

Draft
Faculty Senate Minutes
March 5, 2003

Members Present: Mitzi Bass, Vonna Cranston, Kevin Durand, James Engman, Laura Festa, Angela Boswell (for John Graves), Paula Leming (for Julia Hall), Wray Jones, Travis Langley, Richard Miller, Jules Mollere, Phillip Schroeder, Bruce Smith, Martha Dale Cooley, Carolyn Eoff, William Henshaw, Laura Lockwood, Blair Olson, Connie Roberts, Brett Serviss, Joyce Shepherd, George Ann Stallings, Glenna Sumner, Don Wells and Fred Worth.

Members Absent: David Stoddard, Lynn Leggett, Marielle McFarland.

Others Present: David Epperhart

Dr. Travis Langley called the meeting to order at 3:18 p.m. and the minutes of the February 5, 2003 meeting were approved with corrections.

Dr. Langley altered the order of business for Mr. David Epperhart to answer any questions that Senators had relative to the changes that are taking place in ID cards and he also addressed some concerns about the key card locks that eventually will be on every building on campus. One of the chief concerns expressed by Senate members was disposal of the old ID cards that have social security numbers encoded in them.

President's Report:

Dr. Langley reported on his meeting with Dr. Dunn first. The report began with some data on the budget cuts including roughly a million dollars cut from state generated revenue. Cuts from the budget came from several areas including equipment and elimination of some external programs. One of the issues was that our students have been successful students and retained scholarships that they received. Dr. Dunn was reported to have said that he believed that salary increases were still a high priority even in this time of deep financial problems. It was also reported that we will not be budgeting for an increase in enrollment for next year even though we may very well have increases.

It was reported by Dr. Langley that there was some discussion as to which cabinet members had recently taught classes at Henderson State University and several members were mentioned who had not taught but others had taught Henderson Seminars or regular classes.

From his meeting with Dr. Dunn and Dr. Houston, Dr. Langley reported they had discussed the issue of high school classes that are proposed to be taught by high school teachers for college credit. He indicated that Dr. Houston had said the chairs would be very involved in evaluation and supervision of the high school classes. Dunn and Houston were reported to have indicated that courses had been asked for in only three areas and would be the only ones taught as the superintendent believes that he only has qualified faculty to teach the ones proposed. (Addendum: There will be exactly five classes, including a two semester sequence of English, a two-semester sequence of History and one semester of Math).

Dr. Langley reported that Dr. Dunn had not decided on a new title for Ms Doris Wright that would adequately indicate her duties (after June 30 when the VP position is to be eliminated), only that it would not be Vice-President of Institutional Advancement.

When asked about who appoints the members of the University Planning Council, Dr. Dunn was reported to have indicated that they were appointed by the Committee on Committees.

There was some discussion by President Langley concerning his questions to Dr. Houston about the two days of Pre-Session conferences in August. He reported that Houston had said faculty are paid for the entire month of August but that he was open to a one day if there was not enough to do for two days. He was also very open to the Senate being involved in the planning of the conference.

Houston was also reported to be still working on issues relative to international students and tuition payments. Students are now to be required to pay their first semester in full before coming to the United States. He was reported to have said they were working on issues relative to subsequent semesters when a student might fall out of status.

When asked about grade inflation, Dr. Houston was reported to have indicated that we are doing what we can without intruding on academic freedom and currently the deans have to deal with it as the issue arises among their faculty.

Dr. Langley reported that Dr. Houston said that he reads the printout from student evaluations of faculty to look for problems but realizes that emphasis on student evaluation could contribute to grade inflation. Dr. Houston said that deans and chairs need to read these printouts too, then look at the written comments on the individual evaluations when patterns on the printouts indicate there may be problems to look at.

Dr. Langley reported that Dr. Houston said we would be purchasing a plaque for the Excellence Awards and are looking for a place to put it and considering the Student Center as a possible site.

Dr. Langley then reported on his visit with Ms Doris Wright concerning the Faculty Lunch program and concerns for increased cost relative to special request by faculty with allergies or special dietary needs.

In discussion following Langley's presentation it was suggested that faculty with special needs might go to the regular area of the cafeteria instead of making a special request.

Further discussion centered around the idea that faculty were contracted and paid for the month of August. One senator who has been at Henderson State a long time stated that we have a nine months contract and opted to spread the checks over 10 months and no additional salary was provided for August when this was begun. It was pointed out that we do have a contractual obligation to attend conferences including the two days in August but are not paid for the entire month of August technically.

There was then some discussion of an apparent difference in the financial state of HSU reported in successive minutes of the cabinet (i.e. the February 10 minutes reflected that the budget was balanced and the February 20th minutes indicated there was a deficit before the most recent state cuts.)

In reference to the presentation concerning the courses offered at the high school one senator observed that at HSU all students must have the appropriate ACT score or have met remediation before being enrolled in certain courses (English A & B, and College Algebra). It was further observed that the presence of unqualified students in a class would dilute the education experience of both the qualified and unqualified students. It was further stated that there would potentially be five courses not three taught at the high school (English A & B, US History to 1865 and US History Since 1865, and College Algebra) making it a total of 15 hours which is a semester.

Another Senator questioned the issue of ACT as a measure of qualification for a class but argued that all students should meet the standards of the class.

The following resolution was proposed:

Be it resolved that students enrolled or present in classes at the high school that receive Henderson State University credit meet the same level of academic preparation as required for on campus enrollment.

The resolution was passed with a unanimous vote.

There was then a concern expressed concerning the student evaluation instrument and an informal poll indicated there was a consensus that more work needs to be done on this matter with a possible ad hoc committee of persons with expertise in this area being asked to help.

One senator (in reference to the President's Report) suggested that teaching one semester in a Henderson Seminar is not equivalent to "academic teaching experience".

Committee Reports:

Academics Committee:

The chair of the Academics Committee presented several points:

1. On the issue of grade inflation: He requested information on what had been done three to four years ago on the issue and asked what the committee was supposed to do with it.
2. On the issue of student advising: He indicated the committee is still gathering information and requested individuals respond to a committee member on the following areas: *What is working? What is not working? What would you like to happen?*

The chair of the Academics Committee on behalf of the committee then presented the following resolution relative to the Liberal Arts Core at Henderson State University:

We recommend that all transfer students, including those who have already earned an Associate of Arts from an accredited Arkansas college or community college, must fulfill the Henderson State University liberal arts core.

The resolution was approved by a unanimous vote.

Finance Committee:

No report

Operations Committee:

The Operations committee has been working on the issue of a policy manual and presented a proposed change the Faculty Handbook relative to the section on promotions to make the statements consistent with statements concerning qualification for rank. The presented the following with the bold being what was changed:

K.2. To be promoted from associate professor to professor, ***a person must hold an earned doctorate or sixty-semester-hour MFA degree with a creative thesis appropriate to the field of teaching and professional responsibility and have five years experience as an associate professor.***

The above was passed with a unanimous vote.

Building and Grounds Committee:

No report

Procedures Committee:

No report

New Business:

Several items under new business were withdrawn.

In reference to the issue of Summer Salary Issues. Several proposals were presented and initially one was rejected but later reintroduced as amended below: There was some discussion that upping the caps for summer school classes to 10 undergraduate students and five for graduate students moves the summer classes closer to paying for themselves and therefore justifies a reconsideration of averaging again. The following further justification and resolution was then offered.

Whereas

(1) summer school generates revenue for this university and a source of revenue should be expanded rather than cut back,

(2) class cancellations make the university look disorganized, unprofessional, and uncaring,

(3) a student enrolled in two classes may drop one if the other is cancelled,

(4) a student whose class is dropped in one summer term might change plans to attend Henderson the next term or perhaps ever again,

(5) students who might otherwise attend summer school may decide not to after hearing fellow students complain,

(6) due to how summer is budgeted, departments are not allowed to offer more classes that can attract students who would not otherwise attend summer school, and

(7) academic planning is best served by input from and decision making by the academicians teaching the classes,

we of the Faculty Senate hereby state that something must be done to alleviate the endless uncertainty and confusion regarding our summer school programs, so that students and faculty might make plans they can count on, this university can better plan its budget, and summer school could potentially generate more revenue by attracting and keeping more students. Henderson must reduce the ill will created by class cancellations and other cutbacks in summer course offerings.

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate recommends averaging an individual instructor's summer classes to ten students in undergraduate classes and five graduate students with a minimum of five students in an undergraduate class and three in a graduate class in order to correct this inequity.

Be it further resolved that we specifically recommend that when a summer course's enrollment is less than the minimum required at a time when budgetary constraints would otherwise cause that specific course to be cancelled, the course instructor will have the option of receiving salary proportional to the number of students enrolled in the course. For example, if eighty percent of the necessary number of students have enrolled by the end of the last day to add the class, the course instructor will decide whether to cancel the class or to teach the class for eighty percent remuneration.

The above resolution was passed by a unanimous vote.

The Senate adjourned at 5:35 p.m.