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Faculty Senate Minutes

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9-30-2011

September 30, 2011 Minutes

SWOSU Faculty Senate

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
September 30, 2011
***APPROVED* Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**

I. CALL TO ORDER: Faculty Senate President Kevin Collins called the September 30, 2011 meeting of the Faculty Senate to order at 2:02 p.m. in Education 201.

II. ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM: The following members were present: Warren Akers, Amy Barnett, Amber Sturgeon, John Bradshaw, Kathy Brooks, Erin Callen, Dayna Coker, Kevin Collins, David Esjornson, Fred Gates, Terry Goforth, Marci Grant, E.K. Jeong, Dick Kurtz, Sophia Lee, Jim Long, Scott Long, Ralph May, Evette Meliza, Warren Moseley, Bo Pagliasotti, Edna Patatanian, Eric Paul, Les Ramos, Ann Russell, Lisa Schroeder, Muatasem Ubeidat, Tamra Weimer, Dennis Widen, Jonathan Woltz, John Saluke (SGA Representative).

III. CERTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES: None.

IV. PRESENTATION OF VISITORS Wendy Henson, Violence Prevention Program Coordinator. Wendy Henson discussed SWOSU's violence prevention program with the Faculty Senate.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the August 26, 2011 meeting were approved by voice vote.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. President: Kevin Collins

1. The Administrative Council is exploring the purchase of defibrillators; prices vary, but quality models will cost from \$4,000 to 5,000 each.
2. RUSO legal representative Babb will be returning to campus soon to discuss matters of ethics. Some problems include acceptance of gifts and reselling of free desk copies.
3. Our legislative representatives are coming to campus first week of December.
4. Sherron Manning has been named interim dean at Sayre. The Strategic Planning process, which was on hold until this appointment was announced, will begin soon.
5. The Provost discussed problems related to online courses: a.) he acknowledged that these courses are more time-intensive than telecourses—especially in start-up stage—and advised faculty to seek the help of Distance Learning; b.) it is important that online courses be of equal rigor as face-to-face courses with the same course numbers.
6. The issue raised last month by Academic Advisory and Scholarship Council is still not settled; the Registrar, Admissions, Chairs, Department Administrative Assistants, President,

Provost, and Vice President Foust are all capable of overriding the hold for students on probation.

7. This issue may be solved as New Pell Grant rules will winnow out a fairly large number of students.

8. The SWOSU Mind Games Blue Team won their first match however, the teams still need people strong in science.

B. Secretary/Treasurer: Fred Gates

1. Roll Sheet – please sign.

2. Treasurer's Report:

a. BancFirst Checking Account: August Meeting Balance: \$2126.04
Dues Collected: \$15.00
CURRENT BALANCE: \$2141.04

b. University Account: August Meeting balance: \$106.00
CURRENT BALANCE: \$106.00

C. President-Elect: David Esjornson: Please do not enroll Freshman early unless their status falls under the guidelines requiring/allowing early enrollment.

D. Past President: Muatasem Ubeidat: Please attend the Western Oklahoma Wellness Expo on Saturday October 1, 2011 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

E. Student Government Representative: John Saluke: There are still problems with the current Student Handbook and SGA is still reviewing those issues.

VII. REPORTS FROM STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES

A. University Policies Committee—Report on the question concerning limits on the number of allowable grade changes for the same course. (Committee will provide handout.) There was much discussion in the Senate on the subject of grade changes. The University Policies Committee will institute these suggestions and provide an additional report at the October meeting of the Faculty Senate.

Report from the Faculty Senate University Policies Committee:

Instituting a Grade Change Policy at SWOSU

The University Policies Committee has examined the issue of instituting a grade change policy at SWOSU. Committee members have consulted with fellow faculty and chairs in their respective departments, as well as with Registrar Daniel Archer. In addition, the committee has surveyed grade change policies at a number of institutions, including our regional universities.

Examples of Grade Change Policies at Oklahoma Institutions

Cameron University

According to the University Catalog, the only reason to change a grade is to correct a grade reported in error. The instructor who submitted final grades may make such a change by submitting to the Registrar a "Grade Correction" form signed by his/her chair and dean. In the event of the instructor's absence, death, or disability, the grade may be changed by someone authorized by the President of the University with the advice of the Academic Appeals Committee to act in the instructor's behalf.

East Central University

For undergraduates, *uncontested grade changes must be initiated within one calendar year of the semester in which the grade was issued.* A form must be completed specifying the reason for the grade change and the form must be signed by the student, instructor, department chair, and dean. The form is then submitted to the Office of Admissions and Records.

Northeastern Oklahoma State University

According to the University Catalog, a faculty member may initiate a change of grade after grades have been submitted to the registrar's office provided that:

1. Justification for the grade change is made in writing to the Dean and attached to the "Change of Grade Form," and
2. *The change is submitted within the first eight weeks of the semester following awarding of the original grade.*

Oklahoma State University

In order to change a student's final course grade, a form must be completed with signatures of the instructor, department head, and dean. According to the Faculty Handbook, an instructor who reports an incorrect grade may request the registrar to correct the grade. The request must be in writing on a Grade Change Form and must have a recommendation from both the vice president for Academic Affairs and the division head. In no case will the registrar lower a grade after the student has graduated.

University of Central Oklahoma

According to the Faculty Handbook, an instructor who discovers an incorrect grade may correct the grade using an official grade change form submitted to the registrar. The form must include the signatures of the instructor, the department chair/school director, and the dean.

Signature Requirement for a Grade Change

With the exception of SWOSU, all RUSO universities require a signature from the department chair and possibly the dean and/or higher administrative officer, in addition to the instructor's signature, before a grade change can be processed.

Sampling of National Universities Regarding Time Limits for Grade Changes

University	State	Time Limit on Grade Changes
<i>No Time Limit Specified</i>		
Idaho State	Idaho	No time limit specified; Dean approval
TCU	Texas	No time limit specified; Dean approval

Fischer College	Massachusetts	No time limit specified; Provost approval
William Patterson	New Jersey	No time limit specified; Dean approval
U. of Michigan	Michigan	No time limit specified; faculty must petition an Academic Standards Board
<i>5 years</i>		
IUPUI	Indianapolis	5 years, faculty must petition for change
<i>Prior to Graduation</i>		
Portland State	Oregon	Prior to graduation
Worcester Polytechnic	Massachusetts	Prior to graduation
UNC-Greensboro	North Carolina	Prior to graduation
<i>1 year</i>		
U. of Cincinnati	Ohio	1 year (or prior to Graduation via Faculty Petition)
UCLA	California	1 year
Northwestern	Illinois	1 year
SUNY-ONEONTA	New York	1 year
Lewis and Clark	Oregon	1 year
Eastern Oregon U.	Oregon	1 year
U of Great Falls	Montana	1 year
Dordt College	Iowa	1 year
U. of South Carolina	South Carolina	1 year
UT- San Antonio	Texas	1 year
U. of Florida	Florida	1 year
Oregon State	Oregon	1 year
U. of Alabama	Alabama	1 year
<i>6 months</i>		
U. of the Sci.- Phila.	Pennsylvania	6 months
Auburn	Alabama	6 months
<i>End of Next Regular Term</i>		
Pacific Lutheran U.	Washington	End of next regular term
Villanova	Pennsylvania	End of next regular term
John Hopkins	Maryland	End of next regular term
Kent State	Ohio	End of next regular term
Duke	North Carolina	End of next regular term
Georgetown	Washington, D.C.	End of next regular term
IU-South East	Indiana	End of next regular term
Robert Morris U.	Pennsylvania	End of next regular term
SUNY-Potsdam	New York	End of next regular term
<i>Various Time Limits</i>		
Franklin Pierce	New Hampshire	1 full term, faculty petition Academic Standards Board
Seton Hall	New Jersey	4 months, no changes after graduation
U.C. Irvine	California	One quarter via Faculty petition
U. of Wisconsin-Whitewater	Wisconsin	Five weeks
Purdue	Indiana	30 days into next semester
IU-East	Indiana	30 days
Keuka College	New York	One week into next term or end of semester with Dean approval
Our Lady of the Lake	Louisiana	Before start of next term
Macalester	Minnesota	No changes allowed except for faculty error

Committee Recommendations

Based on a survey of regional and national grade change policies, discussion with faculty members and chairs in the respective departments of committee members, and discussion with Daniel Archer, Registrar, the University Policies Committee recommends the following:

1. The total number of grade changes for a student in a course should be limited to one (1).
2. The time limit for instituting a grade change should be one (1) semester (i.e., by the end of the next regular semester) after the semester in which the grade was assigned.
3. Students requesting a grade change should submit the request on a designated form with the student's signature and the specific reason(s), in writing, for the grade change request. The University Policies Committee asks the Senate to consider requiring the department chair's signature on this form.
4. Given that SWOSU does not currently stipulate a time limit for changing an Incomplete (I) to a traditional grade, the committee recommends a time limit of one (1) semester for a student to complete any remaining course requirements, unless extenuating circumstances prevent the student from completing the course.
5. The University Policies Committee requests that the Senate consider Registrar Daniel Archer's major concerns and recommendations regarding grade changes (see Addendum).

Respectfully submitted,
University Policies Committee

Addendum: Concerns and Recommendations from Daniel Archer, Registrar

From the standpoint of the Office of the Registrar, the *major issue is regarding the open system of changing traditional grades to withdrawal grades*. SWOSU is the only university in the Regional University System of Oklahoma ("RUSO") that does not have a system to regulate grade changes. Aside from Incomplete ("I") grades being changed to traditional grades, all other RUSO Universities (East Central University, Northeastern State University, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Southeastern Oklahoma state University, University of Central Oklahoma) as well as Cameron University and the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma require at least one signature (chair/dean and/or a vice president) before a grade change can be processed.

Additionally, none of these universities permit faculty to change a grade to a Withdrawal ("W") after the grade has been processed at the conclusion of the semester in which the course was completed. After discussion with registrars and personnel at other universities, this type of grade changing practice has not been allowed because altering a grade to a "W" significantly changes the student's academic history and creates federal reporting inconsistencies that will likely result in federal compliance violations involving financial aid, veteran aid, and international student

regulations. By having an open system where grades can be changed without limitations, the university is placed in jeopardy of receiving unfavorable federal compliance audits.

Like the other university personnel that I spoke with, I am very concerned with an open system where grades are changed to “W’s” because this process leads to inconsistencies in how grades/completion rates are reported to the federal government at the conclusion of the semester in which the course was completed. The federal government does not view a “W” as a complete grade, so when a complete grade is changed to a “W”, it can lead to reporting problems and significant financial issues for veteran students and financial aid students, as well as legal immigration issues for international students. This is particularly problematic at this point in time because the federal agencies overseeing these areas have each indicated that their compliance audits will be more detailed and will ultimately result in negative consequences when inconsistencies in reporting are found.

I feel completely comfortable having our office openly change “I” grades to traditional grades because “I” grades are more transitional in nature; however, I think that it would be advantageous to follow the precedence that other regional universities abide by when it comes to changing one assigned traditional grade to another assigned traditional grade.

In an effort to have a consistent and fair system across campus, I think all requests to change a grade to a “W” should go through a committee with at least one representative from the registrar’s office. This committee would only consider cases where documented extenuating circumstances (medical issues, death in the family, etc.) would have prevented the student from withdrawing. The committee could also check if changing a grade to a “W” would impact financial aid, veteran student assistance, or an international student’s legal immigration standing and would only process the change in cases where it would not have an impact on these areas. I want to reiterate that all of the other RUSO Institutions have grade change policies in place as a preventative measure to insure that there is a system where grades are not continually changed and federal guidelines are consistently followed. I believe there is a place for grade changes in our university; however, the open nature of the current grade change system puts the Registrar’s Office, Financial Aid Office, and the entire university in a position where we could potentially lose credibility and ultimately lose financial resources.

Respectfully submitted,
Daniel Archer, Registrar

B. Ad Hoc Committee on the appointment of faculty members to standing Distance Learning Committee. (Appendix #1)

Report from the Ad Hoc Committee

The ad hoc committee proposes the following:

University Distance Learning Committee—“Develops and Promotes technologies for and policies and procedures related to distance learning across campus” or “Whatever description Dr. Meredith comes up with for the committee and its charges go here.”

The committee shall be composed of the Director of Distance Learning, six (6) faculty chosen by the Faculty Senate, with two (2) representatives from the College of Arts and Sciences, two (2) representatives from the College of Professional and Graduate Studies, one (1) representative from the College of Pharmacy, one (1) representative from the College of Associate and Applied Sciences, and one (1) representative from the Library and up to four (4) additional members from faculty, staff, and students across campus as deemed appropriate by the Director of Distance Learning. Terms shall last two (2) years.

The initial FS appointment shall be based on the following to allow a rotating system of expiration:

CAS—One member term expiring S12; one member term expiring S13.

CPGS—One member term expiring S12; one member term expiring S13.

COP—One member term expiring S12.

CASS—One member term expiring S13.

Library—One member term expiring (not determined)

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Long, Scott Long, Ralph May

The Senate approved the report of the Ad Hoc Committee by voice vote.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Errors and inconsistencies in the Faculty Handbook.

1. Item VI. A. 3 from August minutes.
2. Item VI. A. 4 from August minutes.

Both of these issues were referred to the Personnel Policies Committee

3. Listings in the table of contents for which there is no item in the text.

This issue was referred to an ad hoc committee which will go through the handbook looking for references in the table of contents for which there is no corresponding text. The committee is comprised of the following members: Bo Pagliasotti, Kevin Collins, Les Ramos, John Woltz, Dennis Widen, Muatasem Ubeidat.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Opportunity for a graduate student to fulfill an assignment by observing Senate meetings. (Sponsoring Senator will provide handout.)

Faculty Senate Motion 9-30-2011:

The SWOSU Faculty Senate permits Mr. Jason Henderson to observe Faculty Senate Meetings in October, 2011 and November, 2011 in order that Mr. Henderson may successfully complete coursework toward fulfilling the requirements for a Master's Degree in

Library and Information Studies from the University of Oklahoma. As a guest of the Senate, Mr. Henderson accepts the obligation to strictly adhere to this body's rules concerning the confidentiality of Senate discussion and debate.

Rationale:

Mr. Jason Henderson is the Al Harris Library's digitization technician and a student in the University of Oklahoma's School of Library and Information Studies master's degree program. As part of his required coursework, Mr. Henderson has been given an assignment to observe a decision making body in a higher education institution. Mr. Henderson's report to his instructor will discuss the role of the Faculty Senate in SWOSU's decision-making processes, the issues that fall within the purview of the Senate, and the procedures used by this body in the conduct of its business. A copy of Mr. Henderson's assignment is attached for further perusal.

The motion passed.

B. Caucus by College to select members of the Faculty University Promotion and Tenure Promotion Review Committee (FUPTRC) and the University Promotion/Tenure Appeals Committee. (Appendix #2 for list of eligible faculty)

The following faculty were selected to serve on the FUPTRC:

CPGS: Mary Aspedon, Elizabeth Ferrell, Lisa Appedu

CAS: Steve O'Neal, James Silver, David Bessinger

COP: Randall Sharp

CAAS: Bill Smartwood

The following faculty were selected to serve on the University Promotion/Tenure Appeals Committee:

CPGS: Ann Russell

CAS: Brian Campbell

COP: Rahmat Talukder

CAAS: Kathy Brooks

X. ADJOURNMENT: The Senate adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Next Faculty Senate meeting: Friday, October 28 at 2:00 pm in EDU 201

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Collins, FS President

Fred Gates, FS Secretary