

11-2-2007

Faculty Senate Minutes - November 2, 2007

USM Faculty Senate

Follow this and additional works at: http://aquila.usm.edu/faculty_senate_minutes

Recommended Citation

USM Faculty Senate, "Faculty Senate Minutes - November 2, 2007" (2007). *Faculty Senate Minutes*. Paper 104.
http://aquila.usm.edu/faculty_senate_minutes/104

This 2007/08 Minutes is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Senate Archive at The Aquila Digital Community. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Senate Minutes by an authorized administrator of The Aquila Digital Community. For more information, please contact Joshua.Cromwell@usm.edu.

Faculty Senate Meeting of November 2, 2007

Minutes

President Elect Oshrin called the Senate to order at 2:00 o'clock p.m. He recognized Kenneth Zantow as a new delegate from the Gulf Coast and welcomed him to the Senate.

Attendance. Senators present (or represented by proxy) were as follows: Anderson, Beckett, Blackwell, Bounds, Brannock, Buchanan, Bushardt, Davis, Douglass, Evans, Goggin, Gould, Griffith, Hannon, Harbaugh, Hartsell, Hauer, Haynes, Judd (Myron Henry), Klinedinst, Magruder, McCormick, Mead, Meyer, O'Brien, Oshrin, Piazza, Press, Price (Bushardt), Rachal (Blackwell), Redalje, Rehner, Scurfield, Smith, Smithka, Spencer, Tingstrom (Blackwell), Young (Spencer), Zantow.

Senators absent were Cwikla, Kaul, McGuire, Rakocinski, and Russell.

Guest Speaker: Provost Bobby Middlebrooks. The Senate welcomed Provost Middlebrooks as its forum speaker. The Provost provided details on a number of matters:

- 1 He is committed to greater faculty involvement in the selection of awards.
 - 2 The Provost has met with the chairs of all of the various decanal search committees and assures the Senate that all are progressing well, with preliminary selections of finalists due in late February or early March.
 - 3 Fifty-six applications for the post of Provost have been received. Off-campus reviews will be conducted in January, on-campus ones (of a much smaller pool) a bit later, with a final recommendation expected by early March.
-
- 1 College Hall is slated for a major renovation beginning in January 2009 and lasting two years. A meeting will be held on December 12 in room 203 of the Liberal Arts Building to discuss how to schedule classes in the absence of this important facility. The Provost promises that the renovation will be faithful to the "architectural integrity" of the building. This renovation is being paid by outside funds designated to restore historical structures.
 - 2 Eleven of the President's Campus Dialogues have been completed, with over 350 participants. A summary report is due in early December.
 - 3 Responding to a question, Provost Middlebrooks discussed the situation at Jones County Junior College, which issued a press release claiming that they would be offering four-year degrees in conjunction

with an out-of-state senior institution. The Provost reminded the Senate that the IHL has no authority over community colleges and that if state action is required in the matter it must come from the legislature. In any case, JCJC has received a considerable amount of “negative feedback” and has even denounced the press release as “inappropriate.”

Report of the President Elect. President Elect Oshrin’s concise remarks focused on five issues:

1 A new e-mail confidentiality policy is under review by the President’s cabinet and the iTech board of directors.

2 On Tuesday he attended an iTech meeting about a new portal to the USM website; a proposal from IBM was presented. The cost would be approximately \$640,000, with ongoing annual expenses. The matter will be discussed further.

3 The edudev.usm.edu website is being redesigned incrementally over several months. This redesign should bring the university further into federal compliance with issues of handicapped access.

4 Gulf Coast resident Kendrick Kennedy addressed a letter to the Senate regarding textbooks for the sight-impaired. The full document may be found on the Faculty Senate website, but the essence of Mr. Kennedy’s remarks are as follows:

- a. All professors will submit textbook adoptions before or on the due date asked of them and adhere to their adoptions.
- b. Give the O.D.A. courtesy by and in providing information,
- c. When adoptions of textbooks are done, professors will research to see if the publisher has an accessible format that will be provided for O.D.A. at the time that all textbooks are ordered.
- d. When solicited by publishers’ representatives, professors will ask if there is an accessible format for the text. In addition, if there is an accessible textbook format, the professors will ask for a copy to be given to the O.D.A. office for storage at the same time that all textbooks are ordered.
- d. If the publisher does not have an accessible format, professors will encourage the publisher’s representatives to work on obtaining an accessible format.

5 Plans are underway to improve electronic communications with the Gulf Coast so that long-distance Senate meetings can be conducted more easily.

Committee Reports. Seven committees and committee liaisons reported to the Senate on recent business.

1. Academic Governance. Committee chair Redalje addressed two issues: First, the inequity of course requirements for students entering doctoral programs from the baccalaureate as opposed to master's levels; a dialogue on the matter has begun. Secondly, he raised the important issue of evaluation and possible time limits for department chairs. Senator Redalje reports that the Council of Chairs is "open to considering a regular, periodic review" of department chairs to evaluate their performance and possibly to remove ineffective ones. The rotation of department chairs remains an open issue. We need "a more effective way" to get Faculty Senate administrative evaluations to be taken more seriously by deans. Considerable discussion followed on this topic, suggesting an interest in on-going, non-personal, and regular evaluations of department chairs.

2. Awards. Speaking for committee chair Price, Senator Bushardt noted that nominations for the HEDWAE award have been received and a recipient named, to be announced soon.

3. Constitution and Bylaws. Committee chair Buchanan proposed several changes to the opening articles of the Senate constitution. The new text (as amended) reads as follows:

Section 102: The Senate shall provide for the faculty both a forum and a voice and so allow it to assert for the general welfare of the university its distinctive viewpoint and principles. As duly elected representatives of the faculty, the Senate shall act on matters relating to due process, governance, resource allocation, and university planning.

As a key partner in university governance, the Senate shall have responsibility for (1) facilitating meaningful input regarding matters of faculty concern; (2) advising on policy, development, planning and budgeting, resource allocation, and operations of the university; (3) ensuring faculty representation to all relevant university committees, boards, and task forces administering the affairs of the university.

Shared governance is the responsibility of the Faculty Senate, other faculty bodies, the faculty as a whole, and the administration. As a partner in governance, the Senate is entitled to be informed by the university administration in a timely matter of the disposition of any matters, recommendations, or motions made to the administration by the Senate.

The amendment was moved by Senator Buchanan and seconded by Senator Redalje. The motion carried without dissent.

4. Faculty Welfare Committee chair Davis explained in some depth the State of the Faculty Report. The essence of the report is contained in its first table, “Ranking of Faculty Concerns Based on Ratings per College,” reprinted here: (1=highest concern, 6=lowest)

	COAL	COB	COEP	COH	COST	UL	Rank
Compensation	1	5	2	1	1	1	1
Research	2	6	1	2	3	2	2
Support	3	1	3	3	6	6	3.5
Benefits	5	2	5	4	2	4	3.5
Responsibilities	4	3	4	5	4	3	4
Service	6	4	6	6	5	5	5

The report ended with recommendations to continue these studies, thereby creating an historical database of faculty opinion. The Senate will formally receive the present report in December.

5. Gulf Coast Faculty Council Liaison. Gulf Coast Faculty Council chair Scurfield offered a report on activities by that body, notably the creation of an ombudsman team (the exact name to be determined later) as a liaison between the coast and Hattiesburg, as well as within the coastal campuses themselves. Professor Scurfield’s full report may be found on the Senate’s website.

6. Faculty Handbook Committee Liaison. Senator Beckett detailed ten modifications of the Faculty Handbook: (1) Grievance procedures in Chapter Twelve will now include grievances on compensation. (2) An addition to the Forward describes the amendment process to the handbook. (3) Changes in the policies for awarding Summer Grants for the Improvement of Instruction will be modified to avoid financial improprieties by concurrent holders of research grants. (4) The Faculty Activity Report will be removed as an issue in the handbook. (5) The trigger for post-tenure review will be clarified. Is that trigger the chair or the department personnel committee? Senator Beckett’s recommendation is for the personnel committee. A discussion followed on the nature and variance of compliance with the handbook. (6) The present handbook makes the third-year review seem overly punitive; its purpose is rather to improve the candidate’s progress toward tenure and promotion. Certain deans to the contrary, third-year review is not a

“tenure assessment.” (7) Candidates must be notified of votes and decisions on tenure and promotion at the same time as administrators. (8) New wording will prohibit department chairs undergoing a third-year review from writing their own evaluations. (9) An exception is being written to the rule requiring that a faculty member must have been employed at the university for a minimum of three years before serving on personnel committees; this exception will apply to new faculty employed as department chairs. (10) The language explaining the three options of governance for personnel committees will be reworded for greater clarity.

7. Graduate Council Liaison. Senator Blackwell reported that the resolution, previously approved by the Senate and several other faculty bodies, to recreate the Graduate School has been forwarded to the President.

Old Business. Senator Press introduced a resolution, revised since the last meeting, to support higher staff salaries. This revised version reads as follows:

It is our belief that staff compensation at the University of Southern Mississippi has been low historically in comparison with compensation for comparable work at colleges and universities in the Gulf South Region.

The contributions staff make to the success of USM faculty and students are notable. Staff are often the first responders to questions and concerns students may have. They attend to physical environments to assure those environments are conducive to learning and discovery. Staff provide direct support to faculty on many projects and initiatives. Succinctly put, staff are essential to the success of the University of Southern Mississippi.

Members of the Faculty Senate support efforts to adjust staff compensation upward to more accurately reflect market salaries and to assure members of the USM staff receive compensation that recognizes their essential roles as members of the USM family. Further, the Faculty Senate supports upward adjustments in staff compensation to assure staff receive wages and benefits that will provide for a satisfactory standard of living.

In the context of previous paragraphs, members of the Faculty Senate urge the Administration to undertake a timely study of market compensation averages of staff in time to make appropriate and competitive adjustments for USM staff for FY 2009.

The resolution was moved by Senator Smith, seconded by Senator O'Brien, and passed without dissent.

Other Business. Kevin Sellers, a representative from iTech, encouraged the Senate to examine the iTech website to see what services are offered, which are being considered, and how such matters are planned and effected.

The meeting was adjourned by President Elect Oshrin at 4:22 o'clock.

Respectfully submitted,

Stanley Hauer

Secretary Elect

November 5, 2007