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Faculty Senate Minutes - October 2, 2009

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi
Faculty Senate
Minutes for the Meeting of October 2, 2009
216 Thad Cochran Center

Members Present and Represented (by proxy): H. Annulis, J. Bass, D. Beckett, J. Brannock, D. Bristol, B. Burgess (B. George), J. Burnett, D. Daves, A. Davis, D. Davis, J. Evans, D. Fletcher, B. George, C. Goggin, A. Haley, S. Hauer, N. Howell, S. Howell, M. Klinedinst, T. Lipscomb, D. Lunsford, M. Lux, C. McCormick, J. McGuire, J. Meyer, C. Meyers (J. Burnett), S. Oshrin, R. Pandey, C. Rakocinski, D. Redalje, T. Rehner (K. Rushing), S. Reischman, S. Rouse, K. Rushing, R. Scurfield, J. Shin, J. B. Spencer (J. Brannock), D. Tingstrom (J. Brannock), T. Welsh, J. Wolfe, A. Young

Member Absent: T. Gould

1.0 Call to order

Pres. Evans called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

2.0 Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved following the award presentation to former Sen. Bill Scarborough.

3.0 Approval of the minutes

Minutes from the special called meetings in July along with the minutes from the September meeting were brought up for approval. One correction to the September minutes: on p. 6, "International Economics" degree should read "International Business" degree. Change agreed to. All three sets of minutes were approved.

4.0 Faculty Senate Service Award

David Beckett, presenter

Sen. Beckett was called forward, who joked that Pres. Evans might regret that since he did not need that much encouragement to say more. But he did have some comments about Bill Scarborough:

I'm aware that our colleague Bill Scarborough has been honored at several functions, but I didn't want him to slide into retirement without recognition from the Faculty Senate.

I first met Bill in the Faculty Senate during Aubrey Lucas's long presidency. Things were much different then on campus and in the Senate. The considerable angst that gripped the campus during the Thames presidency and now again in the midst of our budget problems was absent.

Dr. Lucas often stated that we had the best faculty and the highest paid faculty within the state. I'm not sure whether either statement was true, but it made us feel good just hearing them. We felt that our neighbors and friends held us in high esteem, because we helped educate them and their children. We didn't think that someone would ever describe our faculty as "lunatics running the asylum." which unfortunately occurred as a comment in an area newspaper during Dr. Thames administration.

We didn't know that much about the College Board. We suspected that most of them had Ole Miss season tickets, but we still held onto a vague notion that they were for us. Midas was a legend, not a program to further enrich faculty who had already been rewarded. No distinguished professors were fired, and we really couldn't envision that ever happening. We even got raises once in a while.

It all sounds wonderful, Camelotish in fact. But one thing was very, very wrong; Faculty Senate meetings were awfully boring. I remember one meeting where a primary topic of discussion was whether we should push for pet insurance, or not. However, there was always one item on the agenda that saved us

from the boredom, and for a long time it was, for me, the highlight of every meeting – **the parking report** – provided by Senator Bill Scarborough. Who would ever think that parking could be that interesting? But Bill's reports came replete with villains – students parking in faculty spots, uncaring, mid-level administrators, and heroes like Bill Scarborough, a modern version of Don Quixote, fighting for the faculty!

His exploits on the Parking Committee reveal an interesting and attractive attribute of Bill's character – he has always felt and fought strongly for causes he believed in. During his parking days he even convinced the administration to allow him to give parking tickets, and he did so with relish. I thought the idea of Bill doing so was a fantastically bad idea. I was waiting for the day when Bill and an irate student would beat the stew out of each other in a university parking lot. Fortunately, his parking ticket privileges were revoked and he returned unscathed to his usual scholarly activities.

During the year I was President of the Faculty Senate reporters would always ask for quotes from me, because I was President of the Senate, and from Bill Scarborough because he always had such zingers. In his earlier years on our faculty Bill so irritated President McCain that Dr. McCain tried to fire him. At our Faculty Senate meeting with Dr. Thames immediately after he had reduced the number of colleges in the university; and fired all the deans, all without any input from the faculty, Bill and a number of the faculty complained vociferously. Dr. Thames stated the faculty moved too slowly and that we were ineffective as a body. Bill then responded that Adolph Hitler and Sadaam Hussein were probably effective leaders too, but not very good ones!

Now with Dr. Saunders as President, Bill keeps speaking up for not just more students, but better ones. Bill never knows when to quit, and in doing so he has been a champion for the faculty for many years. When I meet members of our community who are alumni of USM and they find out that I am a faculty member, they almost always ask two things – how is the **new** President doing (it will probably be five or six years before Dr. Saunders is not the “new” President)? Then they ask do I know such and such faculty member? Usually I do and they will state that this faculty member was a good teacher or helped them in some manner.

Often they will ask if I know Dr. Scarborough, and after I admit that I do, they say some very interesting things. Typical responses are: “I worked really hard in his class, I got a C.” Or, “his political views and mine are complete opposites, but he was the most interesting professor I had at Southern.” I always hear that his classes are thought provoking and interesting. I believe that these comments are true and heartfelt; after all, if he could make parking that interesting, just think what he could do with history!

Although Bill is now retired, he is still in his office in the History Department, he is writing a new book, and he will be teaching on our campus this spring and the following spring. Somehow that makes me feel better about things, because it wouldn't seem right if he weren't here. The plaque I am going to present to Bill is a small token of our admiration for his many years of scholarship, teaching, and service to our university and our faculty.

The plaque reads:

TO BILL SCARBOROUGH:

SCHOLAR, AUTHOR, TEACHER, FACULTY SENATOR AND PARKING GURU
EXTRAORDINAIRE. OUR THANKS AND APPRECIATION FOR YOUR EXEMPLARY SERVICE
TO OUR UNIVERSITY AND OUR FACULTY.

YOUR FELLOW FACULTY SENATORS
2009.

Amidst a standing ovation, former Sen. Scarborough received the award and then told the senate he was honored to receive such an award. It is undeserved, he said, as I was never an officer or president. I think people were afraid I would be too much of a loose cannon or radical. I had a lot of good years on the senate, 12 years in total. Thank you, he said, and now on to more important business.

5.0 Remarks from the administration

5.1 **Provost Lyman**

Provost Lyman said he would represent both President Saunders, who was travelling, and himself today. He did not know how well he could do being both “good cop and bad cop,” he said.

He began with questions submitted in advance by senators:

1. Why, given these difficult economic times, was the decision made to unfreeze hires over the summer while simultaneously terminating people?

The President’s response: **Most of the hires that were authorized this summer were for visiting or other one-year positions. Remember that the terminations of tenure-track faculty will not take effect until July 2010. A few searches for tenure-track faculty positions were authorized but these were in areas where accreditation would be endangered by not hiring or in areas with strong student demand and strong records of external funding. It is likely that the pattern of hiring in some areas while cutting faculty numbers in other areas will continue for the next few years, either through attrition or by terminating/reducing programs.**

2. When will we find out what cuts the administration will have?

The President’s response: **Most of the APG recommended cuts will be implemented. These include significant cuts to administration. These budget reductions will be finalized within the next few months. The VPs in non-academic areas have proposed over \$ 4 million in budget cuts that will be approved and implemented over the next three to four months. All of these budget reductions are applicable to FY 2011. All administrative units are now working on the 3.5% budget reductions for the current fiscal year (deadline October 12).**

Prov. Lyman noted that Commissioner Hank Bounds the other day while on campus said additional cuts are likely in the current fiscal year.

3. When will we find out the list of academic cuts for next year?

The President’s response: **Most of the APG recommended cuts will be implemented and the list will be finalized within the next few months.**

4. Perhaps it has been answered elsewhere, but if not, I would still like a good answer as to how we can terminate a tenured employee without a declaration of financial exigency. The situation perfectly illustrates what “financial exigency” is supposed to be fore: the university’s financial situation is so dire that tenured faculty can be dismissed without cause on their part. It seems like the university wants it both ways—the freedom to dismiss tenured faculty but without the unpleasantness of a declaration of financial exigency, wanting the cure but without taking the medicine.

The President’s response: **The IHL Board declares financial exigency, not USM. The proposed termination of two tenured faculty members that has occurred is not related to a declaration of financial exigency. IHL and USM policy allows for such terminations “for financial exigencies as**

declared by the Board, or in the event of the termination, suspension, or reduction of programs, academic units, or administrative units by the Board” (cited in the Faculty Handbook, Ch. 10, as well as IHL policy). **The proposed terminations are in response to reduction of programs, not financial exigency.** Prov. Lyman noted that financial exigency implies that closing will result if cuts are not done, and we are not in that situation.

5. From Jeff Evans – With the announcement of the Responsibility-Centered Management Budget Committee this week, faculty were disappointed to find only one faculty member and one chair on the committee of 19 members. This is one of the places you told the faculty that they could really assist the university in moving forward by contributing to the Budget Committee. It seems that having only one faculty member and one chair gives the faculty little opportunity to assist the university. Can you comment on this?

The President’s response: **I have asked the Provost to add one faculty member from each College to the RCM Budget Committee.**

Prov. Lyman noted that this makes the committee large, with 23 members. What this committee will do is NOT consider individual programs or any terminations—it will work on refining the RCM model of budgeting. The anticipated lowest level of unit that model will apply to will be the colleges, and others such as Itech and the library—it is not practical for us to extend this model down to the department level. The model has tuition and grant dollars generated by units returning to those units, minus a subvention or “tax” that goes to central administration. E & G allocations will go to central administration for distribution as well. The college is the main unit of focus to get input and data about—that was the reason for the 5 deans and few faculty on it. I understand the sentiment, Prov. Lyman said, for more faculty representation. This committee will take a “macro” view of things rather than the “micro”—dealing not with individual departments but with refining the budget model.

Prov. Lyman then proceeded to respond to questions submitted to the Provost:

6. How much money was spent for new hires when the hiring freeze was lifted last summer? Offhand guess at the figure for each college?

This past summer we hired 24 tenure-track faculty at an annual salary cost of \$1.575 million and 64 non-tenure track instructors at an annual salary cost of \$2.842 million. This is a smaller number of tenure track hires than we usually have (we had approximately 70 tenure track hires for fall, 2008). All but two of the tenure track hires were approved and searches initiated prior to the imposition of last year’s hiring freeze. Many of the non-tenure track hires resulted from freezes of tenure track positions and the need to meet instructional needs that would ordinarily be covered by those positions. The distribution of annual salary dollars for tenure track hires was as follows: COAL \$379,000; COB \$345,000; COEP \$102,000; COH \$423,500; COST 325,500.

7. How are budget decisions going to be decided going forward? Will faculty constitute a majority of the committee that determines when academic programs are to be deleted?

It is not the job of the RCM Budget Committee to make academic program deletion decisions. Those decisions should be made by a committee comprised of both faculty and academic administrators (like APG). I think that a good first step would be for the Faculty Senate to propose a set of guidelines to use in making such decisions and to propose faculty membership for a permanent academic program planning committee. Bear in mind that the IHL already has a role in deleting academic programs through the productivity review process.

Prov. Lyman said the goal for such a committee should not be ad hoc, but the committee should become part of “business as usual.” This committee would regularly look at budgets, programs, and efficiencies that could be brought about. The Faculty Senate should propose a structure for membership and guidelines

for its process. The IHL process of productivity reviews already provides initial data for this. When a program has been questioned, Prov. Lyman noted, we have responded reflexively, defending our programs. We have been largely successful, as only a few have been deleted and those were not strongly defended. In the future these reports need to be taken more seriously, looked at and perhaps programs not be automatically defended.

8. In an article in the *Chronicle* you mentioned “an outside person, a sort of magistrate, and I imagine that person will have a decision-making function.” How can this person be considered impartial to administration proposals when hired by the administration?

We are implementing this process at the advice of IHL and USM counsel. Recall that a similar process was used with regard to Glamser and Stringer. A practical question is who would pay if not USM administration? I am confident that a respectable external “magistrate” would not be influenced in his/her opinion by the source of funds.

Prov. Lyman stressed that a first round of appeals were held before the executive cabinet and have had impact—changes or rejection of proposed cuts have occurred. A second round for those whose cuts have been approved by IHL should now go to a third party arbitrator, as was done in 2004 with the Glamser and Stringer cases. Faculty senators noted that process went badly and that the judge appointed to the role was viewed as “a stooge.” Prov. Lyman said we could find one who would not be stooge. A way to disconnect payment from the individual needed to be found. Perhaps paying them up-front, before a decision is reached, and asking for an objective decision not related to payment would work. An appeal committee composed of faculty was rejected by all lawyers involved, due to concerns about lack of objectivity.

9. When will we find out the list of budget cuts from the APG list that went higher than the original 94 APG recommendations? (From Jeff Evans—the provost went over this list of APG recommendations with the Senate Officers but they failed to get a copy.)

The list was distributed and reviewed.

Prov. Lyman noted that this list was all anyone outside the APG committee had seen; it’s all the president has seen. The APG committee agreed to this because they wanted to prevent administrators from “plucking” lower-ranking cuts from the larger list. Numbers 1-94 on the APG list cut approximately \$8 million. The President wanted to keep the MIDAS program, so that meant suggesting at least \$760,000 more in cuts. This list is what the provost gave to the president.

10. Is it appropriate for an untenured, assistant professor (with a doctorate from USM) to have the position of associate dean as is currently the case in one of the colleges (COEP)? (Pres. Evans noted the question sounded wrong; he did not think that was the case for the credentials of the COEP Associate Deans.)

This is not the case. The two associate deans in COEP are both tenured; one is an Associate Professor, the other a Professor.

Some senators suggested the question may refer to a person on the Gulf Coast, and the Provost said he would check into coast administrator credentials.

11. (Question from Pres. Evans for the President or Provost) After Commissioner Bounds’ meeting, I was puzzled about how we, the IHL system, were going to have “all this [cuts] settled by March of 2010.” Are we talking about just for FY 2011? Or it seemed like Dr. Bounds was saying FY 2011 and 2012 together . . . So are we using the APG recommendations for FY 2011? And what will we use for FY 2012?

I don't understand the question.

Prov. Lyman said the intention is to use the APG suggested cuts for FY 2011, and we have not yet determined the amount or process for possible cuts for FY 2012.

Sen. Hauer noted the strong opinion among faculty that MIDAS should be cut.

Prov. Lyman expressed his agreement with that view, but there are different strong opinions from other VPs. Sen. Hauer also asked if we had saved \$ for a second round of cuts this year. Prov. Lyman said he was not sure where any additional cuts over the currently asked 3 ½ % will come from.

Sen. Oshrin asked how many real people will lose their jobs to keep MIDAS from being cut. Prov. Lyman said about 10. Remember, MIDAS does not come from E & G money. Some have pointed out that some of MIDAS could go to help with instructional needs, but the incentive factor to generate funded research is the main reason for keeping it. Sen. Young wanted to respectfully ask for data to support that incentive effect—where is the data? We're talking about 10 people. MIDAS should be cut, and if it is not the Faculty Senate should ask for justification and data. Prov. Lyman suggested speaking to the President about this—the decision is in her hands and there is strong disagreement on the VP level on this issue. There is a strong fear of research grant receipts going down.

Sen. Scurfield pointed out that we kept hearing that details of budget cut decisions would be made “in a couple of weeks,” but now it looks like months before decisions will be made. How is this fair to people cut who could use the advance information about their program being cut? Prov. Lyman noted that appeals had been made that were still under discussion. Most of the APG recommendations will be implemented, but 10 to 20 are still under discussion. There is a reluctance to reveal “final decisions” before what kind of erosion from other potential items are needed. Yet some are “set in stone,” the provost noted; perhaps it would be good to let affected parties know that. He said he would push for that.

Sen. Redalje asked that the administration reconsider the policy on raises for grant funded employees. There is no justification for this other than saying that because State funded folks can't have a raise, then no one can. This is crippling to our ability to attract and retain qualified technical support for our projects. The OMB circulars - A-21 and A-133 - that have been cited as justification do not support the policy. Prov. Lyman said the effects of giving merit raises to one class of employees and not to another would be volatile policy and potentially very unjust. He philosophically supported the idea of all potentially getting merit raises or none. What about those with a % of research grant support? Sen. Redalje pointed out that he was referring mostly to those on 100% “soft money,” who have zero job security year to year. To keep research programs going, he said, we have to keep our employees. Prov. Lyman noted that we could say the same thing about instructional staff . . . aren't they working hard and don't we want to keep them? That would be so unfair. Perhaps a discussion in the senate about the equity issues here would be useful.

Sen. McCormick noted that people do not understand how dollars can come into the university far beyond what individuals working on grant funding are paid. Overhead dollars go the university. He does not participate in MIDAS, but the amount of \$ generated for the university far exceed the 750,000 talked about related to MIDAS. Prov. Lyman noted that MIDAS is capped at 30% of a salary—it is simply money back from the extra money they generate, and a way of trying to get more dollars in. Research dollars are essential if we are to stay a major research university, and the President is convinced by that argument. Sen. Davis noted that people hired solely on research dollars are a different entity—we may not want to lose their skills for the lack of a merit raise.

Sen. Rakocinski noted the need to get case-by-case permission to recruit out-of-state graduate assistants is crippling recruiting efforts. Prov. Lyman asked for an alternative proposal. Sen. Rakocinski suggested a budget for out-of-state students, and Prov. Lyman said he supported having a large out-of-state graduate student contingent, but we are “broke” and out of \$. There is a limit to what we can afford to give in out-of-state waivers. Prov. Lyman noted that we can cut costs by asking such students to reclassify as in-state

students after a year of residing in the state. Ph.D. programs are the prime focus of this effort to make it worthwhile, but only “spotty cooperation” has been evident because people are afraid they will have to pay more for car tags. So because some people want to save \$200 we will not be able to recruit more out-of-state students. Why bend over backward to support such sentiment? Sen. Burnett suggested requiring such conversion, but Prov. Lyman noted that it does require effort by students to meet the requirements, and we are not to that point yet. Much discussion followed about when out-of-state tuition waivers became “real” budgeted \$ rather than “in-kind” money that was never actually expected to be paid by someone.

Sen. Klinedinst noted that Commissioner Hank Bounds had talked about a 20% cut—how far have we gotten toward meeting that? Has there been reaction from our local state legislators? Prov. Lyman noted that instead of \$12 million, we would have to go to \$20 million, so we will have another \$8 million to cut. He referred to Sen. Beckett’s comments about the Camelot of Higher Education earlier when budgets were fairly stable—it is not like that now; legislators want us to cut our budget and hold up community colleges teaching hundreds of students as models of efficiency. They don’t always understand the differences in our missions. They want more access—and thus the concern with keeping tuition rates down. They are not aware of what kind of university they would find if they fully enacted such policies. Sen. Young noted that low tuition also keeps grants for Financial Aid low. Prov. Lyman suggested we need to do a better selling job with legislators . . . and Hank Bounds should be more aggressive on that. Yet, Prov. Lyman said he was right that we cannot “tuition our way out of this.” Sen. Young said they cannot have it both ways—no support from us, but no tuition raise either. Prov. Lyman said there would be fewer educated people in Mississippi as a result of that. There is also a quest to cut duplications in programs—but that is an illusion; there is not enough real duplication to save real \$. An undergrad student from around here is not going to go to Delta State to be a Sociology major. That’s not how such decisions are made. Dr. Bounds also noted that closing three campuses would still leave budget cuts to be made, but we cannot summon the political will to change one’s name (Mississippi University for Women), much less close any universities. However, Prov. Lyman said we will have to take a hard look at what our offerings are and what we do best.

Sen. Beckett noted that funds brought in by grants in the sciences are spread throughout the university, and he had brought in some himself—not as much as Sen. McCormick, but at least \$1 to \$2 million. One writes grants, he said, to pay summer salary, to run a lab, to pay graduate assistants. There is no real incentive; people do not sit down and write grants for MIDAS money. Sen. Davis noted that many grant recipients do not get MIDAS. Prov. Lyman noted that the highest MIDAS payment is \$100,000. The overhead payments brought in, however, are on the order of \$1 million.

It also seems strange, Sen. Beckett said, to eliminate a program and then have hearings by a mediator about it—that seems backwards. Hearings should occur first, and then talk about eliminating the program. Prov. Lyman noted that appeals were held with the executive cabinet and real changes were made from them. Really, he said, we have suspended admissions, not yet officially terminated those programs. Some students may take two more years to graduate. All these actions are rescindable. So they’re not dead; they’re mortally wounded, said Sen. Beckett. Not dead, but they are suspended, responded the Provost. What if the mediator says “you screwed up,” these programs need to stay, would you actually back off and keep them? Yes, noted Prov. Lyman, or the process would be meaningless.

Sen. McCormick brought up the issue of reduced credit hour requirements for graduate students on waivers. How can we grow programs by giving waivers for students taking only 3 credit hours? Prov. Lyman noted that there is no current connection between credit hours and legislative appropriations; “we could double our credit hours and not get another cent from the legislature.” Incidentally, Prov. Lyman, noted, we have just returned to the number of credit hours generated in 2005, before Katrina. Sen. Beckett noted that, in most places, more credit hours means more dollars. Not here, said Prov. Lyman, but more tuition paid is one place we can get more dollars from.

Sen. Rushing asked what had become of plans to carry faculty pay across 12 months. Senators noted that Human Resources Director Russ Willis had presented to us last year, and laid out three plans. One may simply need to ask for one of those. Pres. Evans was meeting with him next week and would ask him.

Responding to a question on the timeline for the new budget committee, Prov. Lyman said it should be going by the first of the calendar year. APG was not too badly constructed, he suggested, with 15 faculty members. He wanted recommendations on how to pull it together. In looking at RCM budget models at other universities, NH went down to the department level, but we do not have personnel or expertise to do that. Places like Indiana or Kent State go to the college level, and that seems best for us. The colleges of Arts and Letters and Business will run two sets of books as a test, and we hope to have the new budget model fully operational by FY 2012.

6.0 Officers' reports

6.1 President (Evans)

After a ten-minute recess, **President Evans** deferred first to Sen. Hauer for a report from the University Club committee. Sen. Hauer said the eventual plan is for a hotel where Elam Arms is currently located, and in that hotel to have space for a University Club. We need to show there is enough interest, first. The current plan is to operate two Tuesdays per month in a building next to Conestoga Steak House (Hwy 49 N. near 7th Ave.). The first Open House will be Oct. 13 from 4:30 to 6:30 with hors d'ourves and a cash bar, with a 10% discount for dinner next door. The cost will be \$20 per month, by payroll deduction. Bill Taylor who helped found the original university club, noted that the club still had \$11,000 available. The Foundation had lost it, but now it is found. Sen. Hauer said that 50 members are needed to be charter members, and he would be one of them. He encouraged all to be a part.

Pres. Evans thanked Sen. Hauer for all his hard work on that.

The Senate officers had met with Commissioner Hank Bounds earlier on the day he addressed the campus convocation with a chance to talk with him. The Senate has created a University Directions committee (from our old Government Relations committee) to help decide on directions and budget priorities for the university. Dr. Bounds expressed his awareness of the view that one cannot have a complete university by eliminating a whole bunch of programs, and that one must have a set of basic academic programs to have a university. He has IHL board staff members looking at productivity of programs across the state. He described developing a template to deal with budget cuts by each university, and his staff would then apply a template over the whole system. The latter would necessarily include political considerations, Bounds said. He did say he wanted major budget template decisions made by March of 2010, to figure plans for budget for the next two years. Sen. Davis agreed that March is viewed as a significant month for having budget templates in place.

Commissioner Bounds stressed that cuts will NOT be across-the-board. They will be differentiated by what % of support is received from the state. One example could be that Alcorn may be cut 17% and USM 23 % because Alcorn is much more dependent on state funding.

On MIDAS, Pres. Evans noted that the senate officers had relayed negative sentiments about MIDAS to the president, suggesting suspending it, or pulling more of its \$ for the university rather than any individual. She rejected that, however, concerned about difficulty recruiting research faculty. She does not want to risk losing research \$.

On the new RCM Budget committee, Pres. Evans noted that the faculty senate slot should go to one willing to serve and who had experience with budgets and defending faculty interests. **Sen. Steve Oshrin** served on the committee that explored budget models as well as on APG, and Pres. Evans noted that he had represented faculty interests well there. Sen. Oshrin was nominated, seconded, and moved to elect him by acclamation, which was done by voice vote.

Sen. Klinedinst suggested that the new Budget Committee described by the Provost would be even more important than the RCM budget committee, as the former would be involved in making budget cuts. Faculty need to have a majority on the committee that will decide cuts, he said.

With a slot for faculty from each college now open on the RCM budget committee, Pres. Evans suggested that each college delegation could provide a suggestion for someone to serve, and the person could be a faculty senator or not. Sen. Haley suggested that at least one of the faculty on the committee should be from the coast. This suggestion was agreed to. Sen. Redalje noted that he and Sen. Rakocinski are part of Science and Technology, although at Stennis Space Center are “fiscally part of Hattiesburg.” He said he was OK with whoever they are chosen to select representatives with. It was moved and seconded that each faculty delegation nominate a member to represent their college, with the proviso that at least one would be from the coast. Motion passed.

Pres. Evans noted that with all colleges represented by faculty, the VP for research should be on the committee rather than appointing a University Research Council member.

Pres. Evans said that he found out that phased retirement “is not on the table anymore” since as of July 1 the laws changed, and policy and process changed. Re-employment of retired faculty is still possible, but the details are not clear. He plans to meet with Human Resources Director Russ Willis to clarify things. Sen. Beckett noted that the university should be interested in pursuing some kind of phased retirement to realize savings while retaining experienced people. Pres. Evans noted that Commissioner Bounds had also said not enough budget savings could be expected through attrition of faculty.

6.2 President-Elect (Davis)

Sen. Davis is active on technology committees, and is glad to have Sen. Bass (chair of senate technology committee) as back-up. The Campus Hub is the main focus of discussion, a campus intranet where one can log in and do all campus and personal business (email, SOAR, etc.). Further links have been posted to the faculty senate “ning” site although for the first time recently it did not work for two days. It can provide the senate and its committees with an electronic venue to discuss issues between senate meetings.

6.3 Secretary (Meyer) – No report

6.4 Secretary-Elect (Brannock) -- No report

7.0 Committee reports

7.1 Academic and Governance (Redalje)

Sen. Redalje noted that a speaker addressing the issue of “collegiality” when it came to tenure and promotion decisions had been initially planned for the fall, but nothing came of it. Sen. Hauer suggested the fee was more than desired. Sen. Davis noted that the Faculty Welfare survey this year would look at issues of workplace environment that might cover that. Sen. Daves noted that an earlier speaker viewed as effective when speaking to department chairs was to be brought back, but this never happened.

7.2 Administration and Faculty Evaluations (Oshrin) – No report

7.3 Awards (Brannock)

Sen. Brannock reported that due to the severe downturn in the stock market during 2008, funds will not be available for the 2010-2011 Aubrey K. and Ella Ginn Lucas Endowment for Faculty Excellence awards. A proposal to Dr. Cynthia Easterling of the Provost’s office to restore the University Librarianship Award is being discussed.

7.4 Constitution and Bylaws (Rehner) –No report

7.5 Elections (Burgess)

This fall we will test the new online system for voting in faculty senate elections, around the 4th week of

October, to make sure to work out the bugs before actually using it in the spring.

7.6 Faculty Welfare (Davis)

The annual Faculty Satisfaction Survey will be conducted again this year, with the addition of items to look at workplace behaviors and their impact on communication climate. We hope to look deeper than the general overall satisfaction levels. We will also use previous demographic data to compare with earlier years.

7.7 Research and Grants (McCormick)

Sen. McCormick said the committee is pursuing issues that are barriers to recruiting. Tuition waivers were NOT “real” before; they were in-kind waivers never expected to be collected. Now it is “real” money that has to be funded in the budget. Graduate students on assistantship used to be required to take a certain number of hours. The “Texas formula” requires payment of a certain % per credit hour, and we will be in trouble in terms of seeking funding if we do not keep our graduate credits up. Ours have gone down, and waivers still must be paid even for students enrolling in only 3 credit hours. There is a danger that our departments will start hiring post-docs instead of graduate students. Sen. McCormick noted that he cannot get people together to address these issues, and they are real issues. We cannot have the burden of trying to get a tuition waiver approved for every good recruited out-of-state student. Other universities in the state do not seem restricted like this, so we need to “raise Cain” about this. Pres. Evans noted that this issue is probably more important than MIDAS to the university going forward. Sen. McCormick noted that those paid extra with MIDAS are teaching their courses and are bringing in huge grants to the university.

Sen. Redalje noted that directed research courses that supplement classroom courses for graduate students are now charging students extra fees. All can now be put online, but there is an online fee for that. Assoc. Provost Bill Powell noted this was a result of miscommunication. The Graduate Council was attempting to reduce the effect of students taking 8 or fewer credit hours not being charged out-of-state tuition. Now that has changed. The option of an on-line course mitigates this extra cost.

Sen. McCormick noted he was getting multiple stories about credit hours related to funding and the “Texas formula” that MS has apparently adopted. VP Powell noted that only new grant \$ would be subject to the formula. Sen. Beckett said it seemed like the Provost says one thing, then VPs say another thing; what is the real formula? VP Powell said it would be a good idea to bring in VP for Finance Joe Morgan and assistant Alyson Easterwood to discuss the issue. Pres. Evans noted the number of credit hours graduate students are enrolled in is important; even if legislators were not looking at those numbers others would be.

7.8 Technology (Bass) – No report

7.9 University Directions (Davis)

President Saunders charged us with coming up with a “philosophy” of university direction and planning. All who wish to join this effort are welcome, Sen. Davis noted. The committee started with the big picture of USM importance to the state as a comprehensive university, and to clarify our purposes and uniqueness. Committee discussion will follow about how the budgets flow related to the mission. One source of uniqueness is our diversity: we truly represent our state, more than any other university. We are also the only large university south of I-20. We need to serve this diversity and this part of the state. We also want to research our decisions, Sen. Davis noted, by looking at articles about education and the skills needed out there by students, to connect our intellectual capital with our communities served. We can look at enhancing student engagement and learning. The first priority needs to be to preserve core knowledge and what is most important to learn. There is more to metrics of productivity for us than number of graduates. A General Education Committee, chaired by Dick Conville, is working on the academic core requirements. A record of the senate’s committee work is on the “ning” site, Sen. Davis noted.

7.10 Other committee and liaison reports

7.10.1 Faculty Handbook Committee

Sen. Beckett noted changes on the committee for this year:

The assistant provost (Powell or Easterling) continues

VP for research appointee (Julian Allen) continues

Dean (David Davies of the Honors College replaces Rex Gandy)
Council of chairs representative (Bob Bateman) continues
Faculty Senator (Dave Beckett) continues
Faculty Senate Appointed Representative (Pat Smith) continues
President's Appointee (Peggy Price) joins

The committee has no provision for the election of the chair . . . Sen. Beckett said he plans to continue as chair, as the chair should be a faculty member and not a dean as some had proposed in the past.

1. Gulf Coast Faculty Council

Sen. Annulis reported (via speakerphone) that Gulf Coast faculty had also had a chance to meet with Commissioner Hank Bounds. Their council has created four committees to work on key issues: shared governance, increasing use of online technology for meetings, community relations along the coast, and ways to benchmark successes such as growing enrollment.

Sen. Scurfield noted several had expressed concerns with how faculty senate meetings are run. The President and Provost speak first, and then all are exhausted and rushing through our business late in the day. It seems like this is not a deliberative body anymore. Maybe if we start at 2:00, we could have them come at 3:15, he suggested. Then we could discuss our thinking while we are fresh. Pres. Evans noted that all have that concern about shortening meetings and economizing interactions with the President and Provost. Sen. Haley suggested that learning about issues first through discussion could help with forethought before hearing from President and Provost. Sen. Beckett said it is good to have the Provost speak, but then we have to rush the rest of the meeting. He is up there an hour and a half. Sen. Oshrin noted that we would need to move committee reports to after deliberations or they will still take place around 5:00. Sen. Hauer pointed out that the debate seemed rather vigorous while the provost was here. Pres. Evans noted that by submitting our questions in advance, they can think about what they will say. Getting started earlier was suggested, but Pres. Evans (and possibly others) had a 1:00 class. Pres. Evans suggested the senate executive committee discuss the time issue.

1. Academic/Graduate Council (Daves)

Sen. Daves reported two key topics under discussion at Academic Council: The general education core, with a committee chaired by Dick Conville, and online or alternative modes of course delivery. At Graduate Council, the focus is on IRB training being required for all, how out-of-state tuition waiver cuts impact programs, and distinctions between Ed. D. and Ph.D. work. Pres. Evans asked if they "go as long as we do": apparently Academic Council does at times, but not Graduate Council.

Sen. Redalje asked about requesting tuition coverage in grant proposals. The graduate dean had discouraged us from doing that, and this is not as easy with some agencies as others. Sen. Daves said discussions had been brief—the most recent covered how changes in tuition waivers would affect programs and how to connect students with grant money. Sen. Burnett wondered why the graduate school would not know that answer. Sen. McCormick noted there is no "pile of money" for giving tuition waivers, but now quite a lot of budgeted money is there. Sen. Daves noted that the graduate school had lost \$200,000 or so from its budget, as reported in a meeting. Discussion followed about when tuition-waiver money became "real" and budgeted as opposed to in-kind never expected to be collected or paid. Sen. McCormick suggested that a change was made by state accountants without realizing the effects such an accounting change would have. Money to cover tuition waivers is now effectively taken out of money used to pay graduate assistants.

7.10.4 AAUP (Klinedinst)

The AAUP is "growing by leaps and bounds" due to the current budget situation. They are interested in how the university makes money decisions and what these cuts will look like. More effort is needed to notify affected faculty ahead of time, and alternative scenarios need to be considered such as a 5% loan

back to the university. Efforts are underway to contact our legislators to tell them our side of the story. A statewide effort is underway as faculty members from other universities are getting active as well.

8.0 Old Business

None

9.0 New Business

Sen. Haley noted that the university budget committee discussed by the Provost needed to be set up. Sen. Oshrin suggested that the executive committee draft a proposal to start discussion. Sen. Davis noted that proposals could be discussed during the month on the “ning” site. Pres. Evans said the executive committee would put a proposal together for discussion.

10.0 Adjournment

Moved and Seconded, Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:54 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Meyer
Secretary for Faculty Senate

Approved by
Jeff Evans
President of Faculty Senate