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Faculty Senate Minutes - February 16, 2001

USM Faculty Senate

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Faculty Senate Minutes

February 16, 2001


Visitors: Mary Sumrall, Staff Council; MJ McMahon, Associate Provost.

1. Call to Order. President Laughlin called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.
2. Approval of Agenda. The agenda was approved as distributed.
3. Minutes Approval. Minutes of the January meeting were approved as distributed.

4.0 Executive Committee Reports

4.1 President’s Report. Pres. Laughlin delivered the following report:

IHL:

The state’s budget situation continues to dominate discussions at the IHL Board. Last week we received our final numbers for this round of budget reductions. The Governor chose to protect from any cuts state scholarship funds and IHL chose to protect $17.5 million in Ayers funds already given to Jackson State, Mississippi Valley, Alcorn, and Delta State. The amount of the 5% cut that would have come from this money was apportioned to the other 4 schools. Our final cut was 6.58%, or about $220,000 more than we originally anticipated.
At the board meeting yesterday, each president was asked to comment on that institution’s plans for this year’s reductions. Because of the lateness of the year, all universities are finding funds for the cuts wherever they can: freezing positions, lapsed salaries, cutting operating funds, and restricting purchases. At the conclusion of the presidents’ remarks, Bill Crawford, Chair of the Planning, Budget, and Financial Affairs Committee, indicated that it was clear that a financial emergency resolution would not be needed this year, but that we are uncertain about next year. If any president had asked for this declaration, I believe it would have been brought up for a vote.

At that point in the meeting, Board member Roy Klumb provided the only excitement of the day by giving a very impassioned speech, saying that we cannot afford the number of universities that the state is trying to support, that we have too many overlapping programs, that we are not getting enough productivity from faculty, that there is a lot of belt-tightening we can do in our universities, that there is no leadership at the board level, and that he is tired of the moaning and groaning he is hearing about these budget cuts. He ended with a lengthy comparison of the economics of higher education and the lumber industry.

This led to a number of comments from other board members, many of whom disagreed with Mr. Klumb and made remarks supportive of the presidents and their efforts to deal with this situation. There were some additional statements that you need to be aware of: Amy Whitten said that the board needed to consider a set of cut-back principles that will ensure we do not get to live bodies. Stacy Davidson expressed concern about losing both young and experienced faculty. Ricki Garrett added that the Board needs to look at faculty workloads. And Bill Crawford said that highly efficient institutions are finding it more difficult to cut than those that are not highly efficient.

Commissioner Layzell said that although this year has been stressful, the real concern is for years 02 through 04; however, he did say there is a ray of hope in that the legislature is working hard to mitigate cuts for the next fiscal year. Layzell also said that one good thing coming out of this situation is an alliance between K-12, community colleges, and IHL in working toward long term solutions for education funding.

In other IHL action, the name of the Institute for Marine Science was changed to the College of Marine Science, and there was a notice of intent from USM to establish a BS in Athletic Training and a Doctorate in Audiology degree.

**President’s Cabinet:**

In Cabinet meetings there was some discussion of our capital improvements
requests for the next fiscal year: We are asking for funding for part of the Center for International and Continuing Education building, the 3-D Arts Building, the Health and Human Sciences building, and furnishings for the two new buildings at Gulf Park. We have received $10 million for the Student Life Center and we will self-fund the rest. This project is in design development and we should have something to look at in April. The student services complex that is planned for the Commons building is in the conceptual design phase.

Parking issues were discussed in the Cabinet. We have advertised for three new temporary positions for ticket writers; the hope is to make these positions full time and permanent in July. Also in July, the Transportation Department will become a self-supporting auxiliary unit, meaning that they will be sustained by the funds they generate from parking tickets. We are going to hangtags in the fall rather than decals and students will receive those before they get to campus.

In an OTR presentation, John McGowan said that the OTR contribution to the budget cuts included $600,000 from a PeopleSoft setaside fund. This was possible because the PeopleSoft implementation is coming in under budget. During his presentation, he also mentioned several OTR initiatives, including putting all core courses online. Toby Graham has a more detailed OTR report that he will present later in the meeting.

Jim Borsig reported that February 21st is the deadline for floor action on appropriation bills, and that the legislature is working on the Medicaid and corrections built-ins in order to try to give us some budget relief in the out-years. In the past two cabinet meetings, Jim has said that there have been emails and rhetoric from this campus to our local legislators that have not been helpful. Our local delegation is supportive of maintaining and increasing funding for higher education and we will be depending upon them to help broker a solution to the problem.

Deans’ Council:

Teaching evaluations were discussed at the February 7th Deans’ Council meeting. The results from the evaluations done in the fall are not being made available in a timely manner. There are some process problems and there are some problems with the large number of separate forms being used. The Senate has been asked to look at this issue with the hope that we can streamline the process and standardize some of the forms. Susan Hubble and I will be discussing how to go about addressing this problem. If you are interested, or know someone who is interested in working on the teaching evaluations forms and process, please let me or Susan know.
Bucky Wesley, from the Enrollment Management Task Force, presented a proposal to create an Academic Improvement Pilot Program for students on academic probation or on academic probation continued. The goal of this program would be to increase the freshman to sophomore retention rate and to increase the six-year graduation rate. For students on probation, a series of voluntary workshops would be offered, and for students on probation continued, a Learning Skills course would be required. There were many questions from the deans, including whether this program duplicates services already offered, such as University 101, and there were many questions about the cost of such a program and whether we should be putting our resources here. Bucky Wesley was asked to get more information, particularly on costs, and bring it back to a future Deans Council meeting.

Mardi Gras Capitol Event:

The University Faculty Senates Association will be having a February 27th event at the state capitol and I’m going to let Art Kaul discuss that in his report. Many of the SGA members are going to be at a conference on that date and there was some concern that we would not have good attendance from students, so they are planning a separate event next Thursday.

Questions/comments related to the president’s report:

D. Duhon: There is no chance, that IHL will consider an emergency resolution this fiscal year, is that correct? Pres. Laughlin: It doesn't look like it will happen this year.

K. Austin: News reports indicate that K-12 education budgets throughout the south are under pressure, and proposals are being floated to constitutionally exempt these programs from cuts. If successful, such measures would spell even deeper cuts to university budgets.

W. Scarborough: The course evaluation forms have been the same for years; why is there a problem processing them this year? Pres. Laughlin: It is my understanding that there have been several problems, including moving this responsibility to the Office for Planning, Evaluation and Institutional Effectiveness, with no additional resources to do the job. Also there have been some difficulties with the software that processes these evaluations and new code is being written for each form.

4.2 President-Elect’s Report. Susan Hubble was not present.

4.3 Secretary’s Report. No report.
4.4 Secretary-Elect’s Report. D. Alford read the proxies received. [See "Members Represented by Proxy," above.]

5.0 Committee Reports.

5.1 Academic and Governance. M. Lux reported that the committee has data on the number of adjuncts used by USM, and has confirmed that benefits are paid to adjuncts teaching more than six hours per semester.

5.2 Administration and Faculty Evaluations. K. Davis reported continued opposition of assistant deans to the current evaluation form. A distinct form for assistant deans will be considered by the committee.

D. Duhon: Can we anticipate a problem with processing the evaluations? K. Davis: No. J.T. Johnson will continue to process the evaluations, as in the past.

D. Beckett: I have several comments. First, some Science & Technology faculty were confused by the "sample" sent in advance of the evaluation itself, and recommend that the committee not send these out in the future. Also, most faculty would prefer that forms be distributed in a meeting, rather than sent to individual faculty members. Finally, many faculty feel uncomfortable evaluating assistant deans, since they are unfamiliar with specific work expectations. K. Davis: The reason for the sample mailing was to ensure that faculty had an opportunity to review the form before having to fill it out. The mailing of the actual evaluations to individual faculty was a mistake, however, and will not occur in the future.

5.3 Archives. No report.

5.4 Athletic Liaison. T. Green reported scheduling a meeting with the athletic director about holding parking spaces for the duration of games.

J. Olmi reminded the Senate that the request is that at some reasonable point during a game (e.g., at halftime) parking holds be released so that others may park.

D. Duhon emphasized caution that the Senate not appear inconsistent, since it has emphasized so strongly the enforcement of parking regulations.

J. Olmi expressed concern that athletics appears to be a "sacred cow" in budget crisis talks. W. Scarborough added that a basketball coach had received a $20,000 raise, while faculty and academic staff salaries remain frozen. T. Green noted that USM coaches are radically underpaid.

5.5 Awards. S. Graham-Kresge reported that award recipient selection was underway, and should be completed by next week.
5.6 Faculty Welfare. J. Rachal reported that the committee voted to withdraw the resolution calling for the establishment of a benefits position in Human Resources.

D. Beckett suggested that now may be a good time to press for issues other than salary –

for example, transportability of the tuition reduction benefit. A. Kaul commented that the tuition benefit transportability proposal went through other faculty senates and the University Faculty Senates Association (UFSA), and was recommended to IHL. Commissioner Layzell said, however, that no money is available to fund the measure. Several senators expressed the opinion that transportability is unlikely to cost more than the present policy, and Kaul indicated that he will bring the issue back before USFA.

J. Rachal suggested that a second issue to push now might be reduction of semester length.

5.7 Constitution and Bylaws. No report.

5.8 Elections. S. Laughlin stood in for S. Hubble to report that lists of faculty eligible for election to the Senate are now being secured from deans. The first ballot is expected out after spring break.

5.9 Environment. No report.

5.10 Faculty Development. No report.

5.11 Government Relations. J. Palmer reported the following:

The house and senate bills allowing use of tobacco settlement money to help fund the state employees health plan died in committee.

Letters inviting select legislators to a luncheon on February 27 were mailed; to date only one has responded.

A fact sheet has been prepared for distribution at the Capitol on February 27.

5.12 Technology. T. Graham distributed a written report, which follows:

On February 14, the chair of the Technology Committee met with OTR Operations Officer Candy Santell and OTR Business Officer Karen Q. Reidenbach to discuss issues related to OTR's initiatives and its budget.

Questions and answers are provided below:
1. What are OTR’s major initiatives, and (in general terms) what is the current disposition of each?

2. NETWORKING: Thirty-four buildings have wireless access to network. This was phase one completed in December. In phase two, 51 more are to be added. This will include all the academic buildings, dorms, and most other campus buildings. Phase two may be slowed by budget reductions. PEOPLESOF RT IMPLEMENTATION: Modules for HR/Payroll, Advancement, and Course Catalog are complete. Financial Aid and Student Records (current students) are scheduled for February 20. Web Registration for fall will begin April 9 (summer registration will be through STARS). Student Financial Services is scheduled for June; University Financial for July (includes General Ledger, Accounts Payable, and Purchasing); Academic Advising for December; and Non-Current Student Records for December. Subsequent enhancements will be considered after completion of the core functionality (those stated above) to include additional Web functionality. These enhancements may include interfaces for students to view their schedules and financial information and interfaces for faculty and staff to view payroll information. DEVELOPMENT CENTER: OTR is planning a faculty/staff/student development center to facilitate instruction on new instructional technologies and other hardware and software. DISTANCE LEARNING: Software and training for Web CT.

3. What are OTR’s plans for new instructional technology for classrooms and technology that will reach faculty desktops?

4. Plans include cost sharing with colleges on high-tech classrooms and other collaborative projects identified through colleges’ respective representatives. Examples of projects are high-tech classrooms for Business and Liberal Arts, also laptop check out at Cook Library.

5. What are OTR’s plans for maintaining existing instructional technology such as PCs, overhead projectors, and the like?

6. OTR recently began upgrades on media equipment issued through Equipment Services in the McCain Library building.

7. How will budget cuts affect OTR initiatives?
Depending on the level of cuts, phase two of the network initiative may be scaled back; wireless for the remaining 51 buildings will be slower. Priority will be placed on academic buildings and dorms, though technical considerations may occasionally result in some others being wired first.

5. Where will OTR’s share of the budget cuts come from?

This year, OTR will return $170,685 from E & G. It will also surrender a one-time
amount of $600,000 from a Technology Fund earmarked for PeopleSoft. The University created this PeopleSoft fund from the one-time "library and technology" fee paid by students in 00/01 combined with a $500,000 pay out from the OTR E & G budget. Before cuts, the PeopleSoft fund held $1,850,000 to be used for all aspects of the implementation, such as consulting and required hardware (server capacity) over the implementation lifecycle.

In preparation of next year’s budget cuts, OTR is looking at where a 10% cut will come from. This would be $530,000. However, if the announced reduction is higher (or lower) OTR will cut accordingly from its E & G budget. The cut will not affect income from the student technology fee. This is the regular technology fee, as opposed to the 00/01 one-time supplement. Income from the regular technology fee was $735,000 in 00/01, but is always subject to change, depending on enrollment levels.

6. What is OTR’s total budget and what are the sources for this money?
7. Prior to recent budget cuts, OTR had $5.3 million from E & G. It also receives the student technology fee, which was $735,000 in 00/01. The student technology fee is outside of the operating budget, and it is used to support and upgrade computer labs, purchase classroom equipment and other projects like those mentioned in #2 above.

8. How much is PeopleSoft implementation costing the University?
Candy Santell and Karen Reidenbach are working on an answer to this question.

Candy and Karen also commented on a rumor that OTR has expended large sums for "power lunches." They related that perhaps the source of that rumor is that PeopleSoft consultants are given a per diem that includes meals. These individuals dine on campus and are limited to $10 tickets for the Commons to cover breakfast and lunch.

[end of written report]

D. Dunn: What is the latest on the idea of contracting out maintenance of the USM website to a commercial provider? T. Graham: Enough concerns were expressed that the Web Presence Council has backed off from the commercialized option. It is now looking at other possibilities.

5.13 Transportation. W. Scarborough reported that increased pressure has led to renewed administrative attention to the parking issue, and additional enforcement efforts. Three more ticket writers have been authorized (though it is not clear when they will be hired), three more boots have been purchased, and some additional towing has taken place. Vice-President Gilbert has stated that we have to change the current "culture of non-compliance." A major challenge lies in collecting fines
from people without decals, the number of which has been rising; this issue should, however, be addressed by the system to be introduced in the fall.

Scarborough further reported that the university transportation committee has prepared a proposal to go forward to IHL. Highlights of the proposal include: No increase in fees for faculty and staff. The current dorm zones will be combined into a single zone. Part of the Bond parking lot will become zone 4. University vehicles will be restricted from parking in handicapped and other restricted parking areas. Enforcement hours will extend to 5 p.m.

A. Kaul: How much are we paying for ticket writers? W. Scarborough: With benefits, about $17-18,000 per year each.

K. Davis: Do the university police write tickets? W. Scarborough: Not for parking zone violations.

5.14 AAUPLiaison. M. Dearmey reported that he is planning an AAUP meeting in the near future to consider formation of a local chapter. Eligible for membership are all faculty and graduate students. Officers of a chapter must be tenured faculty. Statistics suggest that those universities and colleges with AAUP chapters have more rapidly rising faculty salaries. An announcement regarding the meeting will be out soon.

J. Rachal: What are AAUP membership dues? M. Dearmey: About $120 annually for tenured faculty. A chapter, which requires a minimum of seven members, may have some discretion on use of a portion of membership dues collected.

5.15 Faculty Handbook Task Force. D. Goff reported that meetings with Associate Provost M.J. McMahon and Provost A. Griffin have resulted in the identification of issues for further development and the formation of a standing committee for reviewing and revising the handbook. These are very positive steps.

5.16 University Faculty Senates Association (UFSA). A. Kaul reported that the organization met yesterday. There are three issues to put before the Senate:

First, the Mississippi Association of Educators (MAE) has expressed strong interest in forming a higher education division. The UFSA leadership believes that this opportunity should be explored. Most likely, chapters would be formed on each campus. Dues are relatively high at $300, but it is possible that dues would be reduced in the first year. In return, we would gain an effective lobbying force, and support from the National Education Association (NEA), of which MAE is a member. If there is sufficient interest from faculty, we could have something up and running by fall.
J. Rachal: Would MAE/NEA compete with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP)? A. Kaul: MAE is in a stronger position in Mississippi, where AAUP has virtually no presence. MAE has an established power base.

A. Scarborough: Can you clarify the relationship between NEA and MAE? A. Kaul: MAE is a member of NEA.

J. Palmer: I am a member of NEA. The organization has a unified dues system, whereby a member must be an affiliate of the state association (in this case MAE) as well as NEA. The advantage of membership in NEA is being able to participate in setting the legislative platform. If we had higher education representation in the organization, our issues would be included in the platform. Now you see few higher education issues being raised because of the low membership.

D. Goff: I’d be interested in knowing more about their legislative track record. As for the possibility of competition with AAUP, I don’t see an "either/or" situation necessarily.

D. Duhon: Faculty need more information, so they can decide which, if any, affiliations they want to have. A. Kaul: I can arrange for an informational meeting with MAE.

M. Dearmey: The advantage of MAE is the lobbying power. AAUP, on the other hand, focuses exclusively on higher education and on areas of vital concern such as academic freedom, faculty governance, and tenure. It can censure a university that violates principles related to these areas, and it can provide legal help to faculty on various issues. Mississippi faculty membership in AAUP has been growing over the last few years, and now may be a ripe time for the formation of AAUP chapters.

Pres. Laughlin: Let’s get meetings with organizational representatives set up if we can – not as Senate meetings, but open meetings to share information with all faculty.

A. Kaul: The second issue is the legislative luncheon and rally set for February 27. Each faculty senate will have two representatives attend a noon lunch briefing with key legislators, including the local delegations and chairs of relevant committees. At 2 p.m we will hold a rally and press conference. Each senate will have some sort of position statement prepared. At yesterday’s UFSA meeting there was consensus that tapping into the rainy day fund on behalf of higher education is a good idea.
S. Laughlin: At 8:30 a.m. USM will hand out J. Palmer’s "fact sheet" in the capitol building. Those attending should meet in rotunda, dressed in black and gold.

A. Kaul: UFSA representatives will carry umbrellas (the intended message: "it’s raining, and time to do something"). The Ole Miss faculty senate endorsed the rally and encourages faculty to attend.

J. Olmi: I don’t want for us to appear rude, but I’m unhappy and don’t want to be too nice in how we conduct the rally. I want to wave banners and call for strong actions. I’m concerned that we’re being much too well behaved. Let’s raise some hell.

T. Green: I don’t know if we can afford to act tough under the circumstances. We are not likely to change anything; the rally is more a symbolic action.

D. Alford: I disagree with that point. This is our first public action, indicating we’ve moved a long way. We’re becoming proactive.

K. Austin: But we risk alienating the public if we are too strident.

J. Olmi: I don’t disagree with the need to be civil, but all I’m hearing from the governor and legislators is empty rhetoric.

A. Kaul: Getting 100 people out there will send a shock wave through the capitol. It will be another shock if it gets out that we’re thinking of organizing.

D. Alford: Faculty on the coast have gotten tremendous media attention. It is hard to know what the impact will be, but I think we’re moving in the right direction.

M. Lux: I’m emotionally in tune with J. Olmi, but I think the main thing is getting a lot of people out; it will make a powerful statement.

A. Kaul: Third is the issue of the state flag. The Mississippi State senate has endorsed the new flag, as has the senate at Mississippi Valley. UFSA did not take a position, because it wanted to know the opinion of the individual senates.

W. Scarborough: The flag is a very emotional and divisive issue, ultimately a political issue. I don’t think we can win by getting into it.

T. Green: I don’t think it is a faculty senate issue at all.
D. Dunn: The vote in Starkville had nearly as many abstentions or absent senators as those voting.

K. Austin: I am personally in favor of changing the flag, but agree that it’s not a senate issue.

D. Duohon: I did an informal poll of the College of Business faculty, and there is a strong feeling that the flag is not a senate issue.

J. Rachal: I also personally favor a flag change, but don’t think it’s a senate issue. In ’64 perhaps we would have needed to take a moral stand on such an issue; in the current context it feels like "me-tooism" and collective self-congratulation. It is not appropriate for us to take a stand.

M. Henry: I believe we have an opportunity to take leadership on a critical issue that affects the image of the state. Others have taken stands – coaches, university presidents; the faculty senate may do so as well.

D. Alford: The flag is just as much a moral issue now as at any time. My own professional ethics require multi-culturalism, and the current flag is a detriment to inclusivity.

K. Austin: Yet there are many other moral issues that we don’t make it our business to take positions on.

E. Harrison: The flag is flying over every public building, a condition that makes it different than other moral issues.

W. Scarborough: Racial reconciliation will not be promoted by a new flag, certainly not if 73% of whites oppose a flag change. The push for a new flag is part of a concerted effort to attack the confederate heritage which has been underway for 10-15 years now. This attack radically distorts history and is divisive in the extreme.

D. Alford: Many others see it differently, however; for them the flag is symbol of oppression.

A. Jaffe: I think it is appropriate for the senate to take a position, but we need to vote to determine if we will or not.

D. Dunn: I would like to have a better sense of the faculty on what is obviously a controversial issue before voting to take a position one way or the other. As
senators I don’t believe we can represent the faculty in our areas on this without polling them first.

D. Kolzow: If we stand alone in retaining the confederate flag, when other states have made changes, our image will suffer.

K. Davis: Especially given the stigma that Mississippi already suffers.

Pres. Laughlin: We have no action on the floor at this time.

D. Alford moved that the faculty senate vote on taking a position on the flag. A. Jaffe seconded the motion.

Discussion on the motion:

W. Scarborough: I request a secret ballot.

Pres. Laughlin: The request is noted. We need to hear any discussion on the motion before balloting, however.

R. Smith: I disagree with D. Dunn’s earlier point about representing the faculty. While it is certainly valid to consult with faculty, senators are not under obligation to do so. If we decide to take a position, it is the Faculty Senate, and not the entire faculty, deciding.

D. Douglas: I agree that consultation with faculty is not necessary.

M. Henry: I believe we have a great opportunity to make a statement here, and it will send a negative message if we do not make an explicit statement.

M. Dearmey: I think we should take a stand, even if we have colleagues who may disagree. The flag is important to the future of the state. I don’t believe the confederate heritage is at issue. The problem is that for many people the current flag is equivalent to the nazi swastika.

Pres. Laughlin called a recess to prepare for a secret ballot. 4:01 p.m. The meeting was called back to order at 4:06 p.m. Ballots were distributed and collected by J. Palmer. J. Palmer opened each ballot, M. Forster called out each vote, and D. Alford tallied the votes. Vote on the motion: 22 yes; 15 no; 1 abstention. Motion passed.

A. Kaul moved that the vote on the flag position take place at the March meeting of the Faculty Senate. D. Dunn seconded the motion.
Discussion on the motion:

J. Olmi: An advantage of waiting until next month is that we don’t divert attention from the rally. A. Kaul: Waiting also gives a chance to consult with our constituents. Moreover, it is closer to the statewide vote on the flag.

Motion passed with two "no" votes.

6.0 Old Business. There was no old business.

7.0 New Business.

7.1 Budget committee proposal. M. Dearmey distributed the following resolution:

RESOLVED,

Whereas the faculty of the University of Southern Mississippi have the responsibility for education of all students at the University, and are responsible for the advance of knowledge through inquiry and research, and

Whereas the faculty of the University of Southern Mississippi have the greatest longevity as participants in and creators of the quality of this institution, and

Whereas, all of us must do what is demanded by fairness, dialogue and shared governance,

We, the Faculty Senate, representatives of all the faculty, do hereby approve by vote the creation of a "Faculty Budget Committee," which will participate in all phases of the total budget planning at the University of Southern Mississippi, and have access to all information relevant to budget planning, including written material, memoranda, and charts, and have access to budget meetings and other meetings relevant to budgetary considerations, such as Dean’s Council Meeting.

[end of resolution]

M. Dearmey spoke to the rationale of the resolution: Many faculty remain unhappy with current budget procedures. While the process has opened up somewhat, faculty participation is still inadequate. As we face additional budget cuts, we need stronger participation. While details of implementation would need to be worked out, the Senate should adopt this resolution immediately.

T. Green moved to suspend the rules so that the resolution could be voted on
M. Forster seconded the motion. The motion passed.

M. Dearmey moved to adopt the resolution. J. Lytle seconded the motion.

Discussion on the motion:

J. Rachal: Do you foresee the whole budget committee participating in deliberations? M. Dearmey: Yes, with a focus on the impact of decisions on academic issues.

Pres. Laughlin: We should note that we have had input regarding budget cuts.

M. Dearmey: The Senate president does represent the faculty, but the president must inevitably feel pressure is to mediate between administration and faculty. Having a committee would spread the responsibility more widely.

J. Olmi: Would membership on the budget committee require special expertise? M. Dearmey: I don’t believe members would need to master all budget details, as much as they would need to ensure a faculty perspective in budget discussions.

J. Olmi: Would the committee then essentially exercise an oversight function? M. Dearmey: I see the function more broadly, beginning with the impact that the very fact of committee participation would have on the dynamics of discussion.

W. Scarborough: I support the intent of the resolution, but the committee idea seems impractical and unwieldy to me.

S. Oshrin: Is there a timing issue here? Budget hearings take place when faculty generally are not available. M. Dearmey: The central issue is knowing the major issues in advance.

Pres. Laughlin: Dr. Henry, can you speak to the timing of the budget process? M. Henry: It varies. The kind of things talked about here, principles and guidelines, can be addressed earlier, and can be ready in advance of actual numbers being introduced.

M. Dearmey: We can work out details, such as committee size and composition, later. The important thing is to establish the committee now.

D. Kolzow: If we approve the resolution, are we ensured that we can implement it? Pres. Laughlin: No, the next step would be for the Senate officers to approach President Fleming and discuss it with him.
D. Goff: As written, the resolution does not say that the committee is a committee of the Senate, or that the committee is accountable to the Senate.

Pres. Laughlin called for a vote on the motion. The motion **passed** unanimously.

J. Rachal requested that the constitutional provision allowing secret ballots be reviewed. Pres. Laughlin directed the constitution and bylaws committee to review the provision and bring the matter before the Senate for discussion.

**6.2 Talking points.** M. Forster recommended adoption of three basic "talking points" to be used by senators in discussions with the media: that there should be a "higher education summit" created and charged with creating a long-range plan for higher education in Mississippi; that the USM budget should be restored to the FY 1999-2000 level of funding; and that USM should receive its fair share of the total IHL budget based on credit hour production. J. Palmer indicated that the same points had been incorporated into the fact sheet to be distributed at the Capitol on the 27th. No action was called for.

**8.0 Announcements.** There were no announcements.

**9.0 Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Michael Forster, Faculty Senate Secretary