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Faculty Senate Minutes - November 4, 2011

USM Faculty Senate

The University of Southern Mississippi
Faculty Senate
Trent Lott Center
Nov 4, 2011

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

Members Absent: J. Anderson, D. Conville

Visitors: M. Forster, J. May, B. Powell, K. Reidenbach

1.0   Call to order
       President Rehner called the meeting to order at 2:06 pm.

2.0   Approval of agenda
       President Rehner asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Senator Oshrin motioned and Senator Masterson seconded approval of the agenda. All approved.

3.0   Approval of minutes
       Senator Rehner called for approval of the October meeting minutes. Senator Davis motioned to approve the minutes. All approved.

4.0   Officer Reports
   4.1   President
          President Rehner noted varying agendas and perspective on key issues among University administrators. President Rehner also noted that it is unclear how the voice of governance committees affects decisions being made, such as personnel allocation and university priorities.

          President Rehner proposed the development of a University Council that could press for strategic direction (e.g., salary compression, recruitment of minority faculty, and help set the direction as to whether USM is a teaching or research institution). The Council could also help create a structural mechanism for connecting student-related departments (e.g., Registrar, LEC) with academic units.

          A listening session with Chairs with programs in Hattiesburg and the Coast will take place on November 7th. Drs. Joe Kolibol and Ken Zantow have been added to the review committee of the Gulf Coast Guidelines.

          President Rehner encouraged the Senate to look at the University organizational chart, specifically reporting lines.

   4.2   President-elect
          The President-elect reported that the amount of funds in the Faculty Senate budget is rapidly decreasing.

4.3   Secretary
        No report

4.4   Secretary-elect
        No report

5.0   Remarks from Administration

    5.1   President Saunders and Provost Lyman
            [Prior to the meeting, President Rehner submitted questions to Drs. Saunders and Lyman
            and Mr. Homer Coffman. President Saunders, Provost Lyman, and Mr. Coffman
            responded to those questions (italicized below).]

            *How do associate deans on the coast report to two supervisors and how does the new
            director of HR supervise HR on the coast? Do we have 2 different admissions
            departments?*

            Provost Lyman stated that the Associate Deans on the Coast have dual reporting
            responsibilities. They represent the college in which they are affiliated, as well as
            represent the interests of the Coast. The organizational chart represents this dual role.

            At times the Associate Deans on the Coast are more accountable to local administration.
            At other times, they are more accountable to their respective college. In terms of tenure
            and promotion, Associate Deans are most likely to be more accountable to the college
            dean. In terms of more localized issues to the Coast (e.g., moving a class from Gulf Park
            to GCRL), there needs to be as much—if not more involvement—of Coast
            Administration.

            Senator Daves stated that more discussion can resolve the confusion as to the role of
            deans, Associate Deans, and Coast Administration. Provost Lyman reiterated that the
            conversation is more about tasks, not people. Senator Daves stated that the
            direct connection between the deans and Associate Deans on the Coast needs to be
            clarified.

            *Governance bodies have always been "advisory" at USM. In this case related to nursing,
            the PAC did not recommend a college of nursing. How do you reconcile their decision
            and the actual outcome?*

            Provost Lyman stated that in general, advisory means a non-binding decision-maker.

            *Clinical professors are not eligible for tenure (FH 3.3.3) and are not considered part of
            the corps of instruction (FH 3.3.1) as defined by IHL Board policy (sect 404.1). How can
            administration reconcile its support for granting tenure to professors of practice when
            the IHL policy and the Faculty Handbook define those same persons as ineligible for
            tenure?*

            Two units, the School of Nursing and the School of Mass Communication and
            Journalism, approached their respective dean with a desire to discuss the establishment of
            tenure-track positions with different defining characteristics. Subsequently, Provost
            Lyman presented this request at Deans' Council. As reported in the Deans' Council

minutes, Provost Lyman will consider assembling an ad hoc committee (with representation from each college and governance bodies) to consider the issue.

Senator Haley asked for clarification on the nature of jobs filled by clinical professors at this time. Provost Lyman clarified that no clinical faculty are in tenure-track positions at this time.

Senator Story described the nature of clinical professor positions in the field of nursing. As she stated, although these individuals may not conduct their own research, they are dedicated to translating research to a clinical setting.
Senator Haley raised a concern that job security is being conflated with tenure.

President Saunders reported that per Dr. Bounds, there is no prohibition on multi-year contracts—up to four year state limit.

Senator Oshrin provided an example from another university where clinical personnel are given three year contracts, renewable each year.

Senator Shin suggested consideration should also be given to how to include clinical professor on governing bodies.

Last spring the Faculty Council and Faculty Senate passed a resolution stating that advising should be determined by departments and colleges as opposed to a campus. What is the "pending" status of this resolution?

President Saunders stated that the resolution is being held until the Gulf Coast Guidelines are resolved.

There were many issues with textbook orders this last year. What leverage does the university have on these private vendors to ensure that we get the educational materials that we need?

President Saunders stated that the University is negotiating a contract extension. Faculty should direct concerns to Mr. Michael Herndon, Director of Procurement, or the Textbook Committee (Chair, Dr. Anita Davis).

Senator Haley asked about the likelihood of IHL reconsidering the textbook policy. President Saunders will follow-up with the Board. Senators discussed specific difficulties with ordering textbooks. The President requested that the specific situations be documented and shared with Mr. Herndon.

5.2   Homer Coffman
A $600,000 Department of Education grant was received to upgrade the Walker Science building network. During 2010, iTech completed 30,000 work orders. iTech is operating with 40% less staff than two years ago. iTech is engaged in a mobile strategy with Blackboard. Latency in Internet access is a primary problem.

IHL is requiring the University to put an accountability and transparency of transactions web-site in place. The site would provide access to information about transactions (including p-card transaction), contracts, and salary/compensation. The legislative goal is to make the web-site available by June 2012. Information on the site will be searchable

by date range, vendor, or by both. Department is not a selection criteria.

How can new computers assigned to faculty only have two years left on their warranties?

Mr. Coffman said that should never happen.

Senator Haley voiced concerned that the computers being purchased might not adequately meet the needs of the respective faculty members. Mr. Coffman welcomed feedback such as this from the faculty.

Why would exceptions to the standard issue PC that exceeded the minimum USM specifications be excluded from iTech support?

Mr. Coffman stated that iTech will not turn away faculty that have needs. But, staff in iTech might not have the expertise to work on problems encountered with PCs that exceed the minimum USM specifications.

Why is this (CampusHub) so difficult to use and what is its "future" at USM?

CampusHub is technology in transition and not the answer to everyone.

Why does it take so long for library catalogs to load?

Mr. Coffman was not aware of this issue. There was discussion about providing computers in the library that do not require patrons to log-in.

Are there any more options for increasing security and decreasing spam?

According to Mr. Coffman, tightening spam criteria could result in loss of legitimate e-mails.

A large transfer of funds was noticed for iTech between the 2010 and 2011 budget books. Can you explain this transfer?

This year, funding for faculty/staff telephone services were billed in one lump sum.

Senator Wiggert asked if the difficulty of hiring staff in iTech was due to salary levels. Mr. Coffman affirmed that these difficulties are due to low salaries being offered.

Senator Haley requested that members of the Research and Scholarship committee stay in contact with iTech.

6.0   Old Business
   6.1   SUAC- Space Utilization
          President Rehner revisited the issue of departmental space needs on campus. Dean
          Forster stated that Rita Hailey-Burks is designated at the academic planner. President
          Rehner reiterated that there is no vehicle for planning for long-term space planning.
          Senator Oshrin asked President Rehner to speak with Dr. Saunders about this need for
          planning to meet space needs.

7.0   New Business
   7.1   Resolution for travel
          President Rehner circulated a Resolution on Teaching, Service, and Travel from the
          University Welfare Committee (Appendix A). The resolution was unanimously approved.

8.0   Committee Reports
   8.1   Academic and Governance
          Senator Shelley reported that the Academic and Governance Committee will continue to
          work on the request for the Faculty Senate president to be included in the President's
          Executive Cabinet. The Committee has reviewed the revised student course evaluation
          document. At Dr. Powell's request, that the Committee is reviewing the
          guidelines on Instructional Use of Social Media.

   8.2   Budget
          Senator Agler reported that she met with Dean Lansford regarding the Coast budget
          structure. He suggested that Lynn Estes, the Associate VP of Administration and Finance
          on the Coast, be invited to a Faculty Senate meeting. President Rehner suggested that
          Allyson Easterwood, Associate VP of Finance, be invited to the same meeting to answer
          questions.

   8.3   Constitution and Bylaws
          Senator Tingstrom reported that the Constitution and Bylaws Committee had continued
          to discuss the policy for granting emeritus status. The Committee wants to gauge whether
          Senators are in favor of automatically conferring emeritus status when certain criteria are
          met. There was a lengthy discussion about the policy for granting emeritus status. Many
          Senators are hesitant to recommend automatically conferring emeritus status. Other
          Senators favored an automatic granting emeritus status.

   8.4   Elections
          Senator Hartsell, co-chair of the Election Committee, met with Russ Willis. Mr. Willis
          will generate and compare a faculty list from Human Resources and Institutional
          Research.

   8.5   Evaluation and Assessment
          Senators Oshrin, co-chair of the Evaluation Committee, met with VJ Patel, auditor. Mr.
          Patel has agreed to assist with administrator evaluations.

   8.6   Research and Scholarship
          Senator Masterson reported that members of the Research and Scholarship Committee
          had drafted a travel request form. The form will be shared with the Vice President for
          Research. The Committee has been made aware of delays in approval of expedited
          research protocols submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Electronic
          submission of IRB protocols might alleviate this problem.

   8.7   University Awards
          No report

   8.8   University Relations
          Senator Sevier reported that the University Relations Committee will continue to work on
          the legislative forum. Details will be provided.

8.9   University Welfare
        No report

8.10   Faculty Handbook
         No report

8.11   Gulf Coast Faculty Council (Naquin)
        Senator Naquin reported that a sub-committee of Faculty Council has submitted a request to develop a mini-success commons on the Coast. The commons would include the speaking center, writing center, foreign language lab, and math tutor center. The Council is seeking clarification on who is responsible for enrollment, advisement, and registration responsibilities.

9.0   Other Business
         No other business

10.0   Adjournment
        Senator Oshrin motioned to adjourn and Senator Fletcher seconded the motion. The meeting concluded at 4:50pm.

11/4/2011

Faculty Senate Resolution

Resolution on Teaching, Service, and Travel

Gulf Coast and Hattiesburg faculty teach courses, serve on University committees, and advise students on both campuses and, as a result, often have to travel between campuses. Since these contributions are an essential part of our service and teaching obligations, are evaluated annually, and are considered for tenure and promotion, faculty must be given an equal and fair opportunity to participate in all aspects of academic life and to provide students on both campuses with the support they need. The University must do a better job of providing resources for faculty who teach and perform service on both campuses, whether they are traveling from Hattiesburg to Gulf Park or from Gulf Park to Hattiesburg.

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. Full implementation of this policy, to be orchestrated by iTech and the Learning Enhancement Center using both campus-to-campus (such as IVN and Tandberg) and personal computing solutions (such as Skype), should take place within one year. Much of this could be accomplished with the inexpensive purchase of conferencing software licenses, computer cameras, and training. Flexible, decentralized approaches that allow faculty to meet electronically using office computers or laptops (rather than specially equipped rooms with trained personnel) are especially encouraged.

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. Currently, this is the rate paid to University administrators and faculty when they travel for conferences and other campus business and it is the rate state law mandates for all state officers and employees traveling on official business (Section 25-3-41 of the Mississippi Code of 1972). Presently, many faculty traveling between the Hattiesburg and Gulf Coast campuses are compensated at a lower rate.

3. Recognizing that campus-to-campus travel is a regular part of some faculty's academic life, the University should make every effort to simplify and streamline the system by which faculty are compensated for travel. This might be accomplished by processing requests through the college, coast, and library deans' offices.