

Reminder: The December meeting of the Faculty Senate will be
Thursday, December 9, 1999
3:30 pm in Claxton 103.

FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Approved Minutes
Thursday, November 18, 1999, 3:30-4:45 PM
Claxton 103

ROLL CALL OF SENATORS IN ATTENDANCE: Steven Anderson, John Blake, Dewey Browder, Willodean Burton, Roger Clark, Debbie Cochener, Gloria Gharavi, Meredith Gildrie, Bud Glunt, Dolores Gore, Frederick Grieve, Ron Gupton, Shirley Hagewood, Kay Haralson, Allen Henderson, Mark Hunter, Ellen Kanervo, DeAnne Luck, Ramon Magrans, Robin Mealer, James Prescott, April Purcell, Pete Stoddard, Cindy Taylor, Jim Thompson, David Till, Howard Winn, Pei Xiong-Skiba, Greg Zieren.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

Motion made to approve the agenda by Senator Anderson, seconded by Senator Browder, motion carried.

Motion made to approve the minutes of the October Senate meeting by Senator Anderson, seconded by Senator Cochener, motion carried.

President Gupton: Senator Randall could not attend the meeting today, but requested that the following be read into the minutes in response to Dr. Rinella's comments appearing in the minutes of October 21, 1999.

1. The August 12 letter to Rinella, Pontius and Smith requested information the previous Senate and the new Senate had been seeking for over six months with little success.
2. If anyone has questions concerning the August 12 letter or the called meeting, Senate Resolution requesting a three months delay and Smith's response about the Senate Resolution, I have copies of all three that will confirm that my comments on these issues are correct.
3. In my third quote on page 2 of the September senate minutes, Academic VP Rhoda should be changed to VP Pontius. The last sentence in this quotation does not relate to the topic being addressed, the August 12 letter, therefore I request that it be deleted from the minutes or clarification that the statement is in reference to Dr. Smith's accusatory letter be added.

Motion made and approved to amend the September minutes to reflect Senator Randall's request.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Dr. Pontius:** - In Deans' Council we have discussed the possibility of new positions being added. If funding is available we may be able to add up to four lines. I hope the decision can be made by the next Deans' Council meeting. The money will come from the adjunct and overload budget.

- Thanks to everyone for their work done on course leveling.

- Concerns have been expressed over the FA and FN grades being calculated in a student's GPA immediately. A program can be developed to make sure the grade is not calculated into the GPA until the end of the semester. Concern has also been expressed about the grade appearing at all on the transcript, when the student does not ultimately receive the grade. Sheila McCoy is meeting with the state registrar to discuss the issue.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Attendance Reports, FN, FA Grades - Senator Hunter:** My intended motion is now being addressed by Academic Affairs. I did not feel a student's GPA should be recalculated to reflect the FA or FN grade until the end of the semester.

President Gupton: If an FN or FA is given before the automatic W date and is calculated into the students' GPA, this could be a problem. Is this a conflict in policy? **Dr. Pontius:** I will check that out.

- **Policy on Vacant Positions - President Gupton:** The policy in questions here is 5:005 of APSU Policies and Procedures which relates to positions in departments which may be vacated by retirement or resignation. In some cases, the position does not necessarily go back to the department, even when there has been no reduction in enrollment for the department.

Senator Anderson: In some situations, positions should go back to the VPAA for possible reallocation, but in obvious situations, where the need is still there, the positions should automatically stay in the department. This would allow more time for advertisement, recruitment, etc.

President Gupton: When all vacant positions must go to the VPAA and to the Dean's for allocation, we lose valuable time on advertising. Many potentially good candidates have been lost because of our delay in interviewing.

Senator Winn: If positions automatically revert back to the VPAA, can they be put into other areas of the university?

Dr. Pontius: That is possible, but it does not work that way. In the

case of an untimely death of a faculty member, the

salary money goes to fill the position on a temporary basis, any extra is kept in the instructional area.

President Gupton: Have there been any cases where the money went to other areas?

Dr. Pontius: It usually goes to adjunct and overload.

President Gupton: This issue will be assigned to the Faculty White Committee, chaired by Senator Thompson.

- **Faculty Personnel Items - Senator Till:** There are items that are bothersome in the APSU policy, pp. 20, 21 in the August 98 revision, pp. 117, 118 in the new handbook. The first item is the use of student written evaluations. The policy concerning use of the comments is not clear and the practice of including the comments in dossiers is not uniform. There is a footnote in the policy which indicates that the SGA, Senate, and Deans' Council shall review teacher evaluation documents and the use of information gathered. If this is an issue that needs to be addressed, it must be addressed by each of the three units. It is unclear how these are being used in various departments. Are they given to faculty, chairs, retention and tenure committees?

Senator Hunter: The nature of the comments is usually more negative than positive. In the Education department, the secretary types the comments, and they are given to the faculty member.

Senator Till: But this procedure varies from department to department.

Senator Anderson: According to policy 501, the faculty member may include written comments in their dossier if they so choose.

President Gupton: Is there a common practice among all departments?

Senator Browder: In History and Philosophy the comments are typed by the secretary, and given to the faculty member and the chair.

President Gupton: Maybe we need a clear statement regarding this.

Senator Grieve: Since the comments are usually negative, I am concerned about them being in the dossier.

Senator Till: There is clearly inequity from department to department.

Senator Gore: I agree there is concern about the comments being in the dossier, especially from the standpoint of new faculty.

Senator C. Taylor: Comments by student are not always negative. Some faculty may want to include their comments.

Senator Till: If the comments are treated like other student evaluations, they will go in the dossier. The second concern regarding personnel items is that if a candidate adds material to the dossier, not asked for by the departmental committee, after the committee has voted, then the committee should reconvene and vote again. If not, the dossier that goes to the college committee, is not the dossier voted on by the department. Once the chair sends the dossier forward, nothing can be added. But in practice, there is a period of up to 2 weeks after the department votes but before the chair forwards the dossier when material is sometimes added. The language here needs to be clarified.

Senator Anderson: The intent was to allow the faculty member time at the departmental level to regroup and put their best foot forward. The dossier needs to be closed at some time, but if the department has suggestions, the faculty member should be able to add documentation.

Senator Till: I think the policy is pretty clear on that. The concern is when material is added after the vote is taken by the departmental committee. The policy needs to be clear. The third item of concern is in regard to the independence of the chair's recommendation and the departmental committee's recommendation. The intent of the policy on retention and tenure is for the chair's recommendation and the departmental committee's recommendation to be independent of one another. The way the language of the policy reads, the chair and the department meet together to discuss, when time comes for the vote, the chair leaves the room. The department R & T committee writes their report, the chair writes his/her report. If either party reads the other's report before independently writing their own, it provides an opportunity to argue with the other recommendation. Under AAUP rules, when a chair makes a negative recommendation, it should be handed to the faculty member for a response before it is sent to the next level. I am not suggesting that we follow these rules, but we need to think about whether these should be genuinely independent recommendations.

Dr. Pontius: Concerns have been raised about the ambiguity in the policy. It would be helpful for the senate to look at this and make comments or suggestions. Another question I would like to raise and have the senate address is that during the first three years of the retention process, a reason does not have to be given to the candidate if they are not retained. I have provided a reason in the past because I feel we owe them an explanation. However, I am concerned that this is not in the policy.

President Gupton: Should this be addressed by the handbook

committee or a senate committee?

Senator Gildrie: If the handbook committee is not all faculty, the senate could provide the unique feelings of faculty. **Senator Hunter:** I would like to have the input of the senate.

President Gupton: This item will be assigned to the Faculty Red Committee, chaired by Senator Kemmerly. I will put this item on the agenda for the next meeting for a report.

- **Representation to the President's Cabinet - President Gupton:** My class schedule does not allow me to attend the cabinet meetings. Senator Diehr had suggested at the last meeting that he might be able to fill this role. Since he is not here today I will postpone this item until the next meeting.
- **Evaluation of VPAA - Senator Gildrie:** Since it is too late in the fall to do the evaluations, the committee makes a motion to conduct the evaluation of the VPAA in the spring, and delete the evaluation of the President for this year only, since he is leaving. We can then decide at a later time whether to keep the evaluations in the spring or go back to our normal cycle of doing them in the fall. Motion seconded by Senator Thompson, motion carried.
- **Background Checks - President Gupton:** I had an email from Buddy Grah with forwards from correspondence between him and Bob Bird regarding the wording of a policy on background checks. It seems to be misleading, could refer to financial background checks, or could be more than that.

Dr. Pontius: This has been a major frustration and caused a great deal of concern. We have tried to refine the document to govern all positions: police, child care positions, faculty, staff, etc. The Deans were given a draft of the original document that new personnel are supposed to sign. The check includes consumer reports, felony reports, education verification reports. Any negative report goes to the legal authorities at TBR for guidance. If the report does not impact the role for which the person is applying, the report does not go forward.

Senator Winn: Phil Kemmerly showed me a copy of the form, in the second sentence it mentions "hire or continue employment of".

Senator Hunter: I think this needs rewording.

Dr. Pontius: The company's report does not limit what the department can do with contacts regarding the candidates.

Senator Winn: Why does Bob Bird have anything to do with hiring of faculty?

Dr. Pontius: Ads for positions are done within his department, but he does not have input into the ads. He keeps track of the lines, but can not make a final decision about anything. We hope to move to having

different forms for specific positions for candidates to sign.

Senator Luck: It think this is an invasion of privacy.

President Gupton: This item will be assigned to the Academic Red Committee, chaired by Senator Browder and will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

REPORTS

- **Deans' Council - President Gupton:** Senator Gore left me a list with three items: leveling of courses, the number of adjuncts, low enrolled courses on main campus.

Senator Browder: I think the only courses looked at were low enrollment in lower division courses.

- **Budget Review Committee - Senator Anderson:** The committee met September 1, generating a number of things to look at. In April and May 1999, the Senate and the AAUP signed a six item request which was given to the President. A lot of this has been forgotten. We would like suggestions from the faculty on what the committee should concentrate on. The committee felt that we should restate our position to the new interim president and decide how we could effectively approach the interim to present the recommendations we made last May.
- **Academic Council - Dr. Pontius:** The Academic Council will be setting the beginning and ending dates for summer school by the first week of December. Dates for Fall Semester have not yet been determined. The final calendar will be sent out to everyone.

Meeting adjourned 4:45.