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Faculty Senate Minutes - April 16, 1999

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi
Faculty Senate Minutes
April 16, 1999

Members Present: **College of the Arts:** Kimberley Davis, Cheryl Goggin; **College of Business Administration:** Trellis Green, Bob Smith; **College of Education and Psychology:** Jesse Palmer, John Rachal; **College of Health and Human Sciences:** Mary Ann Adams, Jan Drummond, Michael Forster, Susan Graham-Kresge; **College of Liberal Arts:** Charles Bolton, Linda Dysart Goff, Allan McBride, Art Kaul, Stephen Oshrin, Bill Powell; **College of Nursing:** Norma Cuellar; **College of Science and Technology:** Douglas McCain, Bob Coates, Dean Dunn, Mary Dayne Gregg, Mary Lux, Lawrence Mead, Karen Thrash; **Institute of Marine Science:** Steve Lohrenz; **Gulf Park:** Darlys Alford; **USM Libraries:** Sherry Laughlin, Karolyn Thompson.

Members Represented by Proxy: **College of the Arts:** Shellie Nielsen (pr. Kimberley Davis); **College of Business Administration:** Ernest King (pr. Trellis Green); **College of Education and Psychology:** Lillian Range (pr. Mary Dayne Gregg); **College of Liberal Arts:** Michael Dearnley (pr. Charles Bolton), Kim Herzinger (pr. Charles Bolton), Alexandra Jaffe (pr. Ann -Marie Kinnell); **College of Nursing:** Janie Butts (pr. Norma Cuellar); **College of Science and Technology:** Delia Anderson (pr. Sherry Laughlin), Gerald Mattson (pr. Allan Guymon); **Gulf Park:** Shahdad Naghshpour (pr. Darlys Alford).

Members Absent: **College of Business Administration:** Scott Magruder; **College of Education and Psychology:** Janet Nelson, Daniel Surry; **College of Liberal Arts:** Stephen Mallory; **College of International and Continuing Education:** Mark Miller.

Forum: Vice President for Business and Finance Linda Gilbert

There have been many questions about the PeopleSoft software implementation and how it will affect payroll. I've brought several people with me to try to help answer your questions: John McGowan, Chief Technology Officer; Ed Champney, Director Financial Affairs; Linda Smith, Assistant Director Financial Affairs, Chuck Knight, PeopleSoft Project Coordinator; and Linda McFall, Director Human Resources. Jan Drummond: Faculty are concerned about getting only two paychecks during the summer instead of three.

Ed Champney: It was easier to do it this way with PeopleSoft. Another reason is that some faculty only work one term and two paychecks accommodate that better. The first paycheck will be July 1st and the second will be August 6th.

Jesse Palmer: Some faculty teach both sessions, but may teach one class in one session and two in the other session. How will they be paid in that case?

Ed Champney: We haven't addressed that yet. I assume the summer session salary will be divided into two payments.

Jesse Palmer: How will they be paid if they only teach one session?

Linda McFall: That will have to be indicated up front. We have no way of knowing when you are teaching.

Ed Champney: The process for notifying us when you are teaching is through the dean and the provost.

Jan Drummond: How are federal income tax deductions being changed because of PeopleSoft?

Ed Champney: Many people are confusing allowances with dependents. For example, if you are claiming eight allowances; you are not claiming that you have eight dependents. As long as you have had at least 90% of your income tax liability withheld during the year, you are O.K. On your W2 form you can claim a status that you are not.

Linda McFall: This is an estimated tax format. It is a mechanism to help you pay as you go.

Jesse Palmer: Many faculty have not come to your office to make a change in their W2 forms. When we get our April paychecks, there may be significant differences in withholdings. What can be done to correct them?

Linda McFall: I have my receptionist calling right now to those who have not filled out the new forms.

Linda Gilbert: This software is being implemented over an eight month period, which is unheard of. This group has done a phenomenal job in dealing with this. We've put the information out as quickly as

possible, while trying to meet the Y2K deadline and give ourselves some time to test the software.

Steve Lohrenz: If our April deductions are too high or too low, can we just submit another W2 form?

Linda Gilbert: Yes.

Jesse Palmer: Can this be corrected for April?

Linda McFall: This Monday is the deadline to correct this for April. May 10th is the deadline for May.

Once the deduction has been made in April, we can't change that and we can't refund that money.

Linda Goff: Is this primarily affecting the nine month faculty? Isn't PeopleSoft reading your nine month salary as though you are getting it over twelve months?

Linda Gilbert: Yes. PeopleSoft was originally written for corporations and they don't have a nine month module. They are working on it, but we don't know when it will be available.

Linda McFall: In the fall I sent out a letter saying that the new software could not read the information from the mainframe and that everyone should submit a new W2. If you got a notice about a month ago, that means we didn't have a new form for you. There are some coding errors in the mainframe which will mean some differences in state withholdings for twelve month people.

Mary Lux: I don't understand why we can't be paid for twelve months.

Ed Champney: This system will allow it, once we understand how to do it.

Linda Gilbert: When we are finished with this conversion, we will have a completely integrated financial package which we've never had before. Our current system is 24 years old and we don't have documentation for it.

John Rachal: Was there any opportunity for faculty input in the decision to get two paychecks instead of three in the summer? If there is a decision to be made where nine month faculty would be paid over twelve months, then faculty should have an opportunity for input.

Linda Gilbert: The summer payment schedule did not seem to be a major issue.

John Rachal: There will be a gap of two months without a paycheck. Nine month faculty who are working in the summer are making only about half what they make in the rest of the year. That requires considerable discipline and this only add another difficulty.

Jesse Palmer: Another problem is that there may be adjustments needed with the credit union regarding loan payments that are being deducted automatically.

Ed Champney: You are going to have to pay the credit union directly during the summer.

Jesse Palmer: Faculty need to know this; they will assume those deductions are being made. Why don't we just make changes in the software to take care of these problems?

John McGowan: If we modify the software ourselves, we are in the position of having to constantly reprogram when there are new releases. There is a special users' group that recommends changes that will be made in the base module for educational institutions. We want to wait for regular system updates to address these problems.

Lawrence Mead: Wasn't there anything else on the market?

John McGowan: The major competing software does not handle nine months either. Other systems are for smaller institutions. PeopleSoft's payroll component is one of the best in the corporate world and it is fast displacing its competitors in the education environment. I was not involved in selecting this software, but I think the right choice was made. We had to move quickly to get into Y2K compliance; our deadline for this is June 30th. We first looked at our existing system to see if we could work with it. Our old system was not being used elsewhere, there was no source code or documentation, and the hardware was not being supported or maintained. Please be patient in helping us to work out these problems.

Doug McCain: What do we get out of PeopleSoft as an educational institution?

John McGowan: They have written all the student modules: student administration, financial aid, registration, alumni, and development. We are trying to move toward a fully integrated system that will use a one card system to take care of everything you do on campus.

Allan Guymon: How will the system affect payment from summer grants.

Ed Champney: It will fit perfectly with summer grants.

Linda Gilbert: If you are teaching and working on a summer grant, you will get five paychecks during the summer.

Ed Champney: One of the big changes involves credit union deductions. Rather than showing up as a deduction from your paycheck, they will show up as a direct deposit to the credit union and you will receive an advice, or a notification that the account has been credited.

Business meeting:

1.0 Call to Order The business meeting was called to order at 2:50

2.0 Approval of Agenda The agenda was approved as distributed.

3.0 Approval of Minutes The minutes were approved with minor corrections.

4.0 Executive Committee Reports

4.1 President's Report Jesse Palmer

We will be electing officers for next year at the Senate meeting in May. The nominating committee will be Art Kaul, Chair, Sherry Laughlin, John Rachal, and Linda Goff. May is the last meeting for this Senate; the new Senate will have its organizing meeting in June.

Legislature: The Legislature has appropriated 7.5% for raises. Each university has the discretion to add an additional .5%, but USM probably will not be able to do that. We don't yet know how the raise money will be distributed. Provost Henry will be the forum speaker at our May 7th meeting, and we may have some answers by then. We are also receiving \$700,000 in new discretionary money; this has to do with past formula discrepancies. Additionally, the University will receive capital funds in the amount of \$500,000 for planning the new commons, \$6 million for Polymer Science expansion, \$4 million for renovation and repair, \$3 million for Gulf Park, \$500,000 for GCRL, \$1 million for the Gulf Park Library; and \$1.5 million for the Department of Marine Science.

IHL: The Gulf Coast issue has not been resolved. USM will change the admissions requirements to be consistent with Judge Biggers' Ayers case ruling.

Campus Issues: Telephones: Telephone rates are going up 20 to 30%. The present basic rate is \$20.54 and will increase to \$27. This increase in operating expenses will present real problems for unit operating budgets. The new telephone switch upgrade includes new services such as voice mail, auto call back, and call transfer. These services should be available by July 1st. The present 28 modems will be upgraded to 150 by July 1st. **PeopleSoft:** The PeopleSoft implementation is causing great concern among faculty. The software is not set up to deal with faculty contracts or with summer payrolls. Faculty are encouraged to examine their April paychecks carefully to look for changes or errors that may need to be corrected. The good side is that PeopleSoft is Y2K compliant. **Online Courses:** The Senate needs to propose a resolution to address the issues surrounding online courses used and developed at this university. Art Kaul has drafted a resolution that was prompted by the Senate Forum discussion last month. The Continuing Education Advisory Committee has forwarded a request to Provost Henry to create a committee to examine issues related to online courses. The concern is that existing groups, such as Academic Council and Graduate Council, are being bypassed on this issue. Another oversight body would dilute and remove the responsibility for these courses from the faculty.

Resolution on Online Courses

A variety of unresolved issues surrounding the University of Southern Mississippi's initiation of online courses must be addressed with thoughtful and urgent attention, with a primary goal of establishing policies that preserve the academic integrity and quality of the curriculum.

The Continuing Education Advisory Committee on March 29, 1999, recommended that the University Provost form a task force, with broad representation, to examine and provide recommendations on issues surrounding online courses, including [but not limited to] intellectual property rights, online course evaluation, faculty compensation, and infrastructure support, among others.

The Faculty Senate endorses the examination of issues and the development of policy recommendations related to online courses. Moreover, the Faculty Senate reiterates the long-standing principle of academic governance that oversight of the content, quality, and rigor of the USM curriculum is an essential faculty responsibility.

The Faculty Senate believes that the Academic Council and the Graduate Council, both comprised of elected members of the faculty, are the appropriate and duly constituted bodies to take leadership roles in addressing those issues and in developing policy recommendations governing online courses.

Therefore, the Faculty Senate recommends:

- 1) The Academic Council and the Graduate Council be charged with the examination of academic issues surrounding online courses and the recommendation of policies governing online courses; and
- 2) All online courses undergo the oversight, review, and endorsement of appropriate college councils and the Academic Council or Graduate Council before being implemented.

It was moved, seconded, and approved that the rules be suspended in order to vote on the resolution today. Discussion involved the distinction between an online courses and other courses where part of the material may be online, how the instructor can know who is doing the work in the course, and the fact that some issues relating to these courses might not ordinarily be in the purview of the Academic or Graduate Councils. The resolution passed.

ROTC Graduates: The Senate needs to review the procedures for verifying degree requirements for ROTC graduates and offer a more acceptable process. The difficulty is that commissioning ceremonies happen on the day of graduation and grades are not posted at that time. **Strategic Planning:** It is important that you read the document and offer input. Comments from the special session will be forwarded to the committee and to the Provost. **Curriculum decisions:** Faculty should have significant input in all curriculum decisions which affect a unit This has come under attack in some departments. Chairs and Directors must not be making arbitrary decisions about curriculum without discussion, reflection, and input by the faculty. **Professor Emeritus status:** The process for granting emeritus status has been formalized. Faculty must have served ten years, be tenured at the Associate Professor level and above. The recommendation begins at the departmental level and is final when approved by the IHL. **Dates of Interest:** April 22, 2:30: dedication of the Aubrey Keith Lucas Administration Building; April 23: deadline for Strategic Planning input; May 7: Legislative forum from 10-12 in the Union Hall of Honors.

4.2 President Elect's Report Art Kaul No report

4.3 Secretary's Report Sherry Laughlin No report

4.4 Secretary Elect's Report Shellie Nielsen In the absence of the Secretary Elect, the Secretary read the proxies and distributed the attendance sheet.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Transportation Committee Bill Scarborough

The University Police Department was audited for July-December 1998, and it was found that they are only collecting 50% of the tickets written, so July 1st these tickets will be collected by the Business Office. The Transportation Committee is becoming frustrated that they are not able to get their recommendations approved. We have an opportunity to purchase 180 parking meters from the city of Hattiesburg; there is no decision as to where these meters will be placed. The final report of the parking consultant will be made next month. The Hub/Library plaza has been scaled down and will be rebid in May. Some ideas have been presented for pedestrian and bicycle pathways. Brick pillars will be constructed to define the entrances to the campus.

5.2 Academic and Governance Karen Thrash No report

5.3 Administration and Faculty Evaluations Bill Powell

The evaluation process is finished. Reports are due next week to chairs, deans, and the Provost.

5.4 Athletic Liaison Trellis Green

Our athletic department is in the red and is working on a resolution to the problem. A deficit of \$750,000 was reported at the IHL meeting.

5.5 Awards Linda Dysart Goff The committee has completed its work.

5.6 Benefits and Work Environment Mike Forster

The committee presented its resolutions on increasing the faculty staff tuition benefit to full time and recommending the portability of this benefit to other IHL institutions. Discussion involved the cost of the benefit. Current cost is \$305,000; an increase of \$170,000 would be needed to implement the full time benefit. Both resolutions passed.

Mike Forster met with Sid Gonsoulin about Payne Center benefits. The Payne Center is completely self-supporting and there is reluctance to open the door for free access for faculty and staff. He will be invited to speak to the Senate about Payne Center benefits that are available.

5.7 Constitution and Bylaws Sherry Laughlin No report

5.8 Elections Mary Dayne Gregg

There are runoff elections in every college except Business Administration, where Bob Smith was elected on the first ballot. The deadline is April 26th for the runoff election.

5.9 Environmnet Dick Conville No report

5.10 Faculty Development Norma Cuellar

The committee will be looking at the strategic plan to see what it says about faculty development.

5.11 Technology Dan Surry No report.

5.12 University Club Kim Herzinger No report

6.0 Old Business

7.0 New Business

8.0 Announcements

9.0 Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Sherry Laughlin, Faculty Senate Secretary