

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**

November 7, 2024
3:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.
Austin Hall

APPROVED

Senators Present (22) Irfan Ahmed (COBA), Traci Austin (COBA), Patrick Buzzini (CJ), Jennifer Child (CHSS), Miltonette Craig (CJ), Lindsay Clark (COBA), Kevin Crouch (CAM), Magdalena Denham (CJ), Debbi Hatton (CAM), Owen Kelly (COM), Nick Lantz (CHSS), Victoria Lantz (CAM), Kimberly LaPrairie (COE), Kenneth McIntyre (CHSS), Ricardo Montelongo (COE), Audrey Murfin (CHSS), Jill Pagels (COE), Bradley Seaberg (CHSS), Zachary Valdes (NGL), Rebecca Wentworth (COE), Darren Williams (COSET), Willow Yang (COBA).

Senators Not Present (8): Miriam Akoto (CHSS), Michael Arrington (CHSS), Emma Bullock (COSET), Brandy Doleshal (COSET), Dustin Gross (COSET), Erica Pasquini (COHS), Todd Primm (COSET), Xiaobo Belle Wang (CHSS).

Guests

Volha Minich (COSET)

Called to Order

3:30 PM

Call to Order

3:30 PM

Special Guest

Dr. Anne Gaillard, Vice Provost, Sam Houston State University

Dr. Gaillard discussed two policies currently under review: APS 24030 and APS 800401.

APS 240430 – Course Structure and Management (second cycle):

Dr. Gaillard presented the need to pull data out of Blackboard to help with outreach and student success, and in case of faculty emergency. The reason for the new policy is a change in TSUS rules and regulations that require us to have a policy on course syllabi and on office hours.

Senators raised concerns about technical constraints with Blackboard Ultra, including the weighted grade feature. Some faculty are using weighting methods that are superior to that offered in Blackboard. Dr. Gaillard responded that Instructional Designers are willing to set up weighting within courses, and that we need transparency for student retention and success.

APS 800401 Class Attendance:

According to Dr. Gaillard, this policy is necessitated by a change in the law for pregnant and parenting students, as well as the need to accommodate students traveling for athletics.

Senators had concerns about the policy's addition of a new grade of EA, Extended Absence, and asked how the students would get the instruction that they had missed. At a certain point, the student hasn't taken the class. Dr. Gaillard suggested the student could possibly sit in in a subsequent semester. Senators asked about the difficulty of managing student participation in a class possibly taught by another faculty member, as well as difficulties with active learning scenarios, hands-on learning, and discussion-based classes. Dr. Gaillard said that there would be no pressure on faculty to give the EA. In response to a question of whether faculty would be required to give the EA when students had multiple excused absences, Dr. Gaillard replied that this was possible.

Approval of Minutes

October 24, 2024 meeting. The minutes were not approved and were retracted. They will be voted on at the next meeting.

Senate Committee Reports

- Academic Affairs Committee: APS 890301 – *Hiring, Evaluation, Promotion, and Merit for Non-Tenure Track Faculty*

The committee questioned language in the policy stating that merit would be “guided by” versus “based on” FES scores. There was a motion to accept the policy with suggestion to address this phrasing, which would bring the policy in line with recent changes to APS 830217 and APS 800722. The policy passed with this amendment.

- Faculty Affairs Committee: APS 130424 – *Faculty-Led Study Abroad and Study-in-USA Courses*

The committee recommended the policy be accepted with minor edits and some necessary exceptions to be made for COM. The motion passed and the policy was approved.

- University Affairs Committee: APS 801215 – *Subsequent Master's Degree*

The policy was approved with two minor changes to the language.

- Committee on Committees & Surveys: APS 800107 – *Out-of State/Out-of Country Resident Credit Courses*

This policy was recommended for rescission. Committee supports the recommendation to rescind. Senate recommends the policy be rescinded.

Unfinished Business

Senate resumed discussion of APS 240430, Course Structure and Management. Some senators expressed concern about classroom issues being dictated by policy. Others noted that the policy was preferable to the alternative of reporting midterm grades, and spoke in favor of the spirit of informing students of their progress earlier in the semester. A motion was made to reject the policy. The motion to reject the policy was rejected by a vote of 12 to 4, with one abstention. A motion was made to accept policy with a recommended revision, taking out the word “weighted” in 3.04. The motion passed with 16 in favor, 4 against, and one abstention. The policy was accepted contingent on the removal of “weighted” from 3.04.

Senate resumed discussion of APS 800401 – *Class Attendance*.

Senators brought up several concerns with the new grade of EA:

1. There were concerns with faculty having a continual obligation to monitor the progress of students no longer in their class, even beyond their contractual obligation to these students.
2. There are difficulties in regard to group activities, active learning, and the fact that students will no longer have Blackboard access.
3. Senators questioned the need for a new grade when we already have grades of X, W, and Q and found the EA grade redundant with these. The university can allow a student to retake a course with a grade of W or Q if they wish.
4. Senators questioned whether this grade would be beneficial to students or if it would merely give them false hope.

A motion was made to reject the policy. It passed unanimously.

New Business

Senate Workgroup Assignments

Faculty Affairs Committee: APS 791221 – *Faculty Participation in Commencement*

Faculty Senate recommended rescission of this policy in May 2023. CAD reviewed and rejected the rescission request. As Senior Reviewer, Faculty Senate is being asked to draft a revision. Senator N. Lantz will draft a revision.

Senators expressed concern about the upcoming policy, APS 24XXXXX on Faculty Residency. This policy is currently seeking work group members.

Announcements

- Faculty Senate welcomes new senator, Dr. Traci Austin (COBA)
- Rozlynn Kieschnick, Executive Director of Hospitality and Auxiliary Services, scheduled as Special Guest for November 21, 2024, meeting to discuss updates related to Bearkat Bundle and Faculty Bookstore Committee activities.
- Faculty Senate Holiday Reception with Dr. White on Tuesday, December 3, 2024. RSVP by Monday, November 25, 2024.

Adjournment: 5:00 PM.