

Spring 3-7-2014

Faculty Senate Minutes - March 7, 2014

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi Faculty Senate Meeting

**Gulf Park, FEC 307
(JGH 203, Hattiesburg)
March 7, 2014**

Business Meeting 2:00 p.m.

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

Members Absent: D. Booth, M. Elasri, K. Goodwin, S. Hrostowski, E. Molaison, L. Nored, J. Wiggins

- 1.0 **Call to order** 2:00 pm
- 2.0 **Approval of Agenda** Sen Naquin moved to approve; Sen Piland second
- 3.0 **Approval of Minutes** Sen Lux moved to approve; Sen Naquin second; all in favor
- 4.0 **Officer Reports**

4.1 President

- QEP Topic Selection Committee
 - 24 Proposals under review
 - Developed evaluation rubrics
 - Deadline March 17
- Strategic Planning Phase I
 - Call for feedback on Mission, Vision, and Values
 - Deadline March 10
- Summer School Working Group
 - Incentives to grow summer school (students/faculty/dept/colleges)
 - Barriers to summer school growth
 - Next meeting March 20

4.2 President-Elect

- Pres. Fletcher has strengthened our Senate in close collaboration with committee chairs and in many, many behind-the-scenes meetings with Administration officials and others on issues directly and indirectly affecting faculty, and the University as a whole. Following up on those initiatives, these items are of general interest: (1) need for Faculty Senate and the Administration to work closer on key issues such as retention, advising and teaching; (2) strengthen Senate-Administration partnership in meeting critical challenges ahead through finalizing the President's announcement that the Faculty Senate President will be a voting member of the Executive Cabinet; (3) suggest the upcoming advising week will be a further retreat from the aim of true advising on careers and another round of course scheduling, with new course scheduling requirements required by the Administration without much faculty consultation; (4) suggest consideration of a three-track tenure and

promotion plan: teaching; research; both, to reduce what for many faculty is a kind of do-it-all pressure; (5) find ways to implement retention policies other than a top-down approach to win faculty support; (6) improve communications with SGA to work together; and (7) strengthen Coast and Hattiesburg Council-Senate partnership on faculty issues.

- Closer Senate – Administration partnership. As Dr. Bennett says, we are at a critical moment for USM with regard to future state funding, given the IHL formula. We need to sharply reduce dropout rates and recruit more students. Important initiatives are now on paper, including Student Success plans. Pres. Fletcher has sought Senate input on that document with little response; the University as a whole has gotten only one comment. If we cannot achieve wider faculty involvement in commenting and considering the new plans, the implementation will fall to Administration decisions obliging change of practices by faculty. Such a top-down implementation risks a lukewarm reception by faculty already facing new burdens on several fronts. We have to find ways to work closer in teamwork.
- Stronger Senate-Administration partnership: One way to strengthen faculty support for the Administrations positive initiatives will be through the appointment of the Faculty Senate President as a voting member of the Executive Cabinet.
- Advising vs Course Scheduling: Advising starts soon. I have just learned from Dr. Amy Miller that the Associate VP for Enrollment released a new policy that students will be told then need to tentatively register for classes before coming to see us. Apparently if they do not come to be advised, their names will be dropped from those classes. This raises these questions: (1) How much faculty involvement is there in making critical new policies involving students (and for that matter, faculty) and (2) What impact will the ‘penalty’ have of students being dropped from classes if they do not show up for advising. In COAL, we have been requested by the Dean’s office to do some very sensible things with regard to each advisee: checking their grades, note if they have any evidence of not attending classes, look for substitutions needed, examine their course loads, be aware of their family responsibilities and working hours, and be sure they appreciate the number of hours of study courses need, including the lower level courses. All of this makes perfect sense – in an ideal world. My concern is that we do not have the time to make that ideal world practical. Alternatives might include shifting those important details to staff during ‘advising week.’ That may not be fair or possible. But it is an option. But my question is this: as we reach for a shift in the ‘culture’ of advising to become more than ‘course scheduling,’ how can we accomplish this with the focus remaining on course scheduling. Something is not working even for those of us who have long been urging a shift from scheduling to real ‘advising’ – asking about career plans, study abroad, internships. The Faculty Senate and the Administration need to examine this question more closely, together, especially since it pertains to retention.
- Tenure and Promotion: a three-track solution: Yesterday in a meeting with the Provost and Faculty Senate Executive, we discussed the problem of some faculty using bogus publications for T & P. I was not aware of this problem before. In any case, the discussion led to teaching and research and how some faculty are better at one than the other; some handle both very well. Perhaps we could explore a three-track career path for T & P: (a) emphasis on teaching; (b) emphasis on research; and (c) both. I am sure this is nothing new for you and others, but something like that might relieve the pressures to be everything at once and encourage the best in teaching and research for

everyone. Others handle both just fine. The Senate can begin to open up dialogue and research on this issue.

- Retention: As Dr. Bennett has said, this is a survival issue. We now have a 40-page document on Student Success which some of our colleagues have worked very hard to produce. My concern is that many faculty have not read it: I only read it last week when I took it to SGA for their comments. My other concern is that we faculty may not shift our practices until obliged by Administrative policies to do so – to increase retention. In other words, what are we now doing different to help with retention. The Senate and Administration can begin meeting together to map out a plan to win faculty support and implement this not just in a top-down approach. Our Athletic department and the Greeks tutor students falling behind. We should consider this for other students. The Provost has expressed his appreciation for this kind of initiative but points out the need for resources, but since retention is critical to USM survival at its current level, perhaps we need to find ways to improve our tutoring for non-Greek, non-Athletes, which is to say, for most of our students.
- Faculty Senate –Student cooperation: (a) SGA. We have with us today representatives from SGA Hattiesburg and the Coast: The incoming Vice President of SGA, Kyle Stoner, and Crystal Simson, representing the SGA on the Coast. I have attended two SGA Hattiesburg meetings and will be seeking Faculty Senators in rotation to attend a meeting of SGA in Hattiesburg and the Coast. The idea is to hear what students suggest, especially with regard to faculty. SGA has passed a resolution asking for faculty to be evaluated by students by mid-term and those evaluations to be passed to the chair. We should discuss and vote on this soon. At our next meeting we hope to have with us representatives of Greek life at USM to hear what their concerns may be. (b) Greeks. I met this week with student and staff representatives of Greek life on campus and heard some of their issues of concern. I have invited them to our April meeting.
- Coast-Hattiesburg cooperation: With great appreciation for Pat Smith in his leadership role of Faculty Council this year, and with a warm welcome for Casey Maugh, as incoming President on the Coast, we can look forward to finding new ways to strengthen our partnership. Pres. Fletcher has been on the Coast a number of times doing just that, and we can build on his record in that area.

4.3 Secretary

No report

4.4 Secretary-Elect

No report

5.0 Introduction of Guest Speakers

5.1 Dr. Wiesenburg

- Dr. Bennett is still considering having Faculty Senate representation at the Executive Cabinet. Dr. Bennett is looking to recreating the expanded Cabinet.
- Tenure and Promotion Process: The T & P documents have reached my office. Most are fine, but a couple cases are problematic. The CAC has recommended in several cases to approve Tenure and deny Promotion. This practice is an issue we need to discuss. Your opinion on how this process is invited before I review these documents. Sen. Piland asked if research activity continue or did these individual stagnate in such past cases. Provost Wiesenburg stated that they do stagnate in many cases. Pres. Fletcher recommended those issues should be addressed as a part of a post-tenure review. Sen. Smith recommended that those

decisions be made on an individual basis. Provost Wiesenburg asked if whether he should send these cases back to the UAC/CAC or should he just agree with the decisions. Sen. Daves asked if the T & P be bundled since the process is so similar. Bill Powell noted that since 2004 the distinction between the two was made. Provost Wiesenburg noted that when we do T & P separately, it creates a great deal of work on the deciding bodies. Pres. Fletcher stated that the process is different, and that tenure has a collegiality aspect and a promise for continued success that promotion does not include. Provost Wiesenburg noted that typically the department does not separate the two processes. The UAC/CAC does. Karen Rich asked if we should sacrifice the good teachers if they do meet the scholarship requirements. Provost Wiesenburg responded that good teachers are instructors. Our institution has established that teaching, research, and scholarship are all important. Provost Wiesenburg asked do the faculty want to go to a system with different tracks – one for those who want to focus on teaching and one for those who want to focus on scholarship. Sen. Lux asked what his position would be on offering those faculty an instructor position instead of a terminal contract. Provost Wiesenburg noted that doing so could create a faculty body that was focusing on only teaching as a majority. There are faculty who can do all three. Pres. Fletcher noted that allowing someone to be tenured but not promoted is unfair to our instructors and our clinical practice faculty.

- Predatory journals: Be cautious of these pay for publication journals. A list of these bogus journals can be found on Beall's List. These journals are creating issues for our faculty getting tenured and promoted. It would be better for these issues to be identified during the annual evaluations. Sen. Wiggert asked if publishing in these journals would forfeit your copyrights. VPR Cannon stated it would be dependent on the agreement the faculty signed. Pres. Fletcher noted that we do not currently have a policy on these journals, so how are we supposed to make decisions in these cases. Provost Wiesenburg stated that we have a lot of policies, but we depend on the faculty to make the determination of the quality of publications and determination of T & P. Provost Wiesenburg recommended that we need to be diligent. Sen. Zelner noted that the library is assembling resources to help faculty with some of these issues.

5.2 Dr. Cannon

- Follow up from the previous Midas discussion: Midas will be discontinued at the end of this year. Midas will be replaced with the Research Incentive Fund (RIF). Total reimbursement will not exceed 2% of the recovered F & A. Funds will be dispersed to a DE account of the PI(s) for further developing research and scholarly activity. Projects must recover full F & A, or the sponsor's maximum F & A. Recipients must be in good standing with all USM responsibilities. Funds will be typically dispersed in the year following award. This program will not be a salary supplement.

5.3 Dr. Vinzant

- Categories for Investment Proposals
 - Recruitment – First Year Students
 - Expanded efforts in existing markets
 - In-state
 - Out-of-state (AL/FL panhandle; Memphis; Birmingham)
 - New markets
 - Community College transfer students
 - Student success/persistence
 - Online programs
 - International students

- Expand existing master's programs
 - New programs
 - Summer school
 - Marketing initiatives
- Decision Process Calendar
 - We are in the process of allocating investments to selected proposals (out of about 50 submitted). These initiatives will be rolled out in Fall 2014.
 - This should produce ~350-500 students for a net of \$2.5M - \$3M. This will create a revenue stream to support future initiatives.
- Criteria for Evaluating Proposals
 - Select proposals that generate largest enrollment and revenue impact for the smallest dollar amount
 - Use one-time allocations when possible
 - Strengthen recruitment efforts of first time and CC transfer students
 - Directly impact student success
 - Utilize a wide array of initiatives from 9 different categories to support broad change
 - Maximize impact on all campuses
- Estimated Enrollment Increase
 - 21 initiatives across 7 of the 9 categories for an estimated enrollment increase of ~896
- Next Steps
 - President has approved the 21 initiatives
 - Funds are being allocated
 - Post implementation evaluation will be conducted and then shared with Faculty Senate. Some initiatives may be a challenge to determine their impact, but we are trying to identify measures now.
 - This proposal process will likely be an annual process. Pres.-Elect Press recommended that the faculty and students be included in future.
 - Pres. Fletcher asked Dr. Vanzant and others to keep in mind the impact these initiatives will have on faculty and staff workload. Dr. Vanzant stated that the intention is to reward productivity. Sen. Zantow noted that we need to evaluate what we are already doing to determine if those things are working.
- Kyle Stoner, incoming SGA Vice President-Elect for Hattiesburg Campus, introduction. Wants to get a feel for how Faculty Senate operates and open dialogue. The SGA passed a resolution to have a brief mid-term evaluation. The SGA has also passed several student success initiatives.
- Laquita Gresham, SGA President for the Gulf Coast Campus, introductions. We have an active petition regarding the equality between the campuses. We pay the same tuition but do not have access to the same resources. The petition has been very successful and plan on meeting with Dr. Bennett after spring break regarding this issue.
- Pres.-Elect Press recommended that both groups involve Faculty Senate and Faculty Council so that all groups can work toward the same issues.

6.0 Committee Reports

6.1 Academic and Governance

Sen. Sirola reported that the committee has been exploring the recommendations of the Student Success Steering Committee. Some issues that we have include the language regarding the “historically difficult course (HDC),” confusion about “front loading instruction,” and “in-term grades.” The committee thought the faculty incentives for developing and new faculty training were good ideas. This training

would be a good idea for all faculty. Overall, the committee endorses the report with the exception of the HDC.

6.2 Administrative Evaluation

Sen. Shelly reported that the administration evaluations have been dispursed and are going well. Reponses are up. We are meeting next week to determine next week. Pres. Fletcher asked the committee to get with the Elections Committee to discuss the difficulties retrieving the faculty roster from human resources. Sens. Naguin and Daves reported that some faculty did not receive the email.

6.3 Awards

Sen. Barry stated that all the awards have been determined for the year. The Faculty Awards Ceremony will be before the next Faculty Senate, April 4th.

6.4 Budget

Sen. Zantow reported that they have met with Dr. Vanzant and will be meeting with him monthly.

6.5 Bylaws

Sen. Zelner will be taking over the bylaws committee.

6.6 Elections

Sen. Zelner reported that the ballots will be sent out next week and will be open for two weeks.

6.7 GC Faculty Council

Sen. Smith reported that Dr. Wiesenburg came to the last meeting to identify areas needing clarification in the new organizational structure. Dr. Vanzant will be coming to the next meeting to address how the new organizational structure will impact the budget. The staff has voiced concern about changes in job descriptions and chain of commands. Sen. Smith met with Dr. Bennett and Dr. Wiesenburg yesterday to address some of those concerns. Laquita Gresham stated that the GC SGA have reviewed the new organizational structure and have some concerns. Sen. Smith stated that she could send those concerns/questions to him and he will compile them with the ones he has. Pres.-Elect Press encouraged both SGAs to work together. Pres. Fletcher asked that Sen. Smith forward those concerns/questions to him.

6.8 Handbook.

Sen. Lambers will be taken over as chair. Sen. Welsh reported on behalf of Sen. Lambers. We have two recommendations that we are tabling for further discussion. We have a recommendation for Emeritus Status. This recommendation will be circulated to the Faculty Senate. We are also working on some inconsistencies in the pagination of the handbook.

6.9 Research and Scholarship

Sen. Piland reports that the committee has been meeting with VPR Cannon regarding the new RIF program. We will be distributing a report prior to the next meeting for the Faculty Senate to continue.

6.10 Student Life

No report

6.11 Teaching and Service

Sen. Naquin reported that the committee had some concerns with the recommendation for mid-term evaluations including the inability to make changes to the syllabus and the students had other mechanisms to manage concerns (e.g., the chain of command). The other issue is that the chairs have not been getting the comments from the student evaluations for the last 10 years. Both SGA representatives stated that students complete the evaluations with the understanding that chairs would see the comments and maybe the process could be made more efficiently. Sen. Lux noted that the turnaround for reporting findings would need to be quicker than final evaluations. Pres. Fletcher asked Sen. Naguin to meet with the SGA representatives and circulate a report.

Sen. Naquin reported that some issues the identified in the Academic Integrity Policy, which included the Soar notification of the policy, among others. Pres. Fletcher asked Sen. Naquin to circulate a report on the policy and to bring a recommendation to the Faculty Senate.

Sen. Naquin stated that they also have concerns/questions about the Student Success Report including creating several positions. Pres. Fletcher asked her to send those concerns out to Faculty Senate and bring a recommendation for the next Faculty Senate. Pres. Fletcher challenged the committee to look beyond the resources needed and to look at if whether these approaches are valid.

6.12 University Relations

No report

6.13 University Welfare and Environmental Concerns

No report

7.0 Old Business

7.1 Student Success Report

Bill Powell addressed the HDC concern by stating that the term is widely used and standard in the industry. In the recommendation, students will be given a message when they attempt to register for two or more courses identified as HDC among other recommendations to handling HDC.

7.2 SGA resolution for mid-term evaluations and Teaching Committee response

See above

7.3 Academic Integrity Policy

See above

8.0 New Business None

9.0 Adjourn 5:10 p.m. Sen. Smith made a motion to adjourn; Sen. Naquin second