

Fall 12-6-2013

Faculty Senate Minutes - December 6, 2013

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi Faculty Senate Meeting

Trent Lott Center Rooms 101/102
December 6, 2013

Business Meeting 2:00 p.m.

Members Present and Represented (by proxy): J. Anderson (Story), L. Agler, T. Barry, A. Beck, D. Booth (Fletcher), R. Buchanan, G. Chen (Lambers), S. Cloud (Lux), D. Daves, K. Davis, K. Dillon, D. Douglas, D. Fletcher, A. Haley, B. Hayden, D. Holt (Naquin), S. Hrostowski, L. Iglesias, J. Lambers, M. Lux, , M. Miller (Nored), E. Molaison, M. Naquin, L. Nored, J. Olmi, S. Piland (Lux), R. Press, S. Reischman-Fletcher, T. Robinson (Shelly), K. Shelly, C. Sirola, J. Smith, L. Story, C. Tardy, T. Welsh, J. Wiggert, J. White, K. Zantow, T. Zelner

Members Absent: M. Dugan, M. Elasri, K. Goodwin, C. Myers, W. Odom, J. Wiggins

1.0 Call to order 2:05pm

Observed a moment of silence for Nelson Mandela

2.0 Approval of agenda Sen. Buchannan moved to approve; Sen. Hrostowski second

3.0 Approval of November Minutes Sen Lux moved to approve; Sen. Iglesias second

4.0 Officer Reports

4.1 President

- Discussions around HB-GC issues
 - Final Subcommittee Reports due to Dr. Bennett December 6 (today)
- SACS Compliance Audit Task Force
 - Assignments to audit various portions of the standards have begun
 - David Holt and Pat Smith assisting
- SACS QEP Topic Selection Committees
 - Very broad dissemination of announcement and topic solicitation
 - Approximately 500 submittals have been received
- Student Success Steering Committee
 - 71 recommendations
 - New & Reallocated Resources
 - Curricular Issues and Faculty Involvement
 - Advising and mentoring
 - Policy
 - Attendance Initiatives & Best Practices
 - Communication Plan
 - **“This document reflects a fundamental revision in how we view our purpose as an institution; further, the recommendations reflect that the student experience becomes an organizing principle in how we make decisions as an institution.”**
 - Distributed to FS for feedback; urge to study carefully
- Provost’s Academic Leadership Council
 - Presidential Review Committee on Undergraduate Recruiting
 - Eight recommendations
 - Distributed to FS for feedback
 - Summer School Initiatives

- Allison Gillespie/Doug Vinzant
- Enhancing summer school programs
- Impact on 3-year schedule request from Provost?
- Listening Sessions
 - Beginning to collate issues and will distribute to appropriate committees
 - More colleges to meet in early spring
- Committee on Evaluation of Teaching
 - Marek Steedman
 - Need FS nominations for Instructor and Tenure Track representatives
- Evaluation of teaching volunteers Julie White

4.2 President-Elect

- Recruitment. We still need clarity from the Administration on what they can offer departments taking on recruitment efforts; but we understand some planning is in the works.
- Thank you to the Senators who have completed their listening sessions with faculty in their College. Two departments will do that early next term. It is the start of opening up more communications with our faculty.
- Desmond has suggested that if your College is not meeting periodically with your Deans that you would do well to start that process. In our college it has provided a useful channel of communication.
- The Senate should discuss the issue of reinstating a plus and minus grading capacity for undergraduate grades. The Provost said this is an issue for Academic Council, but the request to the Council would be strong if it comes from the Senate – if we have a consensus for change.
- Sen Haley noted that the survey regarding recruitment did not include the departments.
- Sen Haley stated that the decision to make grades straight letter grades was made by the Student Government Association (SGA) many years ago, so we may want to include them in the discussion and the decisions. Pres-Elect Bob asked if inviting the Student President to a Faculty Senate meeting and request to be added to the agenda to next SGA meeting. Sen. White asked if changing to the plus/minus system would impact GPAs. Sen. Barry stated explained how it affects graduate students.

4.3 Secretary No report

4.4 Secretary-Elect No report

5.0 Introduction of Guest Speakers

5.1 Dr. Bennett

- The President's office has received reports from the Dual Campus Subcommittees, the Student Success Committee, and the other reports Pres. Fletcher described. He will be reviewing these reports over the Christmas break with the hopes of having some direction for the University by the end January.
- Commencement is next Friday. We have two speakers - James Kitchens and Randy Pierce, both State Supreme Court Justices.
- Great strides have been made in student success, retention, and progression this semester. Thank you for everyone's hard work.
- Royal Walker represented USM at the White House at the Critical Disability group.
- Jameela Lars was recognized by state teacher group as teacher of the year.
- Sharon Chatledge was elected as the president of the Mississippi State Board of Nursing
- Randy Buchanan was recognized with a state chemistry award

- The football program ended the season on a positive note with a convincing win against UAB. There are many lessons that we can take from the program's focus and determination through a challenging time.
- Feb 6th Robert Gates will be the speaker for the Dale lecture series at the Saenger Theater.
- May 2nd will be the President's inauguration.
- I have spoken with the Provost and members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee regarding having a Faculty Senate member on the Executive Cabinet. I am considering having a Faculty Senate member as a voting member of the Executive Committee. Will have a decision by the end of January.
- I feel good about where we are as a University. We are having real conversations. There is a real sense of transparency and working together. I am encouraged by a University that is so willing to be a part of this process. We may not all agree, but we are all having the opportunity to be heard. When people are talking about things that they are passionate about, it opens the door for wonderful things to happen. I appreciate your engagement in these processes and activities.

5.2 Dr. Cannon

- Pres Fletcher distributed the concerns that have come up in the "listening sessions" that are related to research. VPR Cannon will address those issues individually.
- MIDUS is the incentive program for research and scholarship activities. If the faculty on a grant includes salary buyout on the grant, the University receives that money to subsidize other faculty to cover teaching assignments. Based on the formula, the faculty received a bonus check. When Provost Wiesenburg started, our payout in the MIDUS program was excessive and at times may not been appropriate. At that time, the MIDUS rules changed. This year we paid out \$231,000 (down from ~\$750,000). Eighteen faculty received MIDUS funds. Only 4 of the 14 grants actually paid F & A. This may mean we are incentivizing the wrong things. We could stop the MIDUS program, but that may send the wrong message. The VPR Cannon has proposed that we stop connecting the incentive to buyout to prevent budget inflation, require that the grant pay F & A, and then make the payment respective to how much they pay back to the University. If we set up three categories - >\$500,000 grants would provide \$5,000, \$100,000 – \$500,000 would provide \$2,500, and \$1,000 – \$100,000 would receive \$1,000. Rather than 18 receiving MIDUS, 86-95 faculty would receive some payment for the same cost or less. The money could go to the faculty personally or they could use it in their research.
- Sen. Barry asked how it would be handled in the cases of co-PIs? VPR Cannon stated that we could give each PI this payout or we may have to split the money. Sen. Barry stated that she would not want the program to discourage collaboration.
- VPR Cannon we are looking at moving more of the money that comes back from the grants to the departments instead of the University.
- Pres-elect Press asked if the granting agents have to approve the program. VPR Cannon stated no. We have a negotiated federal rate of 46%. We are looking at raising that rate. Most agencies are happy to pay that rate. We can use it to support the grant. We just cannot use it to build salary raises into the budget.
- Please send me any input you may have.
- Sen. Wiggert asked if you get a grant would the program automatically happen. VPR Cannon stated that we should be able to make it automatic. Sen. Wiggert asked if the numbers would be for the total grant or annual, VPR Cannon stated that it was for the entire grant.
- VPR Cannon said would like the Research and Scholarship Committee to make a recommendation.

5.3 Dr. Wiesenburg

- The Executive Cabinet is reviewing the excellent report submitted from the Student Success Committee. The President is holding a retreat in early January to determine which initiatives to implement.
- There will be a retention workshop in New Orleans in Jan. 7th and 8th. Please let Bill Powell know if you are interested in going.
- Pres-Elect Press asked about support available for recruitment. Provost Wiesenburg stated that one of the recommendations is to dedicate resources for recruitment.
- We will announce next week Association Provost for International Programs, Daniel Norton. He will also be a professor of practice in foreign language department, and will start March 1. Will recruit from China. Our goal is to internationalize the University so students who cannot afford to go abroad will have an opportunity to interact.
- We are working on a Summer School Initiative to improve recruitment, growth, and faculty compensation.
- We are working on developing a three-year course plan to improve student planning and advising, but allowing for some flexibility.
 - Sen. Haley stated that the three-year planning is beneficial, but offering electives and having flexibility is important to build into the model. Provost Wiesenburg stated that the intention that the required courses are planned out, and adding to the schedule should not be a problem.
- Sen. Holt stated that 60% of his class reported that they taking their finals early. Provost Weisenburg stated that the administration does not make final exam and dead week policies, the faculty are responsible for those policies, and maybe such issues should be a part of teaching evaluation.
- We are also looking at whether days for Fall Break should be added to the days for Thanksgiving week. This would decrease additional absences those two weeks.
 - Sen Lux noted that Dean Paul has said its better to have a break in the middle of the semester than the end, and suggested that the Faculty Senate took a position on this issue. Sen Haley noted that the end of the semester is as important as the beginning of the semester. Sen Smith stated that faculty cancelling class puts pressure on those who have class and puts us in jeopardy in with SACS. Provost Wiesenburg stated that those issues could be handled through the evaluation process. Sen Chen noted that we may want to include the SGA.
 - Pres. Fletcher asked the Teaching Subcommittee to explore this issue.
- Eagle eye cameras are up. Sen. Haley did report that some students have asked we put up signs where the cameras are located. Provost Wiesenburg stated that itech should be able to handle that.

6.0 Committee Reports

6.1 Academic and Governance

Sen Sirola: the Coast Faculty Council has passed a resolution that would allow the Gulf Coast to run as an independent college. Discussion followed. Sen Smith reported that the Faculty Council has spent a great deal of time, that has included meetings with high attendance, to determine how they can grow the Coast. Pres Flethcher offered the Coast College idea early in the process. The Faculty Council developed that idea and developed a resolution that was voted unanimously to pass. The Coast College would run all things academic on the coast. Another priority of the initiate was to grow new programs. Sen. Chen asked would this proposal prevent faculty from teaching on both campuses. Sen. Smith stated that we hope that there is some incentive program to encourage teaching between campuses. Sen Press noted that any resolution that was vetted by 19 individuals should have careful consideration. Sen Smith noted that hours have been spent with Coast faculty, administration, the Provost, and the President. Sen Smith noted that this would increase the ability of the Coast to develop new programs and take any blame away.

6.2 Administrative Evaluation

Sen White reported that she is working Sen Shelley to merge the surveys and the mechanism to administer it. Sen. White is working with Linda Rasmussen to acquire the faculty list.

6.3 Awards

Sen Nored reported the committee has made recommendation on the Excellence and HEADWAE awards. We have two more awards that will be decided soon.

6.4 Budget

Dr. Vanzant is interested in things that will enhance our enrollment. We are setting up monthly meetings with him and asking for the Provost to attend.

6.5 Bylaws

No report

6.6 Elections

No report

6.7 GC Faculty Council

See above Sen Holt offered a Coast perspective to their concerns with the Dean's plan, which includes loss of budget control and administrative voice. Sen Olmi noted that the Council did not include the Chairs in the discussion. Sen. Smith noted that the Council of Chairs had acted by endorsing the Dean's plan. Sen Olmi noted that he has had an open relationship with his Coast faculty, and none of these concerns have been brought forward. Sen. Holt noted that the Council is not recommending people They are making a resolution regarding a structure. Sen. Smith noted that the resolution is a growth initiative not a mechanism for faculty grievances. Sen Haley asked if the Vice President position would be eliminated. Sen Smith stated that no they will be needed. Sen Story asked if the Coast College Dean would report to the Provost like the other colleges. Sen Smith stated they were not taking a position on how the dean reports. We are leaving it up to the administration. We have stayed clear of cabinet issues. Sen. Olmi asked if in the resolution would, Chairs be responsible for the faculty on the coast. Sen. Smith stated that the faculty would be responsible for delivering the degree plans. The departments on the Hattiesburg campus would still serve in an advisory role in some cases. Pres Fletcher asked if all programs would be delivered on the coast. Sen Smith stated yes. Pres Flethcer noted that was not in his original proposal to the Dual Campus Committee. What was suggested was that coast programs delivered primarily on the coast would be in the Coast college, but not necessarily every program. Pres Fletcher noted that the notion of a Coast VP was not discussed either. Sen Smith stated that deciding the reporting of the dean was for the administration. Sen. Haley noted that if they were going to suggest a new college, then they should have made suggested on the upper administration. Pres Fletcher closed discussion and asked Sen Smith to circulate the proposal on the Faculty Senate listserv.

6.8 Handbook

- Sen Welsh: the Handbook Committee makes a recommendation that the ombudsman position include summer release time based on their rank since the position is a fulltime 1-year appointment. Due to multiple questions, the recommendation was tabled.
- The Handbook Committee makes a recommendation that every member of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee receive a course release for 12 month. The issue was tabled for next meeting so that the senators could review the recommendation.
- The Handbook Committee will be relooking at emeritus status.

6.9 Research and Scholarship

No report

6.10 Student Life

No report

6.11 Teaching and Service

- The Teaching and Service Committee has looked at the mid-semester student evaluations and made suggestions. Those suggestions will be circulated on the Faculty Senate listserv.
- We are discussing the Academic Integrity Policy, and we are gathering suggestions.

6.12 University Relations

We had the Legislator Informational Session. We had 5 senators there. We are meeting with Dr. Vinzant to determine budget resources for marketing.

6.13 University Welfare and Environmental Concerns

No report

7.0 Old Business

None

8.0 New Business

Please read the reports mentioned today, especially the Student Success Report and the Undergraduate Recruitment Document.

9.0 Adjourn 5:20pm Sen Davis made a motion to adjourn. Sen Haley second.