

Faculty Senate Minutes 5 February 2014

Senators Present: Ajay Aggarwal, Jill Batson, Steven Becraft, Kristen Benjamin, James Duke, Carolyn Eoff, Dan Fitzroy, Emily Gerhold, Greg Gibson, John Greene, Megan Hickerson, Jana Jones, Travis Langley, Patricia Loy, Richard Miller, Lonnie McDonald, Janice O'Donnell, Malcolm Rigsby, Ingo Schranz, Brett Serviss, Suzanne Tartamella, Penny Whelchel, Peggy Woodall

Senators Absent: Lea Ann Alexander, Holly Morado, Richard Schmid, R. C. Smith, Patrick Wempe, Fred Worth

Others Present: Steve Adkison, Glen Jones, Jacob Mills

1. Call to Order: President-Elect Brett Serviss 3:18pm; President-Elect Serviss announced that he would run the meeting because President Worth was in Little Rock on family business
2. President-Elect Serviss asked for a motion to suspend the rules so that President Glen Jones and incoming Provost/VPAA Steve Adkison could address the Senate; a motion was made and seconded.
3. Discussion with President, Dr. Glen Jones
 - a. He had been invited to speak to the Senate to share his thoughts about, among other things, shared governance and the strategic planning process.
 - b. The strategic planning process is ongoing; one of the key questions is how to incorporate the liberal arts into the strategic plan; another is how to address our community's needs amid current financial pressures.
 - c. At Arkansas State University (ASU) shared governance was not always strong—a great deal of dissention and distrust existed; he helped to gather a group together which helped to change shared governance at ASU; ASU's shared governance was recently recognized by the HLC.
 - d. Several additional comments about shared governance at HSU:
 - i. Three parameters must guide shared governance: *a strong framework* with broad participation; a *shared definition* of what shared governance is and is not; an element of *trust* in the relationship between administration and faculty.
 - ii. Dr. Jones said he cannot “turn back the clock,” but he is prepared to move forward with a new administration and better infrastructure.
 - iii. Dr. Jones desires shared governance, although noted that no mechanism is in place for it currently.
 - e. This is a critical moment for higher education—expectations from society, financial pressures from the state, etc. contribute to this; we must be willing to think “outside of the box” in both academic and non-academic matters.
- a. Feedback to strategic planning committee/subcommittees is imperative; previous strategic plans have failed in the implementation process.
- b. Questions from Senators
 - i. How are we setting the stage to ensure a firm financial footing for the institution? *Diversifying revenue stream; better contact efforts with donors (a recent “thank-a-thon” resonated well); must also do a better job of engaging with faculty in this process.*

- ii. Any truth to the rumor that we will be getting students from India and China? *No; however, a recent evaluation of the international program deemed the program “inefficient”; international students feel isolated; international program should be grown; plan is to target large, wealthy countries.*
- iii. Are we looking at ways to expand online opportunities, specifically distance learning? *We must achieve an “economy of scale,” so such programs are not feasible at this time; we are exploring online course sharing with COPLAC; however, there is currently no infrastructure to do some of these things.*

4. Discussion with Incoming Provost/VPAA, Dr. Steve Adkison

- a. Enjoys the opportunity to have these types of conversations (i.e. dialog with the Senate).
- b. Open to transparency; understands frustrations of the past.
- c. Hopes that administrative decisions are robustly questioned.
- d. Does not enjoy autocratic roles; values intellectual sincerity and respectful interactions.
- e. Promises that while everyone may not always agree with a decision he makes, he will always clarify *why* that decision was made.
- f. As the chief academic officer, wants to be considered “first among equals”—treated as a faculty member.
- g. Posed this question for the Senate: *What does the Senate consider Henderson’s most pressing challenge? What are our priorities?*
- h. Senator raised a question about our low graduation and retention rates—when does academic excellence warrant our doing something that truly stands out?
 - i. Dr. Adkison noted that all regional public universities struggle with retention and graduation rates, but academic excellence must be maintained; everything we do must be driven by our mission and role: access to education is meaningless without excellence.
 - ii. Dr. Adkison also noted that financial resources do not exist for mediocrity; our decisions must be based on achieving excellence or perfection.
- i. Another senator noted that most if not all of the faculty and programs at Henderson already offer academic excellence; students are simply unaware of these opportunities.
 - i. Dr. Adkison stressed the faculty’s role in advertising these opportunities.
 - ii. Another senator raised the issue of retention—keeping quality students here—as well as problems with guidance and advising.
 - iii. Dr. Jones noted that raising the institutional profile is part of the strategic plan and that students who do not succeed are not always those we might expect; revamped scholarship policies will attract the types of students we want as will redesigned campus visits.
- j. A senator affirmed the excellence of the faculty, but asked about unrealized potential and increased opportunities for interdisciplinary work; a significant discussion ensued.
- k. A senator noted that because Arkansas is a small state, institutional presidents often have the governor’s ear; why not offer free tuition for students who meet certain criteria? Students are not interested in things that they do not work for. Discussion ensued, with one senator noting that several other states are already proposing this idea. Dr. Adkison noted that the state legislature would not necessarily be open to more money for higher education.
- l. A senator raised a concern that students are often unaware of the connection between their majors and minors; students often choose minors because they “have a lot of hours” in a given discipline; we must do a better job at demonstrating connectivity.
 - i. Dr. Adkison mentioned a system of “elective paths” at his current institution; these create a sense of connectivity and interdisciplinarity.

- m. Another senator raised the problem of retention, noting that students do not have their “eyes on the prize” and need motivation to stay for something.
 - i. Dr. Adkison mentioned that it is okay for students to enter not always knowing what they want to pursue.
 - ii. Dr. Jones reiterated our shared commitment to retention; initiatives such as an associate degree en route to a baccalaureate degree and reverse enrollment may help with retention.
 - iii. Dr. Jones also noted we must do a better job of linking our majors to concentrations.
 - n. Dr. Adkison asked about the most appropriate role for the provost/VPAA vis-à-vis the Senate. Discussion ensued.
5. President-Elect Serviss asked for a motion to reinstitute the rules; a motion was made and seconded.
6. Approval of January 2014 Minutes by Acclamation
7. President’s Report
- a. Report of Meeting with President, Dr. Glen Jones (30 January 2014)
 - i. Installation has begun on a warning system (siren and speakers) on top of McBrien and Wells. The town's tornado siren is not loud enough, so this will supplement that. It can also be used for other situations where the campus community needs to be instructed to seek shelter.
 - ii. In response to a question about the recent article showing HSU as next to last statewide vis-à-vis remediation; there is no PR we can do to make that look better. We are increasing admission standards so that will improve. The best thing we can do is to improve retention and graduation rates, thereby demonstrating that we are producing strong graduates even though they might have required some initial remediation.
 - iii. I asked about a couple of recent cases in which students were poorly advised and put in classes they did not need or for which they were not prepared [*nota bene* - the advising in this case was not done by the advising center]; we need to try to ask the right questions to help students choose the right majors and get them in the right classes. The advising center is doing a good job but we want to do what we can to give them the tools to do it even better.
 - iv. The report of the president's cabinet meetings and the minutes of the board of trustees meetings will soon be posted on MyHenderson.
 - v. I asked about safety issues regarding athletes (in light of the major problems in the National Football League and elsewhere with concussions.) We do everything we can to assure our student-athletes are protected as much as possible. If there is any question whether or not a student-athlete is healthy enough to play, he/she does not play.
 - vi. Basis for concurrent enrollment: The university has discussed concurrent enrollment in the past but did not pursue it because of the expense involved with National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation and concerns about how we could effectively oversee the program. Subsequently, ADHE created an alternative process eliminating the expense and institutional self-study required of NACEP. Given the requests from local high schools, our current 190 student decrease in enrollment, and the fact that we are the only four-year institution besides UAPB that does not offer

concurrent enrollment, we are currently exploring the possibility under ADHE's new framework. The HSU faculty will be consulted in order to determine the appropriate mechanism for pursuing concurrent enrollment; which will strengthen our institution by engaging quality students while they are in high school and provide a better experience for students who participate in concurrent enrollment.

- vii. The “rumors” concerning plans to create a vice provost position are not true. There are no plans to hire a vice provost.

b. Report of Meeting with Interim Provost/VPAA, Dr. Maralyn Sommer (31 January 2014)

- i. A committee has been established to complete the required concurrent enrollment application process for ADHE and to put together a plan for how Henderson will oversee the concurrent enrollment program. The committee consists of Dr. Brett Serviss, Mr. Eric Bailey, Dr. Lloyd Moyo, and Dr. Steve Carter. ADHE has very strict policy guidelines that must be adhered to in order to offer concurrent enrollment courses. Still under discussion at the state level are the financial expectations of the institutions and of the high school students enrolled in concurrent courses. The state of Arkansas has assembled a committee to recommend some guidelines, particularly dealing with how tuition and fees should be handled. Not all schools are handling things the same way and the committee will determine whether or not this should be standardized.
- ii. Paperwork necessary for establishing the Hot Springs campus was submitted on January 31, 2014, and will be considered by ADHE at the April Higher Education Coordinating Board meeting. Once approved by ADHE, it will go to HLC. The Hot Springs campus will be a stand-alone HSU facility. Classes offered include education, business, non-western cultures, and junior writing. We are only offering junior-senior classes because National Park Community College offers freshman-sophomore classes. The classes are being taught by full-time HSU faculty and HSU-hired adjuncts. The money for this facility comes from a specific state appropriation and can only be used for this project. Students in Hot Springs do count towards our SSCH, which affects costs for certain library services, like database subscriptions; however, these students will likely begin paying technology fees that will be used to offset these additional costs. At present, this has not been finalized, but we do not anticipate that it will be a problem.
- iii. The Faculty Senate Operations Committee will need to look at and clarify the Faculty Handbook section dealing with workman's compensation (in consultation with the HR office). Specifically, we need to address the time period for requiring notification of one's immediate supervisor and completing the required paperwork regarding any work-related injuries. Henderson does not control workman's compensation—it is a state operation—and they can deny payment on an application if not submitted in a timely manner.

8. Reports of Committees

a. Executive Committee

i. Provost/VPAA Attendance of Faculty Senate Meetings

- 1. For each meeting of the Faculty Senate, the provost/VPAA would be asked to prepare and submit a brief written report to the Senate, prior to the meeting, that outlines the items that he/she wishes to discuss with the Senate.

2. Unless special circumstances warrant an exception, the provost/VPAA would be asked to address the Senate within a set, pre-determined period of time, say for example 15 or 20 minutes.
 3. Early in the fall semester, the Senate might consider holding a special meeting designed to “meet the provost/VPAA” in order to allow the provost/VPAA and the Senate an initial chance to interact directly.
- ii. Budgetary Priorities of Faculty
 1. After polling of constituents (at the request of the University Budget Committee) and subsequent discussion by the faculty, it is the overwhelming consensus of the faculty that faculty salaries be increased at a minimum to the point where such salaries would be equitable/consistent with faculty salaries at other four-year institutions in Arkansas and regionally.
 2. Additionally, faculty salaries must be raised while coverage of faculty insurance premiums is simultaneously maintained.
 - iii. Current State of Faculty Morale and Perception
 1. Several issues regarding the current state of faculty morale and perception were discussed. Based on these discussions, a formal survey pertaining to the current state of faculty morale and perception will be constructed and administered sometime during the (current) spring 2014 semester.
 2. It is absolutely vital that *all faculty* participate in the survey and provide candid answers/feedback to all questions/sections. In addition to specific questions, there will be an open response section included in the survey to allow faculty to adequately voice their sentiment beyond just the general parameters/restrictions dictated by survey questions.
 - iv. Senate Representation for Lecturers and Adjuncts
 1. The Executive Committee requests that each Senator routinely contact the lecturer and/or adjunct faculty in his/her area and determine the needs/issues that these faculty would like to see discussed/addressed by the Faculty Senate and subsequently communicate those needs/issues to the Senate.
- b. Academics Committee: no report
 - c. Buildings and Grounds Committee: no formal report; Ms. Lea Ann Alexander elected as chair for 2014; committee will meet soon and already has a list of items to discuss with Mr. Bobby Jones.
 - d. Finance Committee: no report
 - e. Operations Committee: no formal report; committee has been communicating by e-mail and hopes to begin work on changes to the Faculty Handbook soon.
 - f. Procedures Committee:
 - i. Dan Fitzroy elected as chair for 2014.
 - ii. Faculty Excellence Award Committee Elections were supposed to be held last year, so they are considerably late.
 - iii. Process of using electronic ballots was discussed.
 - iv. Focus of this year’s Faculty Excellence Awards will be teaching.
 - v. Phrasing on the ballots was discussed.
 - vi. Information for ballots and elections has been submitted to Ms. Wrenette Tedder; they should be available soon.

9. Old Business

- a. Academic Reports for Athletes; no major issues for the timeline for these reports; we will proceed as outlined at the first Senate meeting.

10. New Business

- a. A Senator raised a concern about recent class cancellations: is there a formal way to communicate these closings? Other senators noted the existence of the RAVE alert system, e-mails, etc. Several senators noted that no such system currently exists for those courses taught at National Park Community College.
- b. Senators raised other questions about the inclement weather policies: why cancel classes only until noon? Why is the decision not made earlier? One senator noted that the school had been criticized in the past for relying too heavily on the forecast and closing/cancelling prematurely.

11. Adjourn 4:56

Respectfully Submitted,
P. Gregory Gibson