

Faculty Senate Minutes
Southwest Tennessee Community College
Union Ave. Campus
October 8, 2013

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

President Bill Summons called the meeting to order at 3:00. The following Senators were present or sent proxies:

Division Senators, Arts and Sciences

Doug Branch
Rosie Minor
Karen Pierce
Bill Turner, Treasurer

Division Senators, Career Studies

Joanitha Barnes
Delores Boland, Parliamentarian
Joan McGrory, Vice President
Dewey Sykes

Department Senators

Michelle Hill, **Allied Health**
Mahnaz Ghaffarian, **Business**
Michael Scott, **Communications and Fine Arts**
David Huffman, **Languages and Literature**
Donald Thomas, **Natural Sciences**
Nathan Knappier, **Nursing**
Yen-kuang Chou, **Mathematics**
Willie Burley, **Technologies**

The following were absent: Mahmuda Sultana, Div. Arts and Sciences; Robert Walker, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

2. Reading of the Minutes

A. The April 2013 minutes were read and approved with slight amendments.

B. The September 2013 minutes were read and approved with slight amendments.

3. Reports from Senate Officers and Senate Committees

A. Bill Weppner, Chair of the Faculty Development Committee, reported on a recent note he had had from the provost verifying that travel funds are, indeed, frozen for all out-of-state travel except when there are compelling

reasons, like a conference dealing with a program start up or one dealing with assessment. Even in-state conferences will usually be limited to two faculty members' attendance.

Bill had many questions: what happens, at the end of the school year, to the money that is budgeted for travel, if nobody is to receive funds? Bill Summons thought he could get answers from the provost about some of his questions.

A discussion ensued during which senators voiced concerns that there is a shortsightedness to this travel-policy. Many points were brought up, including the unfairness of asking faculty to be evaluated on the basis of professional activity without giving faculty the means to be professionally active. Another point: why can't the college at least help pay for professional development travel, even if it cannot pay the full cost?

B. Donald Thomas, Chair of the Grades Appeal Committee, noted his committee's displeasure that the provost has asked members to work voluntarily, without compensation, during the summer in order to review grade appeals turned in after the previous spring's grades are submitted. Donald said that the committee is, however, willing to review these appeals immediately after Aug. 15, when the contract year begins. Bill Summons agreed to convey this message to the provost. The Senate showed no inclination to rescind its previous endorsement of the policy written by Don and endorsed by his committee.

C. The following summarizes Bill Summons' report on a recent meeting between the SEC and senior staff, which he described as cordial:

President Essex, citing low enrollment, had decided that bonuses for faculty and staff would be impossible. Asked whether the college was in the process of re-evaluating the need for an excess of middle-management positions, the president replied that the college was attempting cross training, so that when middle managers retire or leave positions can be combined.

The president reported that a new center should be opened in Whitehaven by Spring 2015.

Asked whether there was a goal for what percentage of our faculty should be tenured or tenure-track, senior staff replied that there was no goal, but that tenure positions are not being systematically eliminated. Senior staff also reported a goal for the nursing department: 50% increase in enrollment.

Provost Joanne Bassett responded to questions about advising between semesters, specifically during the time between the end of the Fall semester and the beginning of the Spring semester. She said that there should be one

faculty member per department on campus, one on Macon and one on Union, every day. Those faculty members should serve strictly on a volunteer basis.

Concern was raised by several senators that subtle pressure to volunteer during times when faculty have not, in the past, been asked to be on duty amounts to extra work without compensation.

4. Old Business

A. Doug Branch reported for Jerome Wilson that he had not received a response from the administration concerning a letter he had sent some time ago about the bookstore's refusing to sell a book written by a guest author he had invited to the college during the Spring semester.

B. Delores Boland, Chair of the Faculty Advising Handbook Committee, distributed copies of the handbook, which will eventually be online. It was moved and approved that we accept the Faculty Advising Handbook.

C. David Huffman, Chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee, reported that all changes and revisions have been completed. David will try to make electronic copies for the Senate to read before our next meeting so we can approve it. Bill Summons noted that the Senate should approve it before the provost does. If, however, the provost wishes for the handbook to be online before we approve it, we need to note that the handbook is tentative and lacks official approval.

5. New Business

A. We set the November Faculty Senate meeting for Tuesday, November 12, 3:00, Macon Cove.

B. One senator mentioned a faculty complaint that faculty who work from home are not being given the computer software they need to adequately perform their duties. Bill Summons suggested that the faculty member be advised to send such complaints through his dean and chair.

6. Adjournment

Bill Summons adjourned the meeting at 4:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Doug Branch
Faculty Senate Secretary

