Faculty Senate Minutes
Southwest Tennessee Community College
Macon Cove Campus, MA C 177
September 8, 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:

William Summons, **Senate President**

Division Senators, Arts and Sciences

Doug Branch (15-17) **Secretary**
Joyce Johnson (15-17)
Shannon Little (14-16)
Mahmuda Sultana (14-16)
Bill Turner (15-17)
MaLinda Wade (15-17)

Division Senators, Career Studies

Lisa Hadley (14-16)
Tim Harrison (14-16) **Parliamentarian**
Joan McGrory (15-17) **Treasurer**
Dewey Sykes (15-17) **Vice-President**

Department Senators

Michelle Hill (14-16) **Allied Health**
Mahnaz Ghaffarian (15-17) **Business**
Michael Scott (15-17) **Communications and Fine Arts**
David Huffman (15-17) **Languages and Literature** (Absent)
Mathilda Doorley (14-16) **Natural Sciences** (Absent)
Monique Cage  (14-16) **Nursing** (Absent)
Shantell Chism (15-17) **Mathematics** (Absent)
Leslie Peeples (15-17) **Technologies**
Ed Reid (15-17) **Social and Behavioral Sciences**

2. Approval of Minutes

The body approved the minutes from the April, 2015 Faculty Senate meeting.
Secretary Doug Branch will ask that those minutes be posted to the Faculty
Senate website.

3. Conversation with Tracy Hall

   Having asked to speak with the Faculty Senate, Tracy Hall, the new college president, wished to discuss some of her early initiatives and goals with the group.  A few of her main points follow:

   A. President Hall noted her concerns with campus safety.  She believes our safety procedures are outdated,  and she announced that a review would be held to culminate in new training in September.  She said, too, that she would be more comfortable with an armed security staff.

      She would like the name of a faculty member to serve on the Behavioral Intervention Team.  That person would join other college personnel in attending a conference in late November.  She also noted the importance of having counselors on campus for grief and mental health counseling.

      She wishes faculty to wear name tags, either the magnetized versions supplied by the college or ID cards worn around on a lanyard around the neck.

   B. President Hall distributed copies of critical parts of the Huron Report and focused several comments on issues addressed in that report.

      She stressed the need for unifying "branding" that would help counteract what many see as our "two school identity."  She wishes to stress the fact that Southwest is one college, not "the former Shelby State" and "the former State Tech."  There is a new branding team working on this initiative.

      She noted that the position for a new provost would be posted soon, but that she was learning toward re-naming and re-imagining the position as a vice-president of academic affairs.

      She discussed her belief in the importance of faculty professional development and made clear that she sees finding money for more professional development, including conference attendance, a priority.

      She made it clear that while she is interested in advising and believes in the merits of mandatory advising, she does not believe that the burden of advising should fall on faculty.  She wishes to hire more professional advisors.

She began an in-depth conversation about faculty compensation, stressing the importance of having a much better paid faculty whose paychecks would help insure their commitment to the institution.

C. The senate thanked President Hall for beginning this conversation about topics of importance to us all.

4. Old Business

   A. Three agenda items were tabled until the next meeting: Doug Branch's and Tim Hall's proposals regarding a constitutional amendment for promotion and tenure policies, Bill Summons' update on the three-year contract issue being promoted by TBR, and Dewey Sykes' plans to raise faculty concerns about the appointment and hiring of faculty chairs.

5. New Business

   A. Bill Weppner and Hannah Province, of the Faculty Development Committee, shared a proposed revised Faculty Evaluation Form. A long discussion ensued, during which many spoke in favor of keeping or tweaking the evaluation form already in place and many spoke in favor of the much simplified form Bill and Hannah proposed.

   The following motion was made and passed: that the FDEC consider revising the current faculty evaluation system such that faculty are no longer required to provide documentation for routine activities. The FDEC is also charged to create a proposal that will significantly streamline the evaluation process.

   It was generally agreed upon that Lisa Hadley and Joyce Johnson would join the FDEC committee.

   B. Hannah gave a proposal, also originating with the FDEC, for digitizing the promotion and tenure application process. Discussion followed.

   Hannah reported for the FDEC formally that, contingent upon final approval, the traditional method of preparing a Promotion or Tenure dossier would be acceptable, as would a digital method, for the 2015-2016 academic year. The same standards would apply for approval of a traditional as for a digital dossier.

6. Adjournment

   Bill Summons adjourned the meeting at 6:10.

Respectfully Submitted,
Doug Branch
Faculty Senate Secretary

To:         Nathan Essex, President
             Barbara Roseborough, Interim Provost

From:     Academic Freedom & Classroom Policy

Subject:   Academic Freedom

Date:      April 16, 2015

The Faculty Senate requests a written directive to Division Deans and Department Chairs stating the following:

Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, being careful not to introduce into teaching controversial matter, which has no relation to the subject.  This includes the presentation of pertinent subject matter as well as the establishment of policies pertaining to each class.  Academic freedom with reference to classroom policy should include establishing policies regarding absences, missed assignments, make-up exams, and/or exams. These policies should be supported by the institutional administration, so long as these policies meet departmental and college requirements and are documented in the course syllabus.

**Faculty Senate Request to the Administration to Establish the Distance Education and Information Technology (DEIT) Committee as a Faculty Senate Subcommittee**

On April 15, 2015, the faculty senate unanimously voted to establish the DEIT committee as a Faculty Senate Subcommittee.

**Rationale**:  The DEIT Subcommittee will enable a greater level of input from the faculty.  All faculty are affected by the guidelines and policies established and enforced by DEIT.  The existing and formalized process of the Faculty Senate will enable timely and widespread communication among the areas affected.

**Impact**:  Accrediting bodies such as COC-SACS and discipline-specific accrediting bodies place increasing importance on the governance of online learning.  Faculty are obviously a significant and vital part of this process.

**Steps already accomplished**:
- On March 24, 2015, a request was made to the DEIT committee for a faculty member to chair the committee and for a faculty member to be the recorder.  As of April 16, 2015, those individuals have been named.
- On April 15, 2015, the Faculty Senate unanimously voted to establish the DEIT committee as a Faculty Senate Subcommittee.

**Opposition**:
The DEIT Director and technical liaison are opposed to making the DEIT Committee a Faculty Senate Subcommittee.  Moreover, the Faculty Senate is aware that on April 1, 2015, the DEIT committee was notified as follows:  "Neither Barbara nor Dr. Essex feel it is appropriate that the Distance Education committee e a sub-committee of the Faculty Senate, thus it will remain a College committee."

> **Response**:  While the Faculty Senate has no doubt that this email is truthful, it also recognizes that the decision was made without discussion with the faculty or clarification of faculty views.  For example, Barbara and Dr. Essex would not be aware of the following:
> - Only 1 meeting of the DEIT committee has occurred in the 2014-2015 academic year.  That meeting was 11-17-2014.
> - A second planned meeting was cancelled without explanation and rescheduled 12-days before Christmas on the last day of final exams.
> - On March 24, 2015, three months later, the next communication to the DEIT Committee occurred and was to direct the DEIT committee that a faculty member will chair the committee.
> - On April 15th, the Faculty Senate and Todd Blankenbeckler as well as DEIT staff and Ms. Roseborough participated in a lengthy question and answer session between DEIT and the Faculty Senate.  Following

this discussion, the senate noted the dire need for widespread input from the faculty that would be supported through the Subcommittee process and voted with one voice to accept the DEIT Committee as a Senate Subcommittee.

**Examples of Existing Similar Subcommittees Viewed as Successful by the Faculty:**

Below are examples of collaborative Committees that are Faculty Senate subcommittees and ensure widespread input by faculty on processes that affect many faculty.

Example #1: The Faculty Advising Committee is the most recent Faculty Senate subcommittee. On this committee, the Director of Faculty Advising Jeremy Burnett seeks the widespread input of faculty while acting as a liaison to the committee. As the liaison, Jeremy Burnett works collaboratively with faculty to share technical details of the system capabilities, updates Southwest policies for advising, and collects input for a cycle of continuous improvement of the Faculty Advising process.

| Faculty Advising Committee | |
|---|---|
| *From the Faculty Senate Constitution* | *From the faculty Senate By-Laws:* |
| *Faculty Advising Committee: This committee shall consist of no more than fifteen faculty members and one representative of the Provost.* | *Academic Advising Committee: The Faculty Advising Committee shall address the mission of advising for faculty, development of a mission statement, course catalog information for advising, course sequence for advising, peer advising parameters.* |

Example #2: In considering the Faculty Development and Evaluation Committee, the similarity would be the evaluation instrument that is used in the promotion & tenure process. As such, the evaluation must conform to TBR Policies, Southwest policies, and include input from the faculty. Decisions made by this committee have widespread impact on the faculty. Again, the committee conducts operations, presents to the faculty senate for greater input, collaborates with DEIT for technical / system support, and acts in cooperation with the administration to create the evaluation instrument.

| Faculty Development and Evaluation Committee | |
|---|---|
| *From the Faculty Senate Constitution* | *From the faculty Senate By-Laws:* |
| *Faculty Development and Evaluation Committee: This committee shall consist of no more than fifteen faculty members, and one representative of the Provost.* | *Faculty Development and Evaluation Committee: The membership of the Committee on Faculty Development and Evaluation shall consist of no more than fifteen faculty members and one representative of the Provost. This committee shall develop and recommend in-service training programs for faculty and encourage faculty participation in off-campus workshops. In addition, this committee shall deal with tools and procedures for faculty evaluation, consider faculty concerns arising* |

| | *from the use of evaluative tools and procedures, and recommend changes to the Provost. The committee will work with administrative officers and staff as necessary to expedite the business of the committee.* |
| --- | --- |

**The Proposed Form:**  For the purpose of completeness, below is a recommendation for the verbiage to include in the Faculty Senate Constitution and Faculty Senate By-Laws.  This verbiage is offered as a recommendation that can be officially presented for inclusion into the constitution and by- pending approval of this new subcommittee by Dr. Essex and Ms. Roseborough.

| Proposed DEIT Subcommittee | |
| --- | --- |
| *For the Faculty Senate Constitution* | *For the Faculty Senate By-Laws:* |
| *Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee: This committee shall consist of no more than fifteen faculty members and one representative of the Provost.* | *Distance Education and Instructional Technology Committee: This committee shall address the mission of DEIT for faculty in teaching and training for online, hybrid, and web-assisted classes, the course evaluation and review process, the proper scheduling and assignment of online classes, and consider faculty concerns arising from the use of evaluative tools and procedures, and recommend changes to the Provost.  This committee will work with administrative officers and staff as necessary to expedite the business of the committee.* |

**The Motion**:  By way of this proposal, I move that the Distance Education and Instructional Technology (DEIT) Committee be accepted as a Faculty Senate Subcommittee.

*** Approved by Unanimous vote of the faculty senate: 4-15-2015 ***