

Faculty Senate Minutes
Southwest Tennessee Community College
Macon Cove Campus, MA B 149
March 17, 2015

1. Call to Order and Roll

Faculty Senate President Bill Summons called the meeting to order at 3:00.
Faculty Senate Secretary Doug Branch called the roll, which follows:

William Summons, **Senate President**

Division Senators, Arts and Sciences

Doug Branch, **Secretary** (13-15)
Shannon Little (14-16)
Karen Pierce (13-15)(proxy)
Mahmuda Sultana (14-16)
Bill Turner, **Treasurer** (13-15)

Division Senators, Career Studies

Lisa Hadley (14-16)
Tim Harrison, **Parliamentarian** (14-16)
Joan McGrory (13-15)
Dewey Sykes, **Vice-President** (13-15)

Department Senators

Michelle Hill (14-16) **Allied Health**
Mahnaz Ghaffarian (13-15) **Business**
Michael Scott (13-15) **Communications and Fine Arts**
David Huffman (13-15) **Languages and Literature** (Absent)
Mathilda Doorley (14-16) **Natural Science**
Monique Cage (14-16) **Nursing**
Hannah Province (13-15) **Mathematics** (Absent)
Leslie Peebles (13-15) **Technologies**
Robert Walker (13-15) **Social and Behavioral Sciences** (Absent)

2. Approval of Minutes

It was approved that we accept the minutes from the February, 2015 Faculty Senate meeting, with a minor correction. Secretary Doug Branch will ask that those minutes be posted on the Faculty Senate website.

3. Reports from Senate Officers and Senate Committees

- A. Bill Summons, Senate President, discussed the TBR initiative to add three-year, “rolling” contracts to the roster of faculty contracts already available. Bill explained that the Faculty Subcouncil accepted the proposal to implement such contracts at the four-year level. Presidents of various colleges, however, amended the proposal to include two-year colleges without the Subcouncil’s approval or knowledge. The president of Jackson State Community College later made public his intention to abolish new tenure track contracts with new hires being offered only these new three-year rolling contracts. The Jackson State Faculty Senate objected, formally, to the president’s intentions. The Faculty Subcouncil will meet to discuss the matter, and Bill will update the Southwest Faculty Senate when there is news to report on this issue.
- B. Bill also provided an update on the recent issue of an administrative grade change being made without the consent of the involved faculty member. Bill has spoken with all involved, including the administration; he expressed the Faculty Senate’s concern and believes that the issue is resolved and that such grade changes will not happen in the future.

A discussion ensued. Shannon Little, Dewey Sykes, and Joan McGrory agreed to draft a formal resolution, to be presented at the next Senate meeting, having to do with department chairs’ and other administrators’ interference with grading. The resolution will also deal with larger issues of classroom management and faculty autonomy in the classroom.

It being generally agreed that the grade appeals process, as written, is unclear, it was moved and passed that the Senate make known to the Interim Provost Barbara Roseborough its desire to have significant faculty input in the writing of a new grade appeals process. Doug Branch agreed to ask Donald Thomas, Chair of the Grade Appeals Committee, to formally write to Barbara Roseborough expressing the Senate’s conviction that the policy needs changing and that the Grade Appeals Committee should have a strong voice in making those changes.

- C. Dewey Sykes, as chairman of the committee charged with administering faculty evaluations of administrators, reported that Dr. Essex does not wish there to be an open discussion of the results of senior administrator evaluations. Many on the Senate pointed out that this is problematic for many reasons, one being that administrators with negative items in their evaluations have no chance to defend themselves publicly.

It was moved and passed that the SEC would request of the administration that administrators evaluated by the recent instrument

provide written responses to particular items of concern by April 7. Those responses should be addressed to the Faculty Senate President.

- D. Dewey Sykes, Vice-President of the Faculty Senate, wished to report that the findings from the Huron Group, a consulting firm that evaluated Southwest as a working environment, has not yet made its findings public. Dewey agreed to contact Huron and ask when and how those results would be released to the faculty.
- E. Dewey began a discussion of IncludED, an operation under which students would pay for books at the same time that they pay for classes. Southwest has used IncludED, and there have been many problems. Dr. Essex has said that Southwest should no longer use this service. During the discussion of the pros and cons of the program, Lisa Hadley made an especially strong case for IncludED, when it is properly administered.
- F. Dewey announced the election results for the 2014-2015 Faculty Senate elections. Of the seats that were up for election, Leslie Peeples, David Huffman, Mahnaz Ghaffarian, and Michael Scott will be returning for new terms. Shantell Chism will be replacing Hannah Province as the Senator from Mathematics. Ed Reid will be replacing Robert Walker as the Senator from Social and Behavioral Sciences. Due to an error in the conducting of the elections, the results for Divisional Senators could not be announced but will be available before the next meeting.

Note: since the time of the meeting, the results of the election for Divisional Senators have been announced. Doug Branch and Bill Turner were re-elected as Arts and Sciences Senators. Joyce Johnson and MaLinda Wade were newly elected to serve from that division. Karen Pierce, who did not run for re-election, is stepping down. (A new seat was created for Arts and Sciences, increasing that division's representation to six members.) Joan McGrory and Dewey Sykes were re-elected to represent Career Studies.

- G. Mathilda Doorley, of the Faculty Awards committee, asked that guidelines be written up by mid-May concerning whether recipients of faculty awards could be nominated by administrators or only by faculty.
- H. Having been asked by the Senate to prepare better-written guidelines for a proposed constitutional amendment concerning the selection of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, Doug Branch presented his committee's proposal. It generally having been agreed that the proposal needed to include additional information having to do with the selection of the Promotion and Tenure Appeals Committee, too, it was decided that Doug's committee should present the proposal again at a later meeting.

4. New Business

- A. Shannon Little initiated a discussion in which she brought to the Senate's attention concerns voiced by faculty she represents about procedures in Distance Education, specifically about policies put in place by the director, Todd Blankenbeckler. The problem for the faculty Shannon represents is that Distance Education seems to be acting not as a service but to be taking on departmental responsibilities, such as staffing classes. A further complaint was that the Distance Education Committee rarely meets and that Todd acts, on that committee, as chair rather than liaison. Bill Summons recommended that Todd be evaluated along with other administrators.

It was agreed that the Senate had several complaints and questions about Distance Education and that those should be addressed directly to Todd Blankenbeckler and Barbara Roseborough. The Senate asked Bill to invite them to come at 4:00 to our next meeting. Senators would, in the meantime, prepare questions about specific issues, to be given to Shannon, who would compile and distribute them. It was agreed that all should make a concerted attempt to stick to those questions, which Todd and Barbara would be given beforehand.

5. Adjournment

Bill Summons adjourned the meeting at 5:30.

Respectfully Submitted,
Doug Branch
Faculty Senate Secretary

