Vice President. I know she is looking forward to returning to her position as dean, but let's recognize her for her hard work in filling the VPAA's chair the past eight months.

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Buildings and Grounds Committee Report to the Faculty Senate for September 2008

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

On August 20, 2008, I met with Mr. Bobby Jones on behalf of the Buildings and Grounds Committee in order to discuss several carry-over items from the spring 2008 semester regarding various requests and needs specific to the HSU campus. The items that were addressed are 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; and
9. broken lights on pedestrian bridge across 10th Street.

Details:

Items one, four, five, and six have been approved or are already corrected, or are in the process of being rendered as such. Two additional kiosks for the placing of advertisements will be erected on campus (the original one between the drill field and McBrien Hall will also be kept), and two campus directories will also be placed at the location of the two new kiosks.

Item eight has been discussed with Johnnie Campbell, and discussions regarding what measures are needed to make our campus more secure are being undertaken.

Regarding item seven, Henderson has purchased five bicycles for use on campus, but no new bicycle racks have been purchased or added to the campus. Some bicycle racks have, however, been moved in order to more evenly distribute them across campus.

Regarding item three, both the Arkadelphia City Police and HSU Campus Security have the airport on their patrolling schedules.

Regarding item nine, Mr. Jones has indicated that replacing all of the lights on the bridge would cost in excess of \$10,000. The broken lights currently present represent the second time that all the lights have been vandalized. An alternative solution that would place the lights where they cannot be accessed by foot traffic is currently being developed.

There has been no resolution regarding item two.

Respectfully submitted,

Brett E. Serviss

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Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair

DRAFT REVISION

REMISSION OF TUITION FOR FACULTY/STAFF

(This revision, if supported by Faculty Senate and Staff Senate will be considered by the Board during fall semester, 2008.)

Definition

The Faculty/Staff remission of tuition is a fringe benefit to the employees of the University and not a student scholarship. The maximum amount of this benefit is 100% of the general tuition for undergraduate work and a charge for graduate work of \$20.00 per credit hour. Any additional fees, such as the Garrison Center, Activity, Vehicle, Lab, Infrastructure, Health, and Technology, etc., are not covered by this benefit. The following guidelines apply for awarding of this benefit:

Persons receiving remission of tuition must be employed at least half-time by the University. (Adjunct faculty and other temporary employees do not qualify for the benefit.)

Educational Policy for Employees

With supervisor(s) approval, Faculty/staff tuition remission will be granted for graduate or undergraduate classes for the absence from the employee's workplace of no more than three (3) clock hours per calendar week during his/her regular work schedule. Employees who elect to take a class must reduce their lunch hour to thirty (30) minutes five days a week. This policy will be strictly enforced. Faculty/Staff remission will be granted for additional undergraduate or graduate classes outside of the employee's regular work schedule with supervisor's approval.

Employees may take classes in summer sessions or mini-sessions during the employee's regular working hours with the following stipulations: Upon approval by the supervisor(s), employees wishing to enroll in summer- or mini-sessions must either adjust their summer work schedule or charge hours out of the office to annual leave. The supervisor(s) must verify that doing so will not adversely affect the productivity of the position.

Requirements

Prior to registering each semester, you must complete an application, available in the Financial Aid Office. The application must be approved by the appropriate supervisor(s) before being forwarded to the Financial Aid Office for processing.

Any other requirements will be specified on the Remission of Tuition Application.