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Faculty Senate Minutes - April 7, 2006

USM Faculty Senate

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Minutes

The University of Southern Mississippi

Faculty Senate Meeting on April 7, 2006

Cook Library Room 123 at 2:00 p.m.

No Forum Speaker scheduled.

- 1.0 The meeting was called to order at 2:05pm
- 2.0 Approval of minutes, March 17, 2006. Approved
- 3.0 Approval of Agenda- Old Business was moved from 7.0 to 5.0, seconded and approved. Agenda was modified under Old Business, from 7.1, Motion on Searches, to Discussion of Searches (see new 5.1).

4.0 Officer's Reports

4.1 President

- 4.1.1 **Meeting with Dr. Meredith-** Bill Powell, Myron Henry and Patsy Anderson met with Dr. Meredith in Jackson this morning.

Coast. They reported that a decision about where to build/rebuild USM on the Coast was close to being decided by the IHL Board. Dr. Meredith also told them that the IHL was committed to rebuilding the USM Coast campus, and that USM will remain the primary provider on the Coast. Dr. Meredith also expressed a desire for evaluations to be tempered with kindness due to faculty and staff losses. Bill Powell reported that a survey of Gulf Coast faculty was placed on the Senate website. Financial losses, losses of books, attitudes towards USM are reported in the Survey report.

2006 Raises. The Legislature approved a raise of 3.75% (not 5%), and also approved another 12 million dollars for USM (which will probably not be used to supplement the raises). One Senator asked if the upcoming raise is going to be across the board or merit only. Bill Powell said it appears it will be based on merit, which is disappointing because faculty progress at USM was diverted by demands and lost productivity from Katrina, NCATE and SACS. One Senator stated that the raise was originally meant to be across the board, but Ole Miss and State preferred it be based on merit. Another Senator stated that determining merit under the circumstances USM has faced last year will be difficult, and that an across the board raise would be fairer for USM faculty, especially those whose scholarship goals were interrupted due to Katrina, SACS, and NCATE demands. Senate discussion centered on affirming a need for an across the board raise for all faculty, given the present state of the University.

Presidential Search. The timetable for the search begins on November 1, 2006. Bill Powell outlined the process used by the IHL Board when selecting the MSU president. Bill Powell stated that Dr. Meredith said that his personal integrity was on the line for having a straight search at MSU, and he felt that a good search had occurred in the recently concluded MSU president search. One Senator asked if Meredith was pleased with the MSU process overall. Bill Powell replied yes, that was his impression. The 3 USM faculty senators were able to discuss their concerns about future searches with Dr. Meredith, including the idea to run the finalists chosen back through the screening committee before the IHL Board makes a determination. One Senator asked if Dr. Meredith understands why USM constituents, in particular, are so concerned about secrecy in the process? Bill Powell stated, yes, his impression was that he did. The process used in the MSU search assured enough transparency to solve the problem of back room deals being struck. One Senator said that the USM search will be an important opportunity to start a culture of working optimistically with the IHL Board to find the best presidential candidates for USM. Patsy Anderson said that Dr. Meredith stated that he understood that USM needed someone who could be a healer for the USM community.

SACS Issues. Senators Powell, Henry, and Anderson gave Dr. Meredith the summary shared with SACS visitors about shared governance, position search inequities, and more faculty raises that did not follow handbook procedures. Dr. Meredith said he would look into these. Myron Henry stated that this was a positive sign that the Senate representatives were able to communicate our continuing concerns with Dr. Meredith. Bill Powell said that he will follow-up on the letter issues with Dr. Meredith.

USM as a Comprehensive University The senators spoke with Dr. Meredith about whether there had been a shift in the Board's perspective of USM as a major research university. Dr. Meredith said he had not heard this and was surprised that such a view could be considered. He said that he did not think that was the perception by the present IHL Board.

4.1.2 **SACS-** The SACS recommendations were reported by Jeff Evans as all fairly fixable, and that more work will have to be done to meet SACS requirements in areas which did not meet the criteria. Bill Powell stated that the SACS visitors were receptive to the Senate document given to them in a meeting alone with Faculty Senate Executive Committee members. Discussion involved whether USM had met the compliant versus non-compliant thresholds in the areas indicated. Most discussion centered around the existence of shared governance and the lack of a shared governance document. Some senators reported that all other meetings with SACS were monitored by administrators and faculty were very tense about how freely they should answer questions posed by SACS visitors. One senator thanked the Executive Committee members for speaking frankly and plainly to the SACS visitors on behalf of the faculty.

NCATE visits are over now, and some reports (SPA) are due next week.

4.1.3 Gulf Coast Status

4.1.3.1 Senators are referred to the power point presentation on the recent survey that is posted on the Faculty Senate Website.

4.1.3.2 One senator reported that an all day meeting was called for the Coast Faculty and Staff with a consultant on very short notice about space and campus usage issues, and where the campus should be placed. The consultant cautioned the participants that he had no power over where the coast was to be located.

4.1.4 **Meetings with President Thames, Provost Grimes, Cabinet-** Three cabinet meetings were cancelled. Bill Powell reports no feedback yet on the Senate query about recent raises. He also reported that he and Myron Henry had met with Provost Grimes on some issues. The Executive Committee met with Dr. Thames this week and asked about the Library Science positions, which were necessary for accreditation. He stated that he was unaware of that situation and would look into it. Dr. Thames stated that the two positions must be reinstated if they are needed to remain accredited.

4.1.5 Syllabus Review Committee- Discussion on this matter was postponed to a later meeting.

4.1.6 **Evaluations of Teaching-** Students can fill the online evaluations beginning in April.

4.1.7 **Shared Governance Document-** See report above 4.1.2 SACS, and SACS issues in 4.1.1. The USM Faculty Senate Executive Committee Statement for the SACS ON-Site Review Team was distributed.

4.1.8 **Other –** Our next meeting will be on May 5th on the Coast at 3:00pm in the Garden Park Hospital Atrium.

4.2 President-Elect

4.2.1 **Outsourcing of physical plant-** Myron Henry reported that 3 firms were coming to USM next week to present their proposals for the committee. Myron Henry analyzed the reports re: USM personnel and benefits and found that in all but 1 case, USM personnel will have a reduction in benefits. One Senator stated that there was no rank and file personnel on the Outsourcing committee, all were administrators and officers.

4.2.1.1 **Print Shop.** Another senator commented that the Print Shop is also reporting that they will be outsourced. The Faculty Senate

representative can give voice to staff issues. A Proposal to end the move to outsource the Print Shop was discussed.

The Print shop has special technical skills and provides a unique service to USM. Bill Powell stated that he would check into the outsourcing information. The Print Shop will be included in Old Business for the next meeting. One senator stated that not all outsourcing is bad for the University, and that all of the pros and cons of the situation needs to be examined carefully. However, it does not make sense to outsource a University's principal elements.

4.3. Secretary–No report

4.4. Secretary-Elect- No report

5.0 Old Business

5.1 **Discussion about Searches-** A senator reported that all the open Psychology positions are gone, and another senator reported that the Chair of the Psychology Department was reprimanded by Dr. Thames and Dr. Grimes for discussing the issue of losing faculty positions. This is at the same time that CISE has been given 14 new positions. The administration is not approving ANY requests by Psychology to fill vacant positions, and has stated various reasons for not doing so. The reasons given by administration to the APA in a letter are different (Katrina) than reasons given to the department and community and the press (department is not productive). The American Psychological Association, accreditor for the Department, will be notified of the loss of positions. Bill Powell said that information was also given to Dr. Meredith. **It was moved and seconded that a statement should be made by the Senate concerning the situation in Psychology, specifically issues of mismanagement, favoritism, and threats to accreditation should be brought to the IHL.** The motion carried with 33 ayes, 0 nays and 2 abstentions. Bill Powell will see that the statement is created.

5.2 Motion on No Confidence

5.2.1 It was decided that No Confidence would be further discussed in the May meeting.

5.2.2 A draft for No Confidence was distributed to the Senate. Several senators objected to any references of a personal nature (ad hominem material) in the motion. On the issue of workloads, Dr. Thames and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee agreed that the workload statement in the Faculty Handbook had served well, and saw no need to change it. Dr. Thames said that implementation of the policy was not occurring consistently. One senator said that the Senate needed to consider one reason there was little money and resources were diminished in

Hattiesburg was because of Katrina. The senator stated that no one had lost their job due to Katrina, and that has caused hardship in other areas. Another senator asked to consider a more positive approach to the problems associated with Dr. Thames; that of reaffirming the upcoming presidential search, and support the beginning of that process. Several senators applauded that approach. However, other senators agreed that a strong message needs to be sent to the IHL commissioner, one that expresses the Faculty's concern about protecting what is left of USM and to prevent more damage to academic units which will take years to rebuild, such as the History and Psychology Departments. Discussion ensued with more senators agreeing that the long term impact on the University for recent decisions by administration will take decades to fix. Senators were distressed at the decisions being made by Dr. Thames that will impact the next president and delay the recovery of the University, for instance; outsourcing, faculty positions, changing TA and GA structure. A senator expressed that it is hard to allow Dr. Thames to finish his term in a good light, as IHL hoped, because he continues to do what caused him to be terminated in the first place. Also stated: The Senate needs to ask strongly for more IHL oversight of USM. Another senator stated that the minutes this year have reported problem after problem, and the pattern of problematic, fundamental changes to USM have to stop. Amy Young, Myron Henry, Bill Scarborough and Bill Powell will work on a statement for the May meeting, asking IHL for more oversight, for protection, and to limit damage before the next president arrives.

6.0 Committee Reports

6.1 Academic and Governance: Bill Scarborough, chair

6.1.1 This committee met in regards to the teaching load policy proposal that was circulated by Joan Exline. The committee presented a report analyzing the proposal, and presented it to the Faculty Senate. After discussion of the teaching loads and the reporting methods proposed, a Senator made a motion to accept the committee's report, which will be examined and discussed in the May meeting. Faculty senators agreed that the present Faculty Handbook policy, which states that 4 courses are the required load, with exceptions made by the department for community service, research, student supervision, committee work, etc. is satisfactory. One senator compared this administration's expectation of teaching loads of USM History faculty in comparison to those at Ole Miss (2 + 2) and Miss State (2+2), and asked, "Why is a higher teaching load at USM better for scholarship and research productivity? It is not IHL who expects this high load, it is this University."

6.2 Administration and Faculty Evaluations: Steve Oshrin, chair-

6.2.1 Evaluations were delivered to the Deans, Chairs and the Provost and President. IHL commissioner, Dr. Meredith was sent Dr. Thames' evaluation. Steve Oshrin asked that the Faculty Senate recognize the extraordinary work of JT Johnson for his assistance in analyzing the evaluations.

- 6.3 **Awards:** Mary Lux, chair- No report. One senator expressed extreme discouragement that no summer research awards and other research awards were approved this year.
- 6.4 **Budget:** Myron Henry, chair- No report
- 6.5 **Constitution and Bylaws:** Randy Buchanan, chair- This committee is reviewing the election rules to streamline the process.
- 6.6 **Faculty Welfare:** Tim Rehner, chair- No Report
- 6.7 **Government Relations:** Dave Duhon, chair- No report
- 6.8 **Technology:** Barton Spencer, chair- No Report
- 6.9 **Elections:** Paula Smithka, chair- Paula reported that the committee is working on ballots for the next round of Senate Elections.
- 6.10 Ad hoc committee reports and liaison reports
- 6.10.1 Presidents Council** – No report.
- 6.10.2 **American Association of University Professors-** The AAUP distributed a flier for a Speaker on Shared Governance at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the AAUP Mississippi State Conference to be held Saturday, April 8, 2006 in Jackson, MS. All are invited.
- 6.10.3 **Academic/Graduate Council** – Academic Council is relieved that the SACS visit is past, but still has 5 more months of work to do on the recommendations, related to the GEC. Donna Davis is taking over the Academic Council chair next year. The next meeting is May 1, 3006. Mary Beth Applin, on Academic Council and a Senator, will serve on the Physical Planning committee. The Graduate Council reported that there has been no movement on the GA proposal, and Ann Blackwell is the representative for the Faculty Senate.
- 6.10.4 **Faculty Leadership Council-** No report
- 6.10.5 Transportation** - Bill Scarborough stated that the SGA proposal for concentric parking fees from the center of campus at \$150 to \$100 further from campus center, to \$50 on the outskirts of campus was discussed. The problems include the fact that staff, who work here permanently cannot afford to pay the higher price of parking centrally, while many students could. It will be discussed further. Next year there will be different campus pictures on the hangtags. Bill reported that when he asked where the money for parking goes, the reply was that ½ goes to police and parking and ½ goes to Physical Plant for improvements. No one on the committee could tell Bill where the fine money goes. Next year the Gated Lot (s) will cost \$300.00 per year. Gulf Park will lose 150 parking spots in May because of building expansion. One senator asked about the number of handicapped spots, and were they sufficient in number for students who have to use their car to get from one side of campus to the other to attend classes at certain times? Has anyone mapped out where the handicapped students' classes are so that sufficient spots can be created where they are needed the most? Bill said he would look into that.

7.0 New Business

7.1 A senator asked if anyone heard that all contracts have to go through the Provost Office for approval? Others said they had. This is causing many delays in placing students in community clinical, etc. Bill Powell said he would ask the Provost about this.

7.2 Senator Larry Mead asked that his Outsourcing Proposal for the Print Shop be tabled until more information is available.

8.0 Other

9.0 Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 4:55pm.

April 7, 2006

Members (N=43) Present and Those Represented by Proxy (Proxies are in Parentheses):

College of the Arts & Letters

Cindy Brown

Anita Davis

Cheryl Goggin

Stanley Hauer

Stephen Judd

Bill Powell, President

Bob Press (Troy Gibson)

Bill Scarborough

Paula Smithka

Amy Young

College of Business

David Duhon

Bill Gunther

James Magruder

College of Education & Psychology

Ann Parker Blackwell

Taralynn Hartsell

Joe Olmi

Antonio Rodriguez-Buckingham

College of Health

Wendy Bounds

Bonnie Harbaugh, Secretary

Mary Lux (Jeff Evans)

Stephen Oshrin

Tim Rehner

Coastal Science, Marine Science & Gulf Coast Research Lab

Don Redalje

College of Science & Technology

Randy Buchanan

Jeff Evans

Jerry Griffith

Myron Henry, President-Elect

Lawrence Mead

Bobby Middlebrooks

Gail Russell

University Libraries

Mary Beth Applin, Secretary-Elect (Bonnie Harbaugh)

Jay Barton Spencer

USM-Gulf Coast

Darlys Alford

Patsy Anderson

Allisa Beck (Bonnie Harbaugh)

Members Absent:

College of the Arts & Letters:

John Meyer

College of Business:

College of Education & Psychology:

Janice Thompson

College of Health:

Coastal/Marine/GCRL:

Chet Rakocinski

College of Science & Technology:

Eyler "Bob" Coates

Mary Dayne Gregg

University Libraries:

USM-Gulf Coast:

Eric Nelson