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Faculty Senate Minutes - September 7, 2012

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi
Faculty Senate Meeting
Trent Lott Center
September 7, 2012

MINUTES

Members Present and Represented (by proxy): M.A. Adams, L. Agler, J. Anderson, A. Beck, A. Branton, R. Carr, S. Cloud, D. Daves, D. Conville (A. Haley), D. Daves, K. Davis, K. Dillon (M. Naquin), J. Ding (M. Naquin), D. Douglas, M. Dugan (L. Flynn), M. Elasri, D. Fletcher, K. Goodwin, L. Flynn, T. Hartsell, S. Hrostowski, L. Iglesias, M. Lux, M. Miller, C. Meyers, M. Naquin, L. Nored, W. Odom, S. Piland, R. Press, K. Shelley, J. Shin, C. Sirola, P. Smith, L. Story, D. Tingstrom, J. Wiggert, J. Wiggins, T. Zelner.

Absent: D. Masterson, A. Sevier

Guests: B. Powell, K. Nugent, M. Forster, D. Beckett, P. McCarver, K. Greene, T. Laird, A. Jordan, K. Reidenbach, E. Kemp.

Business Meeting 2:00

1.0 Call to order-2:03

2.0 Approval of agenda

Motion to approve the agenda Marlene Naquin; 2nd Scott Piland

3.0 Approval of minutes (May-June minutes, Retreat Minutes)

May –June: Motion Daniel Tingstrom; 2nd Robin Carr. Minutes were approved.

4.0 Officer Reports

4.1 President:

Ellen Weinauer, senator elected from CoAL stepped down; Luis Iglesias agreed to serve the 3 year term.

The Executive Committee met with the Provost Wiesenburg this past Tuesday, September 4th, and we have a meeting with the President on Monday, September 10th.

We discussed the idea of Faculty Senate representation on the University Research Committee, and the Provost recommended discussing this further with Dr. Cannon. The Executive Committee will contact Dr. Cannon and set up a meeting within the next week.

There will be no communication with the coast faculty for this meeting, unless they were able to drive up to Hattiesburg, due to Internet and telephone maintenance in the Trent Lott Center. The Senate would like to thank Dr. Weisenburg for setting up a governance travel fund and several coast faculty took advantage of this and came up to Hattiesburg for the meeting.

The Executive Cabinet attempted to make committee assignments based on requests submitted at the retreat or via email. It is expected that all committees will be very active this year, since our resolutions and recommendations should come out of committees. Committees will be meeting together at the end of this FS meeting. During that time, committees need to assign chairs and co-chairs.

The Elections Committee will review faculty representative distribution numbers to ensure that they represent current faculty numbers within each college. There are a large number of new faculty (65 tenure-track eligible to serve on FS) and the new College of Nursing will impact distribution of college representation in Faculty Senate.

Dr. Adams sent the recommendation forward to Dr. Aubrey Lucas recommending the representative areas that should be on the Campus Presidential Search committee. The same document was also sent to Robin Robinson, Chair of the IHL Search Committee. Robin Robinson later reported that she and IHL did attempt to use those recommendations as a template for committee membership distribution.

A senator asked if the floor would be open during Robin's time. Mary Ann stated that in accordance with our bylaws, priority will be given to questions from senators, then any administrators in the audience, and then the rest of the audience, as recognized by the President.

4.2 President Elect

No report

Announcement: An email was circulated to the Faculty Senate listserv regarding the COAI statement regarding Penn State and the study released about the university culture. We can discuss it at the next senate meeting.

4.3 Secretary: Reminder to all senators to sign in. Also we ask all guests to sign in.

4.4 Secretary-elect: No report

5.0 Introduction of Guest Speaker

Robin Robinson, Chair of IHL Board Search Committee for USM President, has served on the IHL board since 2004. She graduated from USM in 1978. Ms. Robinson stated she is committed to finding the best fit for USM. She also stated that nominations will be sent to the Parker Executive Search firm. "My Goal is to be very open and transparent. I love Southern Miss." Robinson stated she is committed to find a talented, visionary leader to continue the momentum that has been started at USM.

On Wednesday September 19th listening sessions have been scheduled on both campuses to hear concerns and ideas about what USM wants in the next president. No ads will be placed

until after the listening sessions on Sept 19. All listening session time slots are open to anyone. The goal is to hear what the campus wants to have in a President. The listening sessions will be webcast (for sure on the Hattiesburg Campus). A Twitter feed will scroll during the listening sessions. Those who cannot attend can watch the webcast or participate through Twitter. Committees will meet afterward to craft an advertisement to include ideas from the sessions. Advertisements for the position of President will be sent to national and state publications. Applications will be sent directly to the search firm where the candidates will be screened for the best match; those few who do match will be sent to the various committees for review. Once all nominations are collected, they will be placed on a secure website. The Campus Search Advisory Committee will be comprised of a good cross section of the USM community constituents. The nomination letters were sent out this Friday, September 7th. Once members accept, those names will be released.

The Campus Search Advisory Committee will be responsible for reviewing all the applications on the secure website and then the search pool of candidates will be narrowed to five. The Campus Search Advisory Committee will select a smaller subgroup to follow the Board through the selection process. The IHL Board Search Committee will select from those 5 people.

A Senator asked whether a candidate who has publicly declared he or she will not serve as President could be drafted and apply. Robin stated that the Advisory committee will select individuals, and the Firm will ensure they are vested before those names go to the IHL Board. Robinson reiterated that the 5 names will only come from the Advisory committee. Each individual advisory member will pick their top five, and the Firm compiles the list.

A senator noted that in previous searches they were involved in, the faculty search committee was not allowed time for discussion of candidates. This independent review and independent submission of the 5 names was distressful. The senator noted that having an opportunity for the Advisory committee to discuss candidates would have been beneficial to the process.

Senators expressed concern about transparency in the search process and emphasized the need for and value of discussion to provide different perspectives. Senator Press asked if guidelines could be provided to sidestep past problems in the selection process. A senator asked if it would be helpful if the senate put into writing some suggestions regarding the process. Robin welcomed those suggestions, and she will take them to the Board. She felt that as long as it follows policy, she agreed to accept guidelines. A senator noted that not having access to individual Advisory committee rankings is concerning because it impairs transparency. Robinson stated she would ask the IHL Board whether the Campus Advisory committee discussion and release of individual member rankings would be possible.

The Board will conduct a series of interviews and narrow the list of candidates. Listening sessions will be conducted at that time for the campus to evaluate the candidates. If the campus does not support any of the candidates then the search process would start over.

Timeline is another serious concern voiced by senators. A senator asked what was the goal to complete the search. Robin stated that it would probably be February or March next year. Robinson stated that the search firm will need 60 to 90 days after candidates are reviewed and names are sent to the various committees. It may be March before there are campus interviews. Faculty are concerned that the search committee will make a selection too quickly and cautioned that we want the best candidate possible.

IHL Board Search Committee:

Ford Dye – Ole Miss

Bob Owens – Jackson

Aubrey Patterson – Tupelo

Christy Pickering – Bancorp South from Coast

An audience member verbalized concern about how this process has not functioned well in the past and worried about a repeat of such events. Concern was also verbalized regarding the Board's actions with Dr. Saunders. It was noted that confidence is not high with the IHL Board to select the best president for Southern Miss.

Robin asked how she and the Board could increase that confidence. Senators reiterated previous comments about transparency. Robin repeated her explanation about the process regarding the smaller Advisory committee following the process after the 5 candidate selection to promote transparency. Robin reiterated that she and the Board are committed to pick someone who is good for the University and who the faculty support.

A senator voiced concern regarding Doug Rouse's resignation from the search committee. Robinson confirmed that he was still on IHL board but has resigned from the USM presidential search committee.

Concerns were voiced about the high turnover of Presidents in the state Universities. It was noted that a history in academics is a desirable trait for an incoming President. Robin stated that these are good points to bring out at the listening sessions.

It was noted that a search for diverse candidates is desirable. Robinson recommended forwarding any suggestions of publications to reach those candidates to the Firm.

An audience member voiced concern about the lack of progress on step 2 in a very long process, given the fact Dr. Saunders resignation was in April. A senator reiterated that we don't want to rush to a decision, but we do want to see timely progress.

Robin was thanked for her time.

6.0 Remarks from Provost Denis Wiesenburg

Our budget is built on a 2% enrollment increase, but enrollment is down slightly. Budgets will be tighter than expected. Funds are available to absorb some of the shortfall, but changes may

be necessary. Those reserve funds were planned to address salary compression, but that will likely not occur. Full time students are up, part time enrollment is down, and graduate numbers are down. However, some graduate decline was expected because of programmatic changes to cap certain programs where there are shortages in faculty. CoBusiness numbers were down. CoHealth was up. Analysis of these trends is ongoing.

A senator asked if he had had a chance to address the issue of scholarship funds being administered or distributed too late to purchase books elsewhere. Provost said no and this is not just a USM issue. The bookstore contract can be examined when it is time for it to be renewed. Denis stated he welcomed senate support on this issue. An audience member noted that it may be a financial aid issue. Several senators voiced issues with the bookstore on the Coast not ordering enough books and the lack of cooperation to address shortages.

An audience member voiced concern about the salary compression issue and offered a suggestion of allowing use of salaries in vacant positions which are in mid- or large sized departments, to address the issues on a departmental level. Provost asked the senators who were chairs to offer their opinions. Senators who are chairs voiced concern with that suggestion. Provost stated a possible solution to salary compression is through some recent retirements. He has asked the deans to identify faculty who are the most productive and the furthest from retirement to possibly address compression. A senator asked that summer salaries be looked at, and Provost agreed. A senator suggested saving money until it is sufficient to address all faculty shortfalls. The Provost said that the money would have to be recurring money.

A senator voiced concern about how a minor student enrollment drop could cause such a serious budget concern and wanted to know what we were doing to secure our financial situation. Strategies to increase revenue (e.g., enrollment, tuition, philanthropy) and decrease costs (e.g., energy savings) are being implemented.

A senator expressed concern that travel funds for faculty scholarship within departments are down. Provost said that was beyond his control and stated that the new tenure track faculty that were hired were given some start up money to help support those kind of issues.

7.0 Old Business: None

8.0 New Business

8.1 Finalize Members for the following Faculty Senate Committees

- Academic and Governance
- Constitution and Bylaws
- Elections
- Evaluations and Assessment
- Research and Scholarship

University Relations
University Welfare and Environmental Concerns
Teaching and Service

9.0 Faculty Senate Committee Group Meetings

9.1 Establish Committee Charge for 2012-2013

9.2 Election of Committee Chair or Co-Chairs

10.0 Adjourn