

10-7-2011

## Faculty Senate Minutes - October 7, 2011

USM Faculty Senate

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### Recommended Citation

USM Faculty Senate, "Faculty Senate Minutes - October 7, 2011" (2011). *Faculty Senate Minutes*. Paper 151.  
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**The University of Southern Mississippi**  
**Faculty Senate**  
**Trent Lott Center**  
**Oct 7, 2011**

Members Present and Represented (by proxy): M.A. Adams, L. Agler, J. Anderson, A. Branton, R. Buchanan (D. Fletcher), D. Conville, D. Daves, K. Davis, K. Dillon, J. Ding, D. Douglas, L. Downey, M. Dugan (E. King), M. Elasri, D. Fletcher, L. Flynn (E. King), A. Haley, T. Hartsell, L. Iglesias (A. Haley), E. King, D. Lunsford, M. Lux, D. Masterson, C. McCormick (D. Masterson), C. Meyers (A. Haley), M. Naquin, L. Nored (D. Fletcher), W. Odom, S. Oshrin (L. Story), S. Piland, R. Press, T. Rehner, S. Reischman Fletcher, A. Sevier, K. Shelley, J. H. Shin, C. Sirola, P. Smith, L. Story, D. Tingstrom, J. Wiggert, T. Zelner.

Members Absent:

Visitors: T. Laird, B. Powell, K. Reidenbach, J. Whitehead

- 1.0 Call to order  
President Rehner called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm.
- 2.0 Approval of agenda  
President Rehner added an item to the agenda. Senator Conville motioned and Senator Masterson seconded approval of the amended agenda. All approved.
- 3.0 Approval of minutes  
Senator Rehner called for approval of the September meeting minutes. Senator Fletcher motioned and Senator Haley seconded approval of the minutes. All approved.
- 4.0 Officer Reports
  - 4.1 President  
President Rehner welcomed Dr. Ernest King as the newly appointed senator from the College of Business.

Senator Rehner reported the he had met with President Saunders to discuss a memo from departmental chairs elected to Faculty Senate. The memo was in response to the Gulf Coast Guidelines. Senator Rehner suggested to President Saunders that a listening session be arranged with departmental chairs. As of now, a listening session has been set for November 7<sup>th</sup> and an invitation has been extended to chairs with programs on both campuses.

Senator Smith encouraged senators to stay focused on what is effective, not the hierarchy and authority at the institution.

President Saunders provided Senator Rehner with an update on the status of resolutions passed in the Senate last year. President Rehner shared these updates with respective sub-committee co-chairs. Resolutions that need additional attention will be discussed at subsequent Senate meetings.

President Rehner and Senator Daves met with the Provost to deliver the aforementioned memo from chairs elected to Senate.

It was announced at the Expanded Provost's Council that a review committee of the Gulf Coast Guidelines, chaired by Dean Lansford, has been organized. Additional members include Joe Olmi—the Council of Chairs appointee, Patsy Anderson, Cyndi Gaudet, and

Mark Wrighton.

Upon a request from Provost Lyman, President Rehner nominated Michael Mays from the College of Arts and Letters to serve on the Classroom Conduct Committee.

At a meeting with the Provost, the Executive Committee reinforced the need for academic/admission staff to vet ideas—at least at the Expanded Provost's Council—before implementing policy. The Executive Committee and Provost also talked about RCM. The Provost has consistently stated that USM is dedicated to a modified RCM approach.

President Rehner reported that the Senate's request for representation on the RCM budget committee was honored. Senators Fletcher and Agler represented the Senate at the last RCM budget committee meeting. At that meeting, Dean Blackwell provided a report from the RCM Action Team. In brief, the all-funds approach is beyond the University's capabilities at this time. The profit centers are the five academic colleges. The Coast, Auxiliaries, and Centers and Institutes are not profit centers. A dedication to incentivizing admissions/enrollment growth remains the core element to the model.

#### 4.2 President-elect

Senator Adams reported that the Senate is at risk of running out of money before the end of the academic year. The Senate's request to the President for additional funds has not been granted. Senator Adams discussed procedures for contributing to the Senate's benevolent fund. Contributions will be deposited into the Faculty Senate bank account.

#### 4.3 Secretary No report

#### 4.4 Secretary-elect No report

Representative Toby Barker (R)—House District 102—addressed the Senate. Currently, PERS is paying benefits to over 80,000 retirees. Over the next 10 years, there will be a significant number of people retiring. Less than 65% of the needed support is funded. Fiscal hits over the last few years only added to the liability. Governor Barbour has formed a study commission to review the current status of PERS. The commission will present recommendations on November 15<sup>th</sup>. The recommendations may or may not be acted upon. According to Rep. Barker, fellow representatives have little appetite to change retirement benefits for current employees. Adjustments to benefits may need to be made for new hires. Rep. Barker invited senators to contact him with questions and reported that there will be a faculty and staff forum later in the fall.

Senator Smith asked Rep. Barker whether the PERS Board has been appropriately doing their job. Rep. Barker stated that he thought the Board does an appropriate job.

#### 5.0 Remarks from Administration

##### 5.1 President Saunders President Saunders was unable to attend the meeting.

## 5.2 Provost Lyman

Provost Lyman stated that all chairs are now invited to attend the Expanded Provost's Council. Even non-chair faculty members are welcome to attend the meeting the last Monday each month at 4:00.

As requested, the Provost briefly reviewed the organizational chart of USM. The Provost left a copy of the organizational chart with President Rehner for distribution. The Provost pointed out that Dr. Lucas is the Vice President for Gulf Coast, not an Associate Provost. There is no direct connection between the Vice President of the Gulf Coast and the Provost. The Provost position can be described as first among equals. This suggests that the Provost is the senior Vice President but is not the boss of other Vice Presidents. The organizational chart is submitted to the Institute of Higher Learning each academic year.

Provost Lyman stated that the Gulf Coast Guidelines are about specific departmental functions, not lines of reporting.

In an effort to resolve the current debate about the Gulf Coast Guidelines, the President will have a listening session, a review committee has been formed (membership aforementioned), and Dr. Lucas is continuing to meet with department chairs that have programs on the Coast.

Provost Lyman provided an update on the Personnel Allocation Committee (PAC). Dr. Nugent, Associate Dean in the College of Health, made a presentation on the reestablishment of the College of Nursing. At that same meeting, Dr. Forster, Dean of the College of Health, reacted to Dr. Nugent's proposal. For the next three weeks, the PAC will meet with two deans (weekly) who will present prioritized request for personnel. Then, the committee will deliberate and offer recommendations. Recommendations can be expected by the beginning of December.

President Rehner asked if requests for data will be made to Institution Research. Provost Lyman reported that PAC will work with Institutional Research as proposals are made and data is requested.

The Classroom Conduct Committee now has a completed membership. This committee will be co-chaired by Drs. Holloway and Easterling. Membership includes Drs. Michael Mays (Faculty Senate representative), Tom O'Brian (Council of Chairs representative), Kyle Zelner (Excellent in Teaching Award recipient), Dean Moser (Dean representative), Marlene Naquin (Coast representative), Police Chief Hopkins (University Police), Deena Crawford (Director of the Counseling Center) John Mark Weathers (University Council), a designee of the Student Government Association, a graduate student representative, and a representative of the Honor's College. The committee's first meeting is being scheduled. The committee's task is to develop statements concerning expectations and thresholds for faculty and student conduct. They are also responsible for developing a statement of minimum behavioral expectations and procedures for when expectations are not met.

Senator Haley asked how the University will be notified about the procedure/s. The Provost suggested that the procedures will be specified in the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, and Human Resource documentation.

Senator Press asked whether the Classroom Conduct Committee's meetings will be open

to the public. The Provost did not think that all meetings will be public but there may be scheduled times for public commentary. The Classroom Conduct Committee has not been given a deadline for completing this work. The committee should have something finalized by the end of this academic year.

Next, the Provost discussed the protocol for suspended or dismissed faculty. The Provost is not certain that predetermined protocols can be applied because the incidences surrounding each suspension or dismissal are idiosyncratic. A review process might be a more appropriate approach. Such a review could help to ensure that there is not any administrative high-handedness. The grievance procedure is provided in the Faculty Handbook.

Senator Rehner pointed out that appeal statements in the Faculty Handbook has little to do with suspensions that result from classroom/instructional behavior. President Rehner suggested that the Faculty Handbook Committee could look at broadening the grievance procedures. Senator Haley stated that a review board could look at what happened in situations and make sure parties involved followed procedures correctly. Provost Lyman reminded Senators that the Ombudsman is part of the grievance procedure. The review function of the Ombudsman could be broadened.

Provost Lyman discussed summer profits to colleges and departments. The University split \$125,000 among the colleges based on percentage of summer school revenue generated. Another agreement will be crafted for this coming summer. In the past, the University has needed summer school revenue to balance the budget.

The RCM Action Team will make a report to the RCM committee in December. In that report, the Action Team will propose: 1) a process whereby academic units can carry over money at the end of the year; 2) a formulaic approach to distribution of increased revenues to the academic units; and 3) a mechanism that reflects the true cost of auxiliary services, Centers and Institutes.

Senator Haley suggested that Centers and Institutes provide intangible benefits to the University. He asked how we could measure those intangible contributions. Provost Lyman stated that support will be provided to those programs that provide intangible contributions.

Senator Press expressed a concerned about students groups not organizing because they do not have the money to pay for renting a room. Second, Senator Press asked whether the RCM approach works and whether the University is stuck with it.

In response to Senator Press' first question, Provost Lyman stated that if the University is going to distribute cost, then costs—including the cost of rooms—must be distributed. In response to Senator Press' second question, Provost Lyman stated that the University is not stuck with RCM. In fact, the RCM Action Team is suggesting that the University can not support the all-funds model. The University is dedicated to finding a way to reflect the philosophical basis of the RCM model—that is 1) finding incentives for reducing cost; 2) identifying the reward for revenue; and 3) splitting up the cost of doing business. This is a move towards an incentivized, decentralized model.

Bill Powell provided an update on Digital Measures. A pilot is being organized in the College of Arts and Letters. The system will allow faculty to record their productivity in

a digital online database. The data would allow the University to quantify research and scholarship activity. Dr. Powell clarified that this is not FAR. It is an annual activity report. This data will be available to personnel committees to simplify annual evaluation processes. Support will be provided to faculty as they enter data. The Digital Measure system will most likely be available in 2013.

Senator Press questioned how teaching excellence will be measured. Provost Lyman stated that by default, teaching is measured by student evaluations. Dr. Powell clarified that digital measures will simply collect the data—not evaluate the data.

Senator Fletcher asked whether the deans bought into this process. Dean Whitehead stated that the deans do not have a problem with this approach.

Senator Conville asked what the impetus for this system was and who would request information from the database. The Provost stated that IHL asks for this kind of data but that IHL is not directly requesting this approach. Provost Lyman stated that advocacy groups and accrediting bodies request data that will be captured in the database.

Senator Haley stated that this system is an opportunity to highlight the University's best.

Provost Lyman stated that there are 80 more faculty members on campus this year as compared to last year. The University has 15 more tenured faculty members than last fall and approximately 50 fewer tenured-track faculty members than last fall. The University does not have fewer instructional personnel than we had last year. The University does have fewer tenure-track personnel.

Senator Haley stated that this creates a service burden on tenure-track faculty. Non-tenure-track faculty members do not serve on committees.

The Provost stated that the University does not need to reduce rigor but does need to identify methods for increasing probability that a student will succeed.

Provost Lyman and Dr. Powell are identifying a list of programs that can be 100% completed on the coast. The draft will be presented to the deans. The next step is to decide whether the University is committed to all of the identified programs.

Senator Davis asked the Provost for clarification on whether the University is dedicated to RCM. The Provost confirmed that the University is committed to the core elements of the model.

## 6.0 Old Business

### 6.1 Gulf Coast Guidelines

President Rehner directed Senators attention to the memo drafted by departmental chairs elected to the Senate. The memo and additional relevant documents were included with the agenda.

### 6.2 Suspension protocol

In regard to the suspicion and dismissal of faculty, President Rehner recommended that the Faculty Handbook Committee give thought to this issue.

### 6.3 Faculty development and VP for research

The Research and Scholarship sub-committee is looking into available funding for conference travel.

### 6.4 Travel

The Senate asked the President for money for travel and space. The request was denied. Upon a request by Senator Naquin, Dean Lansford will try to pay for Coast Senator travel.

Senator Haley presented a resolution from the University Welfare committee on Teaching, Service, and Travel. In brief, the Welfare Committee resolves that: 1) All meetings of University standing committees and all departmental meetings on the Hattiesburg and Gulf Park campuses should allow for participants to attend using long-distance technology; 2) Faculty who attend department and standing committee meetings where long-distance technology has not been provided or are required to attend in person due to the nature of the meeting, as well as those whose teaching and advising responsibilities extend to both campuses, should be compensated for travel at the rate stipulated by the University's travel office, the state, and the federal government; and 3) There needs to be a clear administrative source for requesting compensation for travel. Senators will vote on the resolution at the next meeting.

Senator Naquin stated that President Saunders had offered the Gulf Coast Faculty Council to purchase each department high definition cameras to use for connecting campuses.

Senator Wiggert questioned the number of sites that can be connected electronically. Senator Wiggert stated that the usefulness of technology might be limited when more than two campuses are linked.

## 7.0 New Business

### 7.1 Commitment to tenure track lines

President Rehner stated that PAC's decisions should be made by December. This may be too late for recruiting tenure-track faculty. Senator Tingstrom stated that the vacated positions could theoretically start next fall, but the timing of PAC decisions might not allow much time for many departments to hire faculty members to start fall 2012.

Senator Conville asked whether the number of new hires provided by Provost Lyman included graduate students who are instructors. Dr. Powell clarified that the numbers do not include graduate student instructors.

Senator Adams asked for information on why the number of vacated lines has been shrinking. Dr. Powell stated that some faculty lines had to be immediately filled. PAC members in the Senate discussed the number of lines that are available.

### 7.2 Strategic planning vs marketplace success

President Rehner mentioned the need for strategic planning. Strategic planning is in opposition to a market-driven approach.

Senator Daves stated that the University is most concerned with getting students enrolled.

Senator Haley stated that unless the University is willing to get serious about strategic planning, decision will be made through student demand.

Senator Tingstrom stated that a year ago, the UPC was charged with identifying priorities. Now, we are talking about a strategic plan.

Senator Smith articulated that a strategic plan's function is to lift individuals above the day-to-day issues of life.

### 7.3 Personnel Allocation Committee

The PAC was previously discussed.

### 7.4 Action team's report to the RCM committee

The Provost discussed the Action Team's Report.

### 7.5 Implementation of academic protocols

Senators discussed the current pressure being experienced as a result of Admission policies.

## 8.0 Committee Reports

### 8.1 Academic and Governance

The Academic and Governance Committee are reviewing resolutions from last year. New business will include a continued discussion on the role of departmental chairs and the request for President Saunders to include the Faculty Senate president in the Executive Cabinet.

Senator Daves, a member of the Academic and Governance Committee, directed the group's attention to the memo drafted by departmental chairs elected to Senate. The memo was in response to a memo from the Council of Chairs regarding the Gulf Coast Guidelines. The purpose of the memo is to focus attention on the role of chairs. Also, Senator Daves directed attention to a document that articulated that the University is one institution and does not need to be polarized by campus issues.

Senator Press asked for Senator Daves to identify the sticking issue. Daves responded that the memo addresses where departmental chairs sit in the decision-making processes.

### 8.2 Budget

No report

### 8.3 Constitution, Bylaws, and Elections



The Constitution and Bylaws Committee is looking at ways to build a relationship with Faculty Council on the Coast, Faculty Senate membership realignment, and the possibility of electronic voting in between Faculty Senate meetings.

8.4 Elections

No report

8.5 Evaluation and Assessment

No report

8.6 Research and Scholarship

The Research and Scholarship Committee met with the Vice President for Research (VPR). The Committee is continuing to discuss travel funding with him. The VPR still holds firm to the required on-line RCR training, but the 8-hour, face-to-face, training might not be necessary.

8.7 University Awards

HEADWAE award nominations are due October 17. This year, nominations for all awards must be submitted electronically. The Awards Committee has expanded to include Senators Naquin and Conville. Senator Lux invited Senators Zelner and Hartsell to join the Awards Committee.

8.8 University Relations

Senator Conville reported that he and Senator Sevier, co-chairs of the University Relations Committee, met with J.T. Tisdale of the College of Business, Ryan Kelly of the College of Health and Tara Burcham of the College of Science and Technology. At the meeting, Senators Conville and Sevier conversed with college public relations personnel about their current practices that are effective and what faculty can do to make that go better. All three PR representatives noted that USM staff are a powerful and mostly untapped means of getting good information about the University into the community.

Several items from the meeting stood out:

1. The three colleges represented all make wide use of social media, although not with universally positive results.
2. Print media have not been abandoned. One college develops a formal Annual Report and another college creates booklets that highlight research.
3. The PR personnel depend on faculty members and department chairs to get “good news” stories to them, and in one case, faculty members write up drafts of press releases for them.
4. All believe that some form of constant contact is necessary to compete for their audiences’ attention.

The Committee plans to continue these discussions and hope to bring recommendations to the Senate at some point. December 7<sup>th</sup> is the date for a Legislative day.

## 8.9 University Welfare

The University Welfare Committee will present the aforementioned resolution at the next meeting.

## 8.10 Faculty Handbook (Tingstrom)

Senator Tingstrom provided an update from the Faculty Handbook Committee. Dr. David Beckett was elected chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee. At the first meeting, the Committee reviewed a summary of issues from last year. One of the issues discussed was the need for more specific guidelines for obtaining emeritus status.

The Faculty Handbook Committee will also revise the handbook based on policies developed by the Classroom Conduct Committee.

Senator Odom asked whether the Senate should discuss the emeritus status guidelines and maybe draft a resolution. Senator Lux affirmed that the Senate can make recommendations to the Faculty Handbook Committee. President Rehner suggested that the Constitution and Bylaws Committee put forth a resolution related to the emeritus status guidelines.

## 8.11 Gulf Coast Faculty Council (Naquin)

Senator Downey shared a written update from the Gulf Coast Faculty Council on behalf of Senator Naquin. The Faculty Council passed a resolution affirming implementation of the Gulf Coast Guidelines. Dean Lansford is asking each college on the Coast to budget \$500 per faculty member for travel. Dr. Lucas will provide food for the Senate meeting on the Coast. The Council has asked to have a stronger role in the faculty awards given on the Coast. The Council has invited the President and Provost to be guests at the November meeting. There is hope that the Dean of the Graduate School and the VPR will address the Council.

Council President Naquin attended the Executive Council retreat. Strategic planning on the Coast has begun. Rehner requested a schedule for the Gulf Coast Faculty Council meetings. Senator Naquin will provide that information.

## 9.0 Other Business

No other business was discussed.

## 10.0 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn. The meeting concluded at 5:05 pm.