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Faculty Senate Minutes - January 28, 2011

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi
Faculty Senate
Ogletree House
January 28, 2011

Members Present and Represented (by proxy): M.A. Adams, H. Annulis, J. Bass, D. Beckett, J. Brannock, A. Branton, D. Bristol (Chatham), B. Burgess, J. Burnett, C. Chatham, R. Conville, D. Daves, A. Davis, J. Ding (Horner), L. Downey (Masterson), D. Fletcher, B. George, C. Goggin, A. Haley, T. Hartsell, S. Hauer (Oshrin), N. Howell, D. Lunsford, M. Lux, K. Masters (Chatham), D. Masterson, C. McCormick (Pandy), C. Meyers, S. Oshrin, R. Pandy, S. Piland, C. Rakocinski (Brannock), D. Redalje (Brannock), T. Rehner, S. Reischman, K. Shelley, D. Tingstrom, J. Wolfe, A. Young.

Members Absent: S. Clark, A. Sevier, J.H. Shin.

1.0 Call to order

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda by Sen. Young. Seconded. Sen. Beckett requested that a Faculty Handbook report and the faculty appeals be added to the agenda. Changes added. Motion carried.

3.0 Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve minutes by Sen. Burnett. Seconded. Motion carried.

4.0 Guest Presentations and Reports

4.1 Provost Lyman

Provost Lyman discussed responsible conduct of research (RCR). Federal agencies require people to go through RCR training before receiving federal dollars. USM needs to look into a university-wide policy. All faculty who conduct research need to complete the RCR training which takes 4-6 hours.

Sen. Haley asked if departments could tailor the modules of RCR training to their disciplines needs. Lyman stated that the modules should be able to be modified.

Program appeals. Provost Lyman stated that Dr. Saunders will implement all savings of departments. Letters rescinding terminal contracts are to be distributed. There may be five or six individual appeals in the spring.

Sen. Beckett asked on what basis individuals can appeal. Provost Lyman stated that issues of seniority, tenure status violations, or someone who is mistakenly or tangentially associated with a program may have strong appeals.

Sen. Rehner asked if there is a remaining situation to cover the funds needed for the cut. Prov. Lyman stated that \$2.8m will come from cuts. The deans stepped in to financially support some of the cuts saving faculty and programs. Possible recovery of economy or appropriations will hopefully make up the difference.

Sen. Rehner asked why the university went through the UPC process if the deans had the money. Prov. Lyman stated that the prioritization exercise needed to happen which resulted in some programs being eliminated.

Sen. Meyers asked if save positions will be available for rehire if faculty members accept other employment. Prov. Lyman stated that those positions should be available for rehire.

Turnitin. Lyman stated that the Turnitin software costs the university \$20K with it increasing to \$30K next year. There is an alternative program available through Blackboard that may be able to work, but it is less comprehensive than Turnitin and implementation can be difficult. The options for plagiarism software are to continue with Turnitin, attempt to move to the Blackboard software, or have no plagiarism detecting software.

Sen. Haley remarked that Turnitin is extremely valuable for the history department and that \$30K is reasonable for the amount of time that it saves faculty members when grading. Other senators and guests respond that Turnitin has been beneficial.

Provost Lyman stated that the psychology department is being heavily recruited and that five faculty members are leaving the department. It is one of the strongest departments on campus with all programs rated as Tier 5. There is talk about taking one of the soon-to-be vacant salary lines and dividing it up to give raises to remaining faculty as a means of retention and to elevate departmental salaries to the CUPA averages.

Provost Lyman said that Dr. Saunders wants to bring USM salaries up to the CUPA average. This will first be implemented with starting salaries with salary compression issues to be addressed after. This is not a “one size fits all” situation. Some departments may have to handle this differently than others depending on hiring salaries, compression, and department size.

Sen. Oshrin asked if furloughs are still being considered. Provost Lyman stated that furloughs will be the first thing off the table.

Sen. Oshrin pointed out that giving some people raises and not others may cause morale issues on campus. Sen. Piland stated that psychology is heavily resourced and has the ability to cannibalize a position for raises. This is not true with many departments that need to fill positions. Sen. Haley said that the history department gave up a position to give \$2K raises to untenured faculty members.

Provost Lyman said that vacant positions will provide a pool of money that could be reallocated to departments for salary increases or money for vacant positions.

4.2 Ann Blackwell, Chair, RCM Action Team – 15

Dean Blackwell discussed the history of the RCM Action Team which started looking into RCM in 2008. Through research, they decided to go with a modified RCM model. The university needs to create a central pool of money for incentives and initiatives with a formula that addresses USM’s priorities. Initially, everyone will be held harmless. It’s a way of looking at the university as a whole rather than by its individual parts. The process of discussion this budget model is transparent.

Sen. Beckett brought up the concern that RCM will create a competitive environment on campus. Dean Blackwell stated that the action team has looked into this and are looking for way to prevent this from happening. All decisions will be vetted. The good news is that this model works at many institutions. The implementation process will probably be slow.

5.0 Officer Reports – 15

5.1 President

The issues of psychology department raises will go to committee. The budget committee has been busy.

5.2 Secretary

The secretary stated that she has posted items to CampusHub for senators to review.

5.3 President-elect

The Faculty Senate has spent approximately 40-45% of the budget.

6.0 Committee Reports

6.1 Academic and Governance (Masters/Redalje/Shelley)

6.1.1 Reports

6.1.1.1 Activities (Committee Meetings)

No report.

6.1.1.2 Academic Council (Masters)

No report.

6.1.1.3 Graduate Council (Masters)

No report.

6.1.1.4 Quality Enhancement Program (Redalje)

No report.

6.1.1.5 Strategic Enrollment Council & Planning (Redalje)

The committee has not met, but they have ranked proposals for the Eagle Learning Online grants. Four grants were awarded to help promote online classes.

6.1.1.6 eLearning Steering Committee (Burnett)

No report.

6.1.1.7 Internationalization Council (Shelley)

Representatives from the Professional Education Council recently attended the teacher shortage task force meeting. Teacher education programs will begin to be taught in higher education and will be a part of the review process. The state assessment group is discussing a code of ethics for classroom teachers.

6.1.1.8 Professional Education Council (Shelley)

No report

6.1.1.9 University Honors Council (Davies)

6.1.1.10 Faculty Handbook

The Faculty Handbook online is up to date. The Faculty Handbook Committee is working on bylaws for the committee in response to the request from the Committee on Committees. A draft of those bylaws should be available after the next meeting.

6.1.1.11 University Research Council

Sen. Shelley reported that the URC is finishing a survey at the request of Dr. Wiesenburg to evaluate faculty research. The survey will look at what we do well and what areas need

improvement. Dr. Wiesenburg has also agreed to support the Innovation Awards. Information about those awards will come out soon.

6.2 Budget (University) and RCM Model (Adams/Clark)

A resolution from the Budget committee was submitted for review. The resolution asks for faculty participation in the budget process and that all budgeting formulas relate to the University's mission and academic priority. Sen. Rehner asked that the resolution relate more to the strategic plan and the UPC priorities. Voting will occur at the next meeting after a second reading.

6.2.1 Reports

Sen. Rehner distributed a handout of recommendations from the UPC-AP. (See Appendix A). He met with the Provost about the document and to determine the future of this prioritization process. The Provost sees it as being a necessary committee in the future.

Sen. Rehner expressed thanks to those involved in the UPC process and

6.3 Constitution, Bylaws, and Elections (Burgess/Annulis)

The committee presented a recommendation of changes to the Faculty Senate bylaws. The changes relate to the move from paper ballots to an electronic system in the Faculty Senate voting process. They are also discussing the use of proxies. There was discussion about adding a statement to clarify that people who continually use proxies can be replaced.

6.4 Evaluation and Assessment (Fletcher/Reischman)

Sen. Reischman stated that university assessment has completed the second round of academic reviews at the college level. Institutional Research is working on additional services and accreditation surveys.

The general education committee is working on a revision of the GEC with a new template and an update on student learning outcomes. In February, listening groups within the colleges will allow faculty to provide opinions and suggestions. A recommendation had not been made to academic council. The new GEC will hopefully go into effect in 2012-2013.

Sen. Fletcher said that administrative evaluations will go online with Sen. Shelley doing the final analysis. The process will be altered so that administrators are not involved. The committee is working on the final process.

Sen. Beckett suggested that the Faculty Senate send thanks to J.T. Johnson for helping analyze the information in the past.

6.5 Materials and Resources (Branton/Lux)

6.5.1 Reports

6.5.1.1 Activities (Committee Meetings)

Sen. Branton said that the University Libraries and the Learning Enhancement Center are looking into options for plagiarism detection software.

6.5.1.2 Libraries Advisory Council (Branton)

No report

6.5.1.3 Campus Master Facility Planning (Conville)

No report.

6.5.1.4 iTech Advisory Council (Branton)

Office 2010 is available for a free download. Office 2011 is available for Apple computers. Sen. Beckett asked if these downloads are available for graduate students. Sen. Branton will look into this for the next meeting.

6.5.1.5 Space Utilization Committee (Lux)

No report.

6.5.1.6 Textbook and Course Materials Committee (Lux)

Sheri Rawls from the Learning Enhancement Center said that there are some cases on campus where online courses are being delivered through textbook publishers instead of Blackboard which can cause problems with students because they are being charged twice for access codes. If faculty members want to use a different interface, they should contact the LEC to determine if the interface can be implemented.

Provost Lyman stated that it's important to conduct online chats in Blackboard, as well, to prove misuse or inappropriate behavior. He also stated that one should be able to use Facebook via Blackboard.

Sen. Rehner said that it needs to be important to inform faculty members about these limitations, in addition to possibilities. Sen. Oshrin followed up by remarking that we should communicate this information to students.

6.6 Research and Scholarship (Downey/Masterson)

No report

6.7 University Awards

The committee met to determine a recommendation for the Excellence in Teaching and Excellence in Service Awards. The recipients will be announced in the coming weeks.

6.8 University Relations (Conville/Sevier)

Sen. Conville stated that there is a meeting next week to continue the conversations about how the Faculty Senate and faculty members can assist with communication at the university.

Sen. Conville stated that USM has been informed that the university has attained a Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. Barbara Ross started this work in 1992. 115 universities and colleges received this classification.

6.9 University Welfare (Burnett/Haley)

Sen. Haley stated that he is continuing to work on acquiring psychological services for faculty members. He hopes to organize a meeting on the coast to address faculty needs.

Two pressing issues, addressing pay increases and Staff Council's resolution to make USM a smoke-free campus, will be addressed at a future meeting. Regarding the smoking policy, Sen. Haley states that challenges may include signage and policing. He hopes that there will be funds to help people quit.

Sen. Haley reported that the Climate Action Plan has been approved. They are working on implementing the program.

Sen. Burnett commented that faculty members need raises with that being a priority. Issues of compression need to be addressed especially at the associate level.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Other

7.1.1 Department Appeals

Sen. Beckett reported that each vote had five faculty members and four deans. Deans could not vote on programs in his/her college. Majority and minority opinions were given. In one situation, the minority report was not included because the person was identified by name. The minority opinion was later added with name edits.

The crucial part of the appeals was that the deans found money to save programs. Sen. Burnett said that early on deans did not feel that they could come up with a pool of money. Sen. Burnett believes that the process needs to be developed more for potential future situations. Sen. Piland asked about situations where the dean offered money, but the program was still eliminated. Sen. Becket stated that the program failed to get overwhelming support which is not a poor reflection on the faculty members. The appeals committee may have thought that the program would have been better as a consortium or center.

7.1.2 Other

Senators Beckett and Hauer are meeting with the provost to discuss grade appeals. Sen. Beckett hopes there is a way to streamline the process.

Sen. Beckett remarked how eight of thirty-two Lucas Endowment Awards were partially funded. He proposed that we approach the VP for Research about contributing more money to these awards.

8.0 Adjournment

Sen. Oshrin moved to adjourn. Seconded. Motion passed

APPENDIX A

Recommendations from UPC-AP

- 1) Administration requested a proposal defining UPC-AP
 - a) Scope
 - b) Authority (cooperation in process, program and degree)
 - c) Scale (volume of work)
 - d) Composition (in relation to AA and AS)
 - e) Relationship to other governance and administrative committees (GC, AC, strategic planning)
 - i) Role of UPC in prioritization and reallocation of positions/resources (short term and long term).
 - f) Administrative charge to begin working as originally conceptualized in the UPC guidelines.
 - i) A university committee (UAC like) that was established through senate guidelines.
- 2) Define the relationship between UPC-AP prioritizations (strategic priorities and RCM)
 - a) Strategic planning required
- 3) Commit to the UPC Tiers as a guide for strategic planning
 - a) "Discourage" AC and GC from approving departmental changes/additions that take SCHs away from other college in order to better position departments for RCM.
- 4) Clean up academic initiatives within SOAR/ registrar
- 5) Strengthen Tiers I and II initiatives.
 - a) Timelines (for strengthening or discontinuing)
 - b) Consequences: budget implications, reallocation, etc
 - c) Administrative support (resubmission of material, new reviews, etc).
- 6) Address "quality" issues within academic programs
 - a) Establish faculty to student graduate ratios (especially PhD programs)
 - b) Over representation of USM grads in faculty positions
 - c) Review low GRE scores among students
 - d) Require Plans of Study for all graduate programs.
- 7) Assign instructional costs and responsibilities to colleges and units
 - a) Remove the oversight by campus or alternative learning
 - b) Allow instructional budgets & responsibility to rest in departments
- 8) Establish a University College/Division of Undergraduate Studies, with responsibilities for GEC 01-05 (the 'core')

- a) Reporting to the provost – separate from any one college
 - b) The majors required to stand on their own separate from service courses.
 - c) Provides protection and advocacy for GEC
- 9) Review of scholarships & assistantships at both undergraduate and graduate levels