Savannah State University Faculty Senate Minutes

Tuesday, Feb.7, 2012 4 PM Jen Auditorium Whiting Hall

Senators Present: Han, Metts, Yount, O’Brien, Faries, Kawasha, Jamison, St. Mark, Stewart, McClain, Bentley, Franklin, Dowling, Smith, Yoon, Andreou, Taylor, Tessema, Sivapatham, Dolo, Singh, Cox, Sarhan

Senators Absent: Silberg, Ide, Reddick, Arora, Johnson, Brown, Sajwan, Harris-Murphy, Warren

Visitors: Myers, Brannen, Fayoyin, Rafacz, Dunn, Barnette, Wyche, Gilbert, Crow, Stokes, Clark, Wright, Ouandlous, Mosley, Schroeder, Jordan, Jolley

1. Call to Order- The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Dr. Dowling at 4:05 PM with a quorum present.
2. Approval of Agenda- The BEEP (Black Educational Exchange Program)report was moved up in the agenda. The agenda was then approved.
3. Approval of Minutes- The minutes were approved without changes.
4. BEEP report- Lenora Gilbert from COBA announced that the Black Educational Exchange Program is being hosted by the university. This year, the coordinating committee is structured so that each college will have two representatives. The events will take place from Feb. 29-March 2. There will be panel discussions and classroom visits. Students from Armstrong Atlantic University, SCAD, and Savannah Tech have been invited to the panel discussions. More information will be forthcoming.
5. Executive Committee Report

 1. Dates for Senate Meetings

1. A motion from the Executive Committee was approved to have the calendar for Senate meetings for the remainder of the 2011-2012 Academic Year be changed as follows:

i: Faculty Senate meetings will be held on March 6, 2012, April 3, 2012, and April 24, 2012. The second meeting in April is designed to take the place of the May meeting. The rationale for the elimination of the May meeting is one of a scheduling conflict. The Faculty Senate meeting scheduled for May has always occurred during the period set aside for final exams. After discussion earlier in the academic year, the Senate Executive Committee recommended to the Senate that such conflicts be eliminated.

Ii: By March 6, 2012, Departments and Colleges are to hold elections of faculty to replace those members whose terms are about to expire.

iii: At the April 24, 2012 meeting, newly elected Faculty Senators will be sworn in prior to the election of the Senate Executive Committee for 2012-2013.

iv: At the April 24, 2012 meeting, elections will be held for the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for 2012-2013 after newly elected Senators are sworn in.

1. A motion from the Executive Committee was approved to hold Faculty Senate meetings for the 2012-2013 Academic Year as follows:

Aug.14, 2012

Sept.4, 2012

Oct.2, 2012

Nov.6, 2012

Nov.27, 2012

Jan.8, 2013

Feb. 5, 2013

March 5, 2013

April 2, 2013

April 23, 2013

 i: The rationale for the two meetings in November, 2012 and April, 2013 is the same as that for the two meetings in April, 2012.

ii: Beginning with the 2012-2013 Academic Year and continuing until changed, the August and January meetings will be held on the first Tuesday after classes start.

2. Letter to Charles Young, President of SSU Foundation

 A. Mr. Young called Dr. Dowling to tell him that the SSU Foundation was considering a recommendation that the Board of Regents appoint Dr. Dozier as President without a search.

 i: The Executive Committee’s letter to Mr. Young states that the Executive Committee recommends that President Dozier be allowed to participate as a candidate in an open search for the position of President of Savannah State University. The Executive Committee feels that to directly appoint a President without a search is not in the best interests of Savannah State University.

1. Executive Committee meeting with President Dozier on Feb. 1, 2012.

i: President Dozier said that she lacked a priori knowledge of the intended activities of the Foundation and that no one was authorized to speak to this issue on her behalf.

Ii: Dr. Dozier stated that she did not want the faculty or anyone else involved in assisting her to obtain the position of President.

Iii: The President stated that she knew the terms of her contract appointing her to the position as Interim President and that she strongly feels that this matter should be left up to the Board of Regents.

iv: If you have comments on this matter, The Senate Executive Committee would appreciate any correspondence on this issue. Please send your comments to Dr. Metts.

3. Traditionally at Savannah State University, faculty holding administrative appointments (department chairs, assistant/associate deans, deans, assistant/associate VP’s and VP’s and any other position where the individual is in a line position and makes administrative recommendations regarding faculty) have not been allowed to serve on personnel or faculty search committees. This has been an “understood” policy. Recently, there has been a discussion regarding who was eligible to serve on search committees and personnel committees. The administration has expressed the opinion that, since neither the Faculty Handbook nor the Faculty Senate By-laws specifically prohibit faculty holding administrative appointments from serving on such committees, they were indeed eligible to serve. The Executive Committee believes that the proscription of administrators serving on such committees is in the best interests of the faculty and the university and that it needs to be specifically stated in the faculty handbook.

The following motion was approved: Any faculty member serving in an administrative position with personnel recommendation authority may not serve on faculty search committees or personnel committees, including pre-tenure, tenure, promotion, and post-tenure. This should be included in the handbook.

 4. All Senate Committees are required to submit a written report by the March Faculty Senate meeting.

5. The Committee on Committees has completed staffing of the Faculty Senate Committees for the 2011-2012 year. The Executive Committee has asked that all members of the Committee serve for the 2012-2013 term. Additionally, since the committee appointments are for two years, the number of new appointments necessary for the 2012-2013 term will be minimal and, as they will be fully staffed, they will be able to meet and carry out their responsibilities starting in August of 2012.

6. Resignations-

A. If an individual serving as a Faculty Senator decides to resign, they should tender their resignation to the Dean of the College they represent and should send a copy of their resignation to the Corresponding Secretary, Dr. Rose Metts.

B. If a faculty member serving on a Faculty Senate Committee wishes to resign, they should submit their resignation to the Executive Committee of the Senate and copy the President, who chairs the Savannah State University Faculty Senate.

7. The Executive Committee has been asked to name three individuals, one from each college, to serve on the search committee for the Vice President for Academic Affairs. We are requested to submit these names by Friday, February 10. If you are interested in serving, we need to hear from you via email by Wednesday afternoon at 3:00 PM.

1. Committee Reports
2. NPCC- Dr. Stokes presented two items for information. The items had not been distributed to Senators for review prior to the meeting and, therefore, could not be included on the agenda.
3. We currently have some students who have been suspended up to 10 times. The proposal, which will be discussed further and voted on at the next Senate meeting, states the a student should be suspended for one semester for the first suspension, two semesters for the second suspension, three consecutive semesters including the summer for the 3rd suspension, and be permanently dismissed from Savannah State University for the fourth suspension.
4. Grade Appeal Process- The proposal is that faculty must submit all scores/grades and documentation not returned to the student to the grade grievance committee if a grade appeal is initiated.
5. Committee on Committees
6. Dr. Stewart reported that Chairs of Senate Committees must be Senators.
7. The Parking Committee Chair had not yet contacted new members.
8. The Faculty Handbook Committee will bring changes to the new handbook to the Faculty Senate.
9. The Scholarship Committee is no longer a Faculty Senate Committee. It is now a university committee with representatives from faculty and administrators appointed by the President.
10. Students Evaluations- Dr. Crow gave some background information and made the following points:
11. Twenty-two out of 35 University System of Georgia institutions do online students evaluations of faculty.
12. The old paper evaluation system costs approximately $11,000 per year for the paper, the machine, and staff time to process the paper.
13. Over the last four years, SSU has had a 35% decline in state appropriations. When the machine that processed the paper broke down, there were insufficient funds to replace it.
14. There has been disagreement about whether to administer the paper evaluations at the midterm or at the end of the semester.
15. Some faculty turned in paper evaluations after the end of the semester. This slowed down the process of obtaining results.
16. There is a structural bias to paper evaluations. Students not in class on that particular day cannot evaluate the class.
17. The paper response rate has typically been 60-70%.
18. Another issue is that online courses have been evaluated with the same system as classroom courses.
19. The online evaluation system doesn’t cost anything.
20. The overall response rate was low for Fall, 2011 evaluations, due in part to the very late date that the online evaluations were available.
21. A unique feature on our online evaluation process is that there is a receipt system. Students who complete the evaluation receive a receipt which will tell the professor which students have responded but still keeps the responses confidential.

A discussion ensued following Dr. Crow’s comments.

1. Dr. Tessema said that students could chat with each other and bias evaluations.
2. Several professors asserted that students should not be given extra credit or other incentives to do the evaluations.
3. Dr. Metts called for a memo saying that the fall evaluation process was just an experiment and would not count against anyone.
4. Dr. Sarhan responded by saying that he would send a memo saying that professors would have the option whether or not to use the Fall, 2011 students evaluations in tenure, promotion, pre-tenure, or post-tenure portfolios.
5. A suggestion was made to include on the syllabus a statement that completing the evaluation is a course requirement. Students could then enter the system and either do or not do the evaluation.

A motion was approved to continue with online evaluations and to work on the response rate.

1. President’s report
2. Dr. Sarhan reported on two new Presidential initiatives. A. The first is mini grants for faculty starting in March for between $500 and $2,000 to support faculty activities on and off campus. This initiative is supported by Title III.
3. The second initiative is for international programs. There will be scholarships between $500 and $750 with a total of $25,000 for students to pursue international exchanges and programs.
4. Dr. Sarhan congratulated Dr. Lemma for winning the Board of Regents Teaching Excellence Award.
5. Adjournment- The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin O’Brien- Recording Secretary