

Spring 2-7-2014

Faculty Senate Minutes - February 7, 2014

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi Faculty Senate Meeting

Trent Lott Center Rooms 101/102
February 7, 2014

Business Meeting 1:00 p.m.

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

Members Absent: D. Daves, M. Elasri, J. Olmi, J. Wiggins

1.0 Call to order 1:05 p.m.

Pres. Fletcher made a motion to suspend the bylaws to vote on a resolution recognizing Dr. Susan Siltanen's years of service to The University 1st Sen Roberson 2nd Naquin
Pres-Elect Press made a motion to approve the resolution; Sen. Naquin 2nd.

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

3.0 Approval of December Minutes Sen. Lux moved to approve; Sen. Naquin 2nd

4.0 Officer Reports

4.1 President

- Recognized Dr. Bennett for his work guiding the Dual Campus Committee
- Call attention to the initiatives from the Student Success, undergraduate enrollment, and strategic planning
- We would like to hear from Provost regarding the Veteran's policy, the summer bridge program, and the summer school initiatives: Summer Bridge and Summer School
- Educator Connect Conference March 4th. Reception Monday, March 3 – Speaker Bios are on the LEC website
- We are now in phase II of the QEP topic selection process. Proposals due by Feb. 26th.
- President's reception in the Thad Cochran Ballroom I at 3:30 pm.

4.2 President-Elect

- Student Government Association. Introduction of Yolanda Cruz, a Senator from SGA Hattiesburg and LaQuita Gresham, SGA President on the Coast. The Presidents of the Hattiesburg and Gulf Coast SGA have agreed to send a representative to Faculty Senate on a regular basis; and a representative of the Faculty Senate will monthly attend a meeting of SGA both here and on the coast. This issue was discussed briefly with favorable response at our last meeting. On the coast, Sen. Naquin will attend SGA meetings; here, I will start next week.
 - Student Government Representative, Yolanda Cruz. SGA is working on:
 - Mid-term evaluations
 - Strengthening the student advisor relationship

- **Communication with Faculty.** As we all know, the more we understand the concerns of the faculty, the better we can represent them. And as those concerns surface, the appropriate committees can respond. I want to express my appreciation for our current committee chairs and will soon be asking them if they would like to continue next year or who would like to take those key posts. Pres. Fletcher has worked hard to set up the committee to have ongoing leadership and you will have a chance to confirm your interest in keeping the momentum going. I hope that all Senators are active and listening to their constituents so we can best represent them. Secretary-elect Anderson has accepted the coordinating role for Faculty Senate communications, including publicizing the link that allows any faculty member to anonymously send a complaint or suggestion to the Executive Committee. Secretary-elect Anderson is also coordinating follow up of the listening sessions in each college by Senators with faculty. A couple of colleges are still working on that. Others have produced an impressive list of concerns. Those issues will soon be sent to you and to the appropriate Committee chairs.

The director of web services has been in touch with the Executive Committee on new ways to facilitate communications with faculty. I also think it would be helpful if we have a faculty-wide satisfaction survey as we have had at times in the past and hope that the appropriate committee or other volunteers can do this during the spring term.

- **Communications with the Administration.** My appreciation to the President and the Provost who have opened their doors on a regularly scheduled basis for meetings with the Faculty Senate Executive. Their presence at our meetings and our conversations mean the faculty-Administration relationships and mutual support and frank discussion of issues is strong – and getting stronger. I want to express appreciation for the continuing teaching forums underway and for those Senators, faculty and staff who have helped organize them.
- **Finally, a note on collegiality.** The plans for links to the Coast and Hattiesburg have been decided by the President. But there is an invisible link that needs strengthening: appreciation. I have heard that so often from people I deeply respect that the relations are not just a matter of lines on a chart, but genuine appreciation for those on the Coast by those in Hattiesburg. Let me say that I, and many others, do appreciate our colleagues who work so hard every day on the coast for our students.

4.3 **Secretary** No report

4.4 **Secretary-Elect**

- Compiling College Listening Session Reports

5.0 **Introduction of Guest Speakers**

5.1 **Dr. Bennett**

- Army representatives are briefing the President's office this afternoon regarding the ROTC requirements
- I would like to acknowledge the hard work of 3 committees – Student Success, Enrollment Management, and Dual Campus Committee
 - Decisions
 - All academic programs will be under the Provost
 - All business transactions will be under the CFO
 - All enrollment functions will be streamlined
 - Student success will be a key institutional priorities
 - Other strategies from these reports may be instituted
 - Close to being able to make a decision on having a Faculty Senate representative on the Executive Cabinet

- Last night we hosted Dr. Gates as a guest speaker at the Saenger Theater. We also honored Dr. Beverly Dale and dedicated the Dale Center.
- Ray Guy was recently inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame as the first punter and the first USM alumni to be inducted.
- Tonight the Emmitt Till Story will be playing at the Saenger Theater as part of the museum's black history month celebration and grand opening.
- Monday marks the year anniversary of the F4 tornado. We will be recognizing the anniversary at the Men's Basketball game and at a ceremony.
- I have charged the Student Success Co-Chairs to develop an action plan for the committee's recommendations. Bill Powell is developing a faculty survey to inform that implementation team.
- I would like to highlight two things. First, the recommendations do not imply that the quality standards of academic programs will be compromised. Recommendations emphasize removing barriers and having the students take ownership. Secondly, the initiatives incentives creative thinking and innovative strategies.
- Wilton C. Jackson II is a junior has been named to the USA Today correspondence program. He is one out of 18 students selected for this program.
- NBCLearn.com has added our research videos to their page. We are one of 14 universities included on this website.
- I would like to highlight Mark Miller Professor of Geography/Geology – selected as a recipient of MS World Trade Center's Excellence in International Education Award.
- I would like to highlight the foundation has raised more than more than \$2 Million from more than 3000 donors from 37 states to repair the damage from the tornado Day of Giving - May 8.
- The third phase to restore landscape at the Lake Byron area, including the restoration of the Lake to 6'.
- Work on the Ogletree House is moving forward along with other numerous projects on the front of the campus, including restoration of Arts venues. In total, there are 17 construction projects resulting from the tornado under way. All are projected to be completed by December 2014.
- Sen. Smith wanted to thank the President for his efforts to understand our culture. Sen. Smith would like to invite Dr. Bennett to a Faculty, Staff, and Student Councils meetings to personally explain the decisions made regarding the Dual Campus Committee. Dr. Bennett stated he would be happy to come speak to those groups. Dr. Bennett reinforced the University's success is the responsibility of all.
- Pres. Fletcher asked if the President would like to speak regarding strategic planning and branding of the University. Dr. Bennett would like to hold off on those topics until information is released to the campus on Monday.
- Sen. Haley asked if the President would please speak to financing the student success initiatives. President Bennett stated that we will have to prioritize, and I am relying on the Provost and the CFO to help with that process. We will likely be conservative regarding spend for the upcoming year or two. Student success is going to be key to our funding according to the new budget model. Creating revenue through summer school and recruitment is going to be key. Also, President Bennett stated that he is working with CFO to establish a salary pool to address salary issues such as compression and cost of living. Sen. Haley asked how long the President envisioned this plan being implemented. Sen. Haley asked how long the President envisioned this plan being implemented. President Bennett stated that he thinks this will be our new reality especially given our profile. It is a long-term investment to change that profile.

5.2 Dr. Wiesenburg

- Veteran-Friendly University Policy – Dr. Bennett has asked Dr. Hammond to create a center that veterans can go to for all their needs (e.g., academic planning, counseling, benefits). We are looking at spacing for such a center. Currently we waive the out of state tuition. We are looking at also waiving the out-of-state tuition for dependents. We are looking at expanding this option reserve personnel. We are changing our student application form so that students can identify themselves as a veteran or a dependent of a veteran.
- Sen. Haley voiced concern about our services and our ability to assisting individuals with disabilities. Encouraging veteran enrollment may increase our students with disabilities. President-Elect Press reminded faculty that many if not most veterans experiences some degree of PTSD. Provost Wiesenburg agreed and the center would help with address those issues. Sen. Holt asked if the Provost if the same resources will be made available to veteran students on the coast. Provost Wiesenburg responded that everything that happens in Hattiesburg will happen on the coast as well. Hattiesburg will be first in the process and he is not certain about General Hammond’s full charge at this point.
- Summer Bridge Program – Setting up a working group to put together a program for underprepared students. We will likely need some outside support to do this type of program well. The University of Alaska Anchorage has a similar program (The Alaska Native Program). The Provost’s office is currently looking for members for this task force. The program would not be ready for this summer, but hopefully for next summer.
- Summer school – Alison Gillespie is looking at the budgeting issues her as well as other universities. They are looking at developing a plan. One possibility is to pay faculty a % of their annual salary instead a flat fee (e.g. ~8%). More of the revenue will go to the college. Additionally, an office and website would be dedicated to managing all summer school activities.
- Contumacious conduct – Defined in section 10.1.2 of the faculty handbook. The issue I have been dealing with involves a faculty refusing to teach an assignment made by the department chair based on his/her research activity. After a discussion between the faculty and chair, the chair instructs the faculty to teach the courses. The faculty did not show up to teach one of the courses a few class meetings. Sen. Hrostowski asked if the faculty was indeed conducting research. Provost Wiesenburg stated that the determination is up to the chair. Sen. Haley stated that giving the chair that much power is problematic. Provost Wiesenburg stated that the faculty should have filed a grievance and should not have abandoned the class. That is a disservice to our faculty. Pres. Fletcher asked if the grievance process is activated if the faculty is terminated. Provost Wiesenburg explained the complex process. President-Elect Press asked Dr. Beckett to speak to the issue. Dr. Beckett confirmed Provost Wiesenburg’s explanation of the process and pointed out that the procedure outlined in the Faculty Handbook is from IHL. He went on to explain that there are several paths depending on the nature of the grievance. He also noted that in his opinion that the faculty should have taught the class while he filed the grievance. Sen. Piland noted that there has to be some sort of check and balance in regards to faculty research activities. Sen. Zantow asked if the faculty’s annual evaluation reflected whether the faculty was engaging in research activities. Provost Wiesenburg stated that he could not speak to this particular case. Provost Wiesenburg asked what should be done when the chair and the faculty do not agree. We should affirm that the chair has the authority to make the teaching assignment. Sen. Miller asked if the faculty was unsatisfactory in teaching and research this year, would that be a first step to a post-tenure review. Provost Wiesenburg stated yes, but it would have to happen two years in a row. Sen.

Barry stated that consistencies in workload across the university may prevent this in the future. Provost Wiesenburg stated that we need a more progressive disciplinary process.

- There will be money to finance the student success initiatives, possibly around 1 million.
- Pres. Fletcher asked if the 8 items identified by the student enrollment committee were successfully implemented. Provost Wiesenburg stated they were improved, but the student success action team will be looking at those initiatives.

6.0 Committee Reports

6.1 **Academic and Governance** – no report

6.2 Administrative Evaluation

Sen. White reported that the evaluations are close to being sent out. The faculty list and questionnaire in Qualtrix has been updated. Sen. White asked if full-time instructors should be included. Pres. Fletcher stated yes. Sen. Davis asked that the comments from the evaluations were sent to the deans regarding the chairs. Sen. Shelley stated that the individual administrators and their immediate supervisor receive a copy. Secretary-Elect recommended using password electronic PDF files that generate “Read Receipts” to transmit evaluations. Sen. White stated that the committee would take the recommendation under consideration.

6.3 Awards

Sen. Reischman-Fletcher reported that the committee met this week regarding the faculty awards. The faculty awards ceremony is before the April faculty senate meeting.

6.4 Budget

Sen. Zantow reported that the committee is meeting with Dr. Vinzant.

6.5 **Bylaws** – No report

6.6 Elections

Sen. Zelner stated that they have received a list of faculty from HR. They are currently reviewing the list for accuracy.

6.7 GC Faculty Council

Sen. Smith reported that Dr. Wiesenburg is scheduled to come speak to FC and they look forward to Dr. Bennett coming.

6.8 Handbook

Sen. Dugan requested that the previous resolutions continued to be tabled. Dr. Beckett further explained the resolutions including clarification in the tenure and promotion discussion, faculty disciplinary process, and core of instruction (research and clinical professor will be faculty but not core of instruction).

6.9 Research and Scholarship

Sen. Piland reported that the committee is looking two items – grants incentive program and policy statement for defining PI.

6.10 **Student Life** – No report

6.11 Teaching and Service

Sen. Naquin reported that the committee is looking at the Fall Break/Thanksgiving Break. The polling elicited a wide range of responses. A structured university-wide poll was suggested. Pres. Fletcher asked Sen. Naquin to speak to Dr. Paul about the issue.

6.12 **University Relations** – No report

6.13 **University Welfare and Environmental Concerns** – No report

7.0 Old Business

Sen. Reischman-Fletcher stated that she forward a link to the Student Success report on the faculty senate listserv and circulated a document regarding the historically difficult courses.

8.0 New Business - None

9.0 Adjourn 3:38 pm

Sen. Naquin made a motion to adjourn. Sen. Booth 2nd