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Fort Hays State University Faculty Senate Minutes, May 5, 2008

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FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE
Minutes for Regular Meeting on Monday, May 5, 2008
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The meeting was called to order in the Robbins Center, Sunflower Communications
Room at 3:43 p.m. by President Kulmala.

1. **Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting**

   a. The April 8, 2008 minutes were approved after a motion and second to the motion. There were no changes to the meeting's sign-in roster.

2. **Announcements and Information Items (no action required):** Dan Kulmala

   a. Board of Regents meeting—Dan noted there are a series of proposed KBOR Performance Agreement Goals. Chris Crawford commented on each goal, noting that the timeline has escalated, as we usually have until July. Things are unfolding at the State right now, and we are making progress.

      - Increase participation in workforce development.

      - Increase retention

      - Internationalize the campus and curriculum

      - Improve teacher preparation

      - Improve foundation skills—Improve learner outcomes

   b. COFSP meeting

      - Considerable informal discussion ensued concerning the various forms of faculty senate organization and the changing and emerging demographics of faculty at the Regents' institutions. Concerns about the roles of faculty and the accompanying job descriptions were outlined and noted. COFSP decided that this issue might be one for the incoming COFSP to address. Dan noted that the demographics are different in the various faculty senates in terms of how faculty are defined or who is part of that body. He noted concerns about adjunct faculty, instructors, and the question of who can have a voice – Should we come up with a sense of who is on these?

      Continue the discussion on each institution's response to the Five Strategic questions outlined by KBOR. Four items were singled out for consideration. Provost Gould provided more description on the items.

      1. Common Outcomes

      2. Ubiquitous Assessment

      3. Identification of Basic Competencies

      4. Setting Benchmarks to Reach Key Goals

   c. President's Cabinet

      - Nothing to report as Cabinet meets Wednesday, May 7.

      - Dr. Hammond reported at today's Faculty Senate meeting that he had been receiving input from the Deans who had been receiving input from Chairs about the Midterm pass/fail approach. He has been hearing that faculty prefer the old way. There was discussion about faculty who had

not been asked for their opinion. Jeff Burnett stated that without a doubt, students prefer grades at Midterm. Dr. Hammond said he welcomes Faculty Senate input and suggested that we go back to our Departments and email him regarding where our colleagues stand on the issue. We need to make the decision in a timely fashion. He explained the reason for the pass/fail approach was that faculty thought that "Midterm Grade" was a misnomer as it was not "50% of the final grade." Another concern was that pass/fail does not tell the students if they are on track for certain scholarship retention. Dr. Hammond is leaning toward not continuing the pilot and then looking at other options. Provost Gould noted that we pay $100,000/year for BlackBoard. There is a faculty stipulation that "you will keep a grade book," so why not keep it in BlackBoard? Dan noted that an e-portfolio system called Epsilon is looking good right now. Discussion included the possibility that BlackBoard is working to improve, and the question about why a student can't just ask faculty rather than having to go back to the dorm and check BlackBoard.

- Dr. Hammond noted that he is trying to have contracts out by commencement but he still doesn't know what we are getting from the legislature. It may be pushed into June or July. If not available by commencement, contracts will be mailed to summer addresses.

3. **Reports from Committees**

   a. Executive Committee: Dan Kulmala

   - CoursEval: Pilot the database this semester and develop a policy statement that aligns with Ad Hoc Teaching Evaluation Committee's recommendations. Dan reported that the pilot involves eight departments. The Committee created a wiki to connect to the policy document, and will have something by the next academic year. Remind students that this Friday is the last day for completing surveys online. We will re-assess what questions we want for the University and limit the number to about eight or ten, so departments can have some questions.
   - General Education Program Review—Task Force for the Review of the General Education Program: to study and survey the current trends and practices of General Education Programs and to report back to Faculty Senate with its findings by April 2009. Dan noted the Task Force will begin this summer, and still needs members from the College of Business.
   - Chair and Dean Evaluation—next year's agenda. See Ken Trantham if you are interested.
   - Recommendation to increase Faculty Development Funds—(also available as attachment). Dan presented the recommendation: "WHEREAS Faculty Senate believes in the value of Faculty Development, we greatly support and endorse the increase in Faculty Development funding from the current $50,000.00 to the future amount of $75,000.00." Jeff Burnett spoke to the need for the increase. Provost Gould noted the price of fuel increase. Dr. Hammond said there is a clear indication of the underfunding of OOE that is 20% behind. Inflation has an impact there. There are two options – increase OOE budget of the Department or have a central location for distribution. He noted that in January, the International Travel Fund was created with about $20,000,

so in fact, faculty development had already been increased by that amount, as more faculty are traveling internationally. He is aware of the problem but wants to give departments enough money for those decisions. The more put in salaries, the less for OOE. Provost Gould thanked faculty senate members Burnett and Hauck for their service on the Faculty Development Committee. After a second motion and vote, the recommendation was unanimously approved.

- Resolution on the Statement on the Value of Higher Education—see attachment. Dan noted that the statement was primarily developed by two Faculty Senate presidents from KU and KSU in relation to the importance of workforce development and whether or not we are preparing students for jobs that are out there, leading to a concern that liberal arts educations are being threatened. The Board of Regents agreed with the statement. Dan called attention to paragraph three. After discussion, Senator Drabkin moved to accept the resolution conceptually. It was seconded, and approved.

b. Academic Affairs: Martha Holmes.

- Martha reported that a new CSCI course, "Introduction to Cryptography" had been approved by the Committee (see handout). It was approved unanimously by the Faculty Senate today

- Martha reported that two new courses in ART courses, "Drawing II" and "Professional Development in Studio Art" had been approved by the Committee (see handouts). Both new courses were approved unanimously by the Faculty Senate today.

c. Passing of the gavel to Ken Trantham. As Dan Kulmala passed the gavel to Ken Trantham, Dan stated his belief that Ken is well-qualified for the position of Faculty Senate President. Ken thanked Dan for doing an exceptional job, followed by applause from the Senate.

d. Academic Affairs (cont'd).

- WAC Program Criteria—see attachment. Martha presented a "Motion from Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Senate: The Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Senate advises the Faculty Senate to approve the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Program Report with the following recommendations to the University administration and to Dan Kulmala, chair of the AdHoc committee: 1. To create a University Director of Writing position, 2. To conduct a Pilot Program in large enrollment General Education courses such as HHP200 and PSY100 with final approval of the WAC program contingent upon the success of this trial, 3. To gather data from the Pilot Program concerning the effectiveness of the WAC Program, 4. To provide faculty orientation to the WAC Program, 5. To educate faculty members teaching the selected courses and other persons who will implement the WAC Program." Martha noted that the handout "WAC Program Criteria Academic Affairs" is a "WAC document excerpt" and that we are not voting on it, but on the motion on the last page of the handout. Discussion included that various departments, particularly Science and Business, expressed the desire for technical writing, almost more than "Comp 2." If a Department has a

comparable course, it could be offered for that although it would probably have to go through a committee led by the Director in order for courses to meet requirements. There will likely be two mechanisms to evaluate the courses, similar to the General Education course approval process. There was concern about the pilot program slowing down the process to have a system to engage students in a rigorous program. Each discipline creates its own kind of writing. We are not trying to produce great writers, but to use writing as a mechanism to assess what students are learning in the classroom. Senator Britten noted the pilot does not have to be HHP200 and PSY100, but they have the largest enrollment. He called attention to "such as," in the motion. There was a suggestion to have it in "Freshmen Experience." Dr. Hammond noted the importance of the issue – How can we help our students practice writing more? It is an opportunity for our students to practice writing skills. The pilot demonstrates to other faculty that it works. He congratulated the team that put it together. Senator Martin noted that the assessment would need to occur at the end of all three courses, not after each one. Dr. Gould noted that the pilot is in the spirit of improvement – "more people, more help." Senator Squires suggested that we need to help students read with comprehension that leads to improved writing. Senator Trout called the question. Ken seconded the motion and it passed unanimously, followed by applause. Steve Trout thanked Dan Kulmala for "making it happen," followed by applause.

    e. Student Affairs: Jeff Burnett

- Jeff reported on the students' concern about on-campus courses decreasing. The message to the student body is loud and clear, "that's not the case."

    f. University Affairs: Jerry Wilson

- No report

    g. By-Laws and Standing Rules: Win Jordan

- No report

    h. University Marketing and Strategic Academic Partnerships: Josephine Squires

- No report.

4. **Reports from Special Committees and Other Representatives**

    a. Noel Levitz Priority Survey for Online Learners (see handout): Larry Gould

- Provost Gould reported that, in terms of process, we are doing well. He called attention to the top of the handout being both on-campus and off-campus while the lower table is off-campus. He noted that for Challenges, Item 4, "Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress," we are not alone. We are talking about improvement, not accountability.

7. **Adjournment of Regular Faculty Senate Meeting.** After motion to adjourn, meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.