

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
Southwest Tennessee Community College  
Union Campus  
September 11, 2012

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

Todd Blankenbeckler, president, called the meeting to order at 3:00.

The following senators were present:

Karen Pierce	Bill Turner
Rosie Taylor	Robert Walker
Annie Sultana	Joan McGrory
Dewey Sykes	Joanitha Barnes
Leslie Peeples	Mahnaz Ghaffarian
Nathan Knappler	Michael Scott
Donald Thomas	John Friedlander
Jason Whitt	Ladonna Young

The following senator sent a proxy:

Doug Branch

The following senator was absent:

Margie Coltharp

The following guests were present:

Liz Lawrence  
Bill Weppner  
Yen-kuang Chou  
Jimmy Chism

B. Reading of the Minutes

The minutes were approved as amended.

C. Update on Senate Subcouncil and General Assembly meetings:

Todd Blankenbeckler reported on the latest Senate Subcouncil meeting. The pertinent items discussed were:

- There is concern that the Governor's Council of Higher Education has not had any faculty involvement. Only business and industry have been invited to take part.
- Jim Bitter from ETSU proposed a change to the academic freedom policy that would extend those freedoms to participation in committee meetings. That

motion was denied by the Academic Subcouncil. The Faculty Subcouncil will request a guideline be created to address this need.

Updates from the General Assembly:

- One thing of note: If it is shown that a faculty member was wrongly terminated, that faculty member will receive compensation for back pay.
- There is still talk of stopping the Common Calendar. One major issue is that different calendars throughout the state would cause a problem for RODP courses.
- Faculty evaluation of administration continues to be a problem throughout the system.

D. Reports From Senate Committees:

- Faculty Development and Welfare Committee  
Annie Sultana handed out a report of money spent for faculty travel for the 2011-2012 year. Out of the travel budget pool of \$25,000, only \$3,269.00 was spent. Restrictions on out-of-state travel lead to a shortage of requests. Annie reported that restrictions will remain in place this year. Any out-of-state travel requests will be decided by the Provost.

Todd Blankenbeckler emphasized that this did not mean all out-of-state travel was prohibited. Faculty should continue to request travel funds as necessary. Todd also encouraged all faculty to look for outside development activities that we can bring to the college.

- Grade Appeals Committee  
Donald Thomas reported that Grades Appeal Committee had resolved one (1) grade appeal during the summer and three (3) more appeals were under review at the present time. Donald reminded faculty to make sure their syllabi are very precise to avoid any misunderstandings.

Todd Blankenbeckler proposed expanding the Grade Appeals description in the catalogue to include the verbiage that grade appeals will not be handled during the summer since faculty may not be on campus.

Todd advised all committees that as part of shared governance, minutes must be taken and published on the Senate website. Each committee should have not only a chair, but a secretary. The minutes should show all present.

E. Old Business:

- Bookstore issues – Todd Blankenbeckler reported that he met with Michelle Newman about bookstore concerns. Todd reported that:
  - 1) The original contract started in 2009-10 with a year by year agreement for ten (10) years. Either party can ask that the contract be cancelled at year-end.
  - 2) The bookstore has been paying a \$700,000 commission to the college. With revenues down they are requesting a reduction to \$600,000.
  - 3) The bookstore provides \$25,000 to the Foundation for scholarships and allocates another \$10,000 for book scholarships.
  - 4) Under the contract, faculty cannot tell students they can get books elsewhere, but there is no restriction on putting the ISBN number on syllabi.
  - 5) If faculty are committing to a book for three (3) semesters, the book can be offered as a rental.

Following Todd's report, the following concerns were voiced:

- 1) Under our Academic Freedom policy, is it not our responsibility as faculty to provide a quality education for the best possible price?
- 2) Pursuing an amendment to the contract to say that if the book is out of stock in the bookstore, faculty can advise students to look elsewhere.
- 3) The formula for ordering books is a problem and leads to shortages.
- 4) The perception is that the bookstore pressures students to prepay for books that are out of stock and then is slow in delivering them.
- 5) Editions and prices are subject to change without notice to faculty.
- 6) Administration tells faculty to be flexible the first few weeks when students do not have books, but the faculty do not feel they are being supported to get books into the hands of students.

Todd recommended that continuing bookstore concerns be turned over to one of the Senate committees for further review.

- Student Discipline:  
There is no update at this time.

F. New Business:

- Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaw Review  
Todd Blankenbeckler advised that the constitution had not been revised in several years. The Faculty Advising Committee, for example, is not even in the constitution. Todd suggested that the scope of the committees and numbers representing each committee be reviewed. All senators are asked to take a look at the existing constitution and bylaws and send any recommendations to Todd.

The concern was raised that with three-day a week classes now, it was difficult for committees to meet. Todd will investigate what technology and facilities are available for virtual meetings.

- Faculty Evaluation Update

Todd Blankenbeckler reported that he had met with Barbara Roseborough about revising both the evaluation instrument and shifting the responsibility for documenting performance. In particular, he was concerned with the following evaluation items: Role 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.2, and 2.3. The general consensus is that there are some items are repetitious and should be based on observation by the department heads.

There was much discussion about mandatory advising and the use of AdvisorTrac. Faculty will have to be certified in AdvisorTrac.

Todd recommended that the evaluation instrument be turned back over to the Faculty Evaluation and Development Committee to work on with input from the Chairs.

- Faculty Convocation

Todd Blankenbeckler reported that he had received mostly positive feedback from the two-day Faculty Convocation.

Leslie Peebles passed out a list of concerns raised at the faculty-only meeting. Todd asked that the Senate look over the issues that were raised and send comments back to him of how to prioritize these concerns.

- Registration and Financial Aid

Todd Blankenbeckler reported that Financial Aid was caught off-guard with the new financial aid regulations this year that required additional documentation from the IRS for each student.

Todd commented on the importance of the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) form that has been introduced this year.

- 1) This form is part of the Financial Aid Appeals committee's decision on whether a student will be allowed to continue to receive aid.
- 2) 90 credit hours completion mark triggers a SAP report. This relates to the 150% percent rule. Once a student has reached this point, the SAP form should be accompanied by a Degree Audit to indicate how many courses remain to graduate. Only those courses will be approved.
- 3) At 24 credit hours, a student must declare a major. If no major is declared by 36 credit hours, the 150% rule kicks in and they must file an appeal to continue receiving aid. It is important that faculty encourage all students to declare a major.

- 4) Financial Aid suspensions are generated based on poor academic performance and low GPA. Students placed on Financial Aid warnings or suspensions will have to request the completion of an SAP form by their academic advisor in order to complete their appeals packet.

There was a concern that this information had not been communicated well to faculty. It was suggested that both the SAP and the Reinstatement forms become web-based to avoid additional paperwork on the part of faculty and fraud on the part of the student.

- Donald Thomas proposed a resolution to keep all Senate meetings to an allotted amount of time.
- Todd Blankenbeckler reminded all Senate members to communicate with their faculty matters brought up in the Senate meetings.

The next meeting will be October 9 at 3:00 p.m. at Macon.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.