

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Southwest Tennessee Community College
Macon Cove Campus
February 12, 2013

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	Joan McGrory
Bill Turner	Dewey Sykes
Doug Branch	Joanitha Barnes
Rosie Taylor	Jason Whitt
Robert Walker	Mahnaz Ghaffarian
Annie Sultana	John Friedlander
Leslie Peebles	Michael Scott

The following member sent a proxy:
Margie Coltharp

The following senators were absent:
LaDonna Young
Nathan Knappler

The following guests were present:
Dwayne Scott
Jeremy Burnett
Wayne Morris
Delores Borland
Bill Weppner
Steven Lockhart

B. Reading of the Minutes

The minutes were approved as read.

C. Reports from Senate Officers and Senate Committees:

Faculty Handbook:

Delores Borland reported that the Faculty Handbook Committee has begun drafting a Faculty Advising Manual so that faculty will have all information and forms related to advising in one place. The committee is set to meet again next week.

Faculty Development and Evaluation Committee:

Bill Weppner reported that there had been only a few requests for travel this year and that with the travel freeze now in place, he expects to see few, if any, the remainder of the year. He also reported that the FDEC is still hoping to streamline the evaluation instrument.

Todd Blankenbeckler explained that the travel freeze was far-reaching. He stated that no travel will be approved unless it pertains to the routine business of the college or is required for accreditation. The following questions were raised:

- What about travel that had already been approved? Anything that was approved before the freeze went into effect should be honored.
- Could faculty travel on their own expense? Todd will check on this.
- Is blanket travel approval in the state vehicle included in the freeze? Yes.
- What about travel for student activities? Todd will check on this.

Todd further stated that he would like to find a way to use the existing FDEC funds to possibly bring faculty development sessions to campus.

Academic Matters:

Steven Lockhart reported that the Academic Matters Committee had met and reviewed the existing college policies and identified items that needed change and/or revision.

Todd added that the Bookstore issue will be coming back to the Academic Matters Committee to review as well.

Faculty Subcouncil Meeting:

Todd Blankenbeckler reported on the January 25, 2013 meeting of the Faculty Subcouncil. (A summary of his report is attached to the minutes.)

- Faculty will be asked to weigh in on a proposal that would affect LGBT and Domestic Partner benefits. Todd will send out information on the proposal via email to the faculty. The Senate will vote on this matter at the March meeting.

D. Guest Speaker – Dwayne Scott

Todd introduced Dwayne Scott, Vice President of Student Services. Dr. Scott entertained the following questions from the Senate:

- Q. Spring enrollment: How did Southwest fare in this area vis-à-vis other TBR institutions?
A. All institutions in the system saw a decrease in enrollment this semester. As far as Southwest is concerned, we lost 48% of our students who had attended classes in the Fall semester. His team is in the process of putting together a recruitment plan targeting students who would typically go to a four-year institution. His goal is to work on the enrollment piece and then focus on retention.

While not under his direct authority, Dr. Scott explained that changes in Federal regulations regarding Pell grants had affected the number of hours students could attempt. Because Southwest does not allow loans, this change in financial aid probably has a greater impact on us. However, he stressed that decreased enrollment was not tied to one factor alone.

- Q. Retention: One contributing factor to students failing or withdrawing from classes is due to the fact that we are often several weeks into the semester before financial aid decisions are made.

A. While not under his control, many times students have not filed their paperwork in a timely manner. He went on to suggest that the Admissions Office receives a significant

number of applications from students who apply but do not attend. He suggested that the challenge would be to ascertain who is serious about attending Southwest, perhaps by requiring payment for the admissions fee upfront. That would allow for more efficiency in completing the admissions process.

- Q. Books: Why are students on financial aid not required to pay for books and courses at the same time?
A. Financial aid guidelines do not allow for the institution to delegate how students should spend their financial aid.
- Outreach: In terms of outreach, Dr. Scott commented that considering the educational level of students who end up taking developmental courses, we should be recruiting at that level., going to the high schools and working more one-on-one with the parents.
- Q. Budget: In light of the budget shortfall all senior staff should pull together to see where they can cut.
A. Vanessa Dowdy is in the process of doing an Admissions project. They are looking at different positions that have been paid by stimulus funds, which are coming to an end, and looking at doing some cross-training with those employees.
- Q. Budget: In light of the budget, the Senate made the recommendation last year to terminate all athletic teams.
A. Athletics falls under Sherman Greer, and he could not really speak to that.
- Q. Testing: Southwest has lost its adult population over the years. The Testing Center factors into this because of the limited hours and locations available.
A. The demand for extended hours needs to be addressed. If we change the hours of the Testing Center, what customers does that inconvenience? He agrees that the space at Union is not conducive for testing. They would need to insure that they have adequate resources and staff before any changes could be made, but that if special conditions exist, Testing should be able to accommodate them.
- Q. Communication: What is your preferred channel of communication from faculty?
A. By email directly. He hopes to put together a portal to place minutes of his department meetings so everyone will have access to what's going on.
- Q. Graduation: Are you at liberty to change the venue for graduation?
A. Yes, but the college would have to go with the most economical venue. The issue of forcing faculty to gather under a tent outside was discussed. Dr. Scott will look into the issue. Perhaps there are other areas in the building that are not presently being used.

Bill Weppner made a motion to form an ad hoc committee to assist Dr. Scott with graduation. The motion was seconded and passed by the Senate.

E. Unfinished Business:

1. Grade Appeals – tabled until the March meeting.
2. Mandatory Advising – tabled until the March meeting.

F. New Business:

1. SACS: Todd Blankenbeckler reported that an external consultant will be reviewing our

documentation this Fall. There will be an offsite documentation review in the Spring of 2014 and an onsite visit in the Fall of 2014. Todd is looking for interested parties who are willing to serve on the QEP portion of the SACS report.

2. Senate Elections: Jason Whitt will be contacting divisions and departments about upcoming Senate elections.
3. Evaluation of Administration: Item to be discussed in the March meeting.
4. Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes: Item to be discussed in the March meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00. The next meeting of the Senate will be March 5, 2013 at Union.