

1-27-2012

Faculty Senate Minutes - January 27, 2012

USM Faculty Senate

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USM Faculty Senate, "Faculty Senate Minutes - January 27, 2012" (2012). *Faculty Senate Minutes*. Paper 148.
http://aquila.usm.edu/faculty_senate_minutes/148

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The University of Southern Mississippi
Faculty Senate
Trent Lott Center
January 27, 2012

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

Absent: D. Conville, D. Douglas, A. Sevier, C. Sirola

Guests: Michael Forster, Kate Greene, Ed Kemp, Tim Laird, Jeff May, Bill Powell, Karen Reidenbach, David Sliman, and Ken Zantow.

1.0 Call to order

Dr. Rehner called the meeting to order at 2:03 PM.

2.0 Approval of agenda

President Rehner asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Senator Dugan motioned. Senator Tingstrom seconded. All approved.

3.0 Approval of minutes

President Rehner asked for a motion to approve the December meeting minutes. Senator Oshrin motioned. Senator Reischman Fletcher seconded. All approved the December meeting minutes as circulated.

4.0 Officer Reports

4.1 President

President Rehner discussed recent changes among University administrators, including the resignation of Russ Willis as the Vice President for Administrative Affairs. Chad Driskell will serve as the Interim Vice President for Administrative Affairs. Senator Oshrin suggested that a resolution thanking Mr. Willis for his service to the University be drafted and presented at the next meeting. Senators approved the motion. Senator Oshrin will draft the resolution.

There were no updates to report on the Gulf Coast Guidelines.

University retention efforts, including the Student Success Center and the First Year Experience, will be moved from Academic Affairs to Student Affairs, effective July 1, 2012.

In an effort to expand shared governance, Senator Press suggested a resolution that the Faculty Senate President be included as a member of the Executive Cabinet. All senators were in favor of such a resolution. Senators Press, Haley, and Flynn will draft a resolution in support of the Faculty Senate President becoming a member of the Executive Cabinet.

4.2 President-elect

No report

4.3 Secretary

The March 2, 2012 meeting will be held on the Coast.

4.4 Secretary-elect
No report

5.0 Remarks from Administration

5.1 Interim Provost Wiesenburg

Dr. Wiesenburg addressed questions submitted to him prior to the meeting. Dr. Wiesenburg stated that the transition of Chad Driskell to the Vice President for Administrative Affairs should not have any impact on Academic Affairs. In regard to recent events surrounding the Southern Miss U-tab pilot program, IHL has broadened their interest to look at student fees at the University. Of the 759 tablets that were distributed fall semester, all but three have been tagged as University property. Dr. Wiesenburg asked for input on what to do with the tablets. Ideas can be submitted to deans or David Sliman.

Dr. Wiesenburg has organized a task force, co-chaired by Sheri Rawls and David Sliman, to look at distance communication capabilities on campus. Dr. Wiesenburg is hoping to improve connectivity between the Hattiesburg campus and campuses on the Gulf Coast.

In regard to moving retention efforts to Student Affairs, deliberation with various university groups was not possible. Dr. Wiesenburg stated that retention efforts and needs are too immediate to allow for such discussions. Senators discussed the benefits and limitations of having retention efforts in Student Affairs. Dr. Wiesenburg is looking for additional dollars, perhaps currently designated for Administrative Affairs, to be re-designated for Academic Affairs.

Senators and Dr. Wiesenburg discussed the current textbook policy and contract. Faculty members are encouraged to document problems with ordering or obtaining textbooks from Barnes and Nobles and to submit a description of the problems to Dr. Cynthia Easterling. A four-year contract with Barnes and Nobles was recently renewed. Senators also discussed the problem of overcrowded classrooms with Dr. Wiesenburg.

6.0 Old Business

6.1 Master Space Allocation Committee

A space budgeting committee is being formed.

6.2 Resolution regarding Guidelines

The Provost's recommendation is forthcoming.

6.3 Resolution for travel

The Provost will take the resolution to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

6.4 Classroom Conduct

The Classroom Conduct Committee has not met spring semester.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Ombudsman

Frank Moore has been appointed as the University Ombudsman.

7.2 Search processes

David Sliman is the Interim CIO. A job announcement for the Director of Procurement and Contract Services position has been posted.

7.3 Governance Committee's role

The Provost's Council has been disbanded. Dr. Wiesenburg will work directly with deans—who will work with chairs of academic units. Senators voiced concern with Student Affairs becoming more involved with academic decisions, particularly because faculty members are not being included in decision-making processes.

7.4 Strategic planning
No report

7.5 Other
Senator Press voiced concerns about the lack of shelter for the designated smoking areas. Senator Haley encouraged faculty to express concerns directly to Jodi Ryder, campus Health Educator. Senator Haley reiterated that the smoking zones have already been established.

8.0 Committee Reports

8.1 Academic and Governance

The Academic and Governance Committee disseminated a recommendation that the University allow multi-year contracts for clinical faculty members, but not tenure. The Committee asked whether the Senate supports the position for multi-year contracts. Instructors would not be in this class. Senator Naquin pointed out that instructors—part of the corps of instruction—have no protection, but according to this recommendation clinical faculty members—who are not part of the corps of instruction—would have protection. The Committee will draft a parallel document that addresses instructors.

The Academic and Governance Committee will meet with representatives of Student Affairs to request faculty representation on the Admissions and Credit Committee.

8.2 Budget
No report.

Upon Senator Fletcher's suggestions, Dr. Rehner will invite Jeff Hammond, Interim Director of Athletics, to speak to the Senate. Dr. Rehner asked the Budget Committee to draft a resolution to support Dr. Wiesenburg's effort to move money from energy savings to Academic Affairs. Senator Fletcher will conduct research that could inform a possible resolution.

8.3 Constitution and Bylaws
No report.

8.4 Elections
Senator Reischman Fletcher reported that Dr. Rehner has facilitated a meeting of chairs of all governance bodies, Linda Rasmussen, representatives from iTech, and Institutional Research. The group is trying to create a more efficient process for generating a list of faculty for election purposes. The group will continue to meet weekly.

8.5 Evaluation and Assessment
iTech has agreed to wave the fee for space on the University server for conducting administrative evaluations. The evaluation/surveys should begin early March.

8.6 Research and Scholarship
The Committee is drafting a resolution to address the development of a faculty mentoring plan. A draft resolution will be disseminated before the March meeting.

Senator Zelner met with representatives from iTech to discuss improving classroom technology. Faculty with ideas for improving technology should contact the Research and Scholarship Committee. Technology concerns in general can also be shared.

8.7 University Awards

Committee members participated in the selection of the Grand Marshal. Applications for Faculty Senate awards will be reviewed in the spring.

8.8 University Relations

Dr. Rehner encouraged Senators to pay attention to ongoing conversations about capping the Optional Retirement Plan employer contribution at 10.3%.

8.9 University Welfare

No report

8.10 Faculty Handbook

No report

8.11 Gulf Coast Faculty Council

Senator Naquin reported that the Provost attended the last meeting. At the next meeting, a representative from Student Affairs will attend.

9.0 Other Business

10.0 Adjournment

President Rehner requested for a motion to adjourn. Senator Tingstrom motioned and all voted in favor. The meeting ended at 4:48.