

Fall 12-5-2014

Faculty Senate Minutes - December 5, 2014

USM Faculty Senate

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**Minutes of the
Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate of The University of Southern Mississippi
Cook Library 123/Fleming Education Center 307 (IVN)
December 5, 2014**

Members Present and Represented (by proxy): M. Alford, J. Anderson (T. Welsh), T. Barry, A. Beck, D. Booth, R. Buchanan, S. Cloud, K. Davis, D. Fletcher (L. Story), D. Griffin, R. Griffitt, A. Haley (M. Grivno), O. Harvey (F. Heitmuller), B. Hayden, S. Hayden, F. Heitmuller, D. Holt, S. Hrostowski, L. Iglesias, J. Lambers, M. Leonard, M. Lux, H. Lyn, C. Meyers, C. Miller, L. Nored (R. Press), L. Neelis, W. Odom, J. Olmi (T. Barry), R. Press, P. Price, L. Rackoff, S. Reischman-Fletcher (L. Story), T. Roberson (T. Welsh), C. Sirola, S. Rouse, K. Shelley, L. Story, C. Tardy, M. Van Norden (K. Zantow), T. Welsh, J. White, K. Zantow

Members Absent: K. Goodwin, E. Molaison

Guests: Chad Driskell, Bill Powell, Doug Vinzant

Business Meeting – 2:00 PM

1.0 Call to order by Pres. Press, 2:03 PM

2.0 Approval of agenda

On motion by Sen. Hayden and second by Sen. Heitmuller, the agenda was unanimously approved with the understanding that President Bennett would be late and his report given out of order when he arrives.

3.0 Approval of November minutes

On motion by Sen. Rackoff and second by Sen. Alford, the minutes of the November 7, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved.

4.0 Officer Reports

4.1. President Press

Pres. Press thanked the Senators for their contributions this semester and said they play an essential part in making USM a place where students, faculty, and staff move forward together. For spring, some of the topics and initiative worth considering:

1. **Recruitment and Retention.** How can the Senate best support the new initiatives and should faculty be given additional credit for these initiatives or should this be part of the normal workload?

2. **Using the Arts for Recruitment and Retention.** The University Relations Committee has come up with some fresh initiatives that will be presented in spring.

3. **Athletics and Academics.** The administration is focused on two issues – greater recruitment and retention and a successful athletics program. The appropriate Faculty Senate committees are urged to do a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the athletic program in the spring.

4. **Sexual Misconduct Policies.** Two issues are worth our attention: 1) Do students and others know how to report sexual misconduct? 2) Are those accused adequately informed about their rights? The Title IX Coordinator has been invited to discuss these issues in the spring.

5. **Teaching Faculty.** This issue is being researched and a report will be issued in the spring.

6. **On other fronts,** faculty can look forward to earlier administrative evaluations, simultaneous Senate elections with other key campus elections, many awards, and initiatives from various Faculty Senate committees.

4.2. President-Elect Story

Pres.-Elect Story reported that as part of the student recruitment and retention effort, she met with Dean Mullin. They will be providing faculty with bullet points of best practices and Dean Mullin's staff will be meeting with chairs to find out more about the programs offered across campus

4.3. **Secretary Anderson** – No report

4.4. **Secretary-Elect Welsh** – No report

5.0 Remarks from Administration

5.1 Provost Denis Wiesenburg

Provost Wiesenburg congratulated faculty on the extra effort with students to prepare for final exams such as tutorial sessions offered by some departments. Richard Mullin, Dean of Admissions and Enrollment, is working on identifying new ways of recruitment such as sponsoring USM recruitment weeks at various locations around the state and regionally such as in Texas and Florida, buying access to databases with names of prospective students, and expanding efforts to recruit international students and incoming freshmen. Admission applications are currently backlogged, but after this is addressed, a new, more streamlined system online that will be more efficient.

The college deans have worked together to minimize the impact of the budget cuts for 2015. They are in discussion for the 2016 budget – they will make sure accredited programs are supported, that research is supported, and programs that are growing will be supported.

Teaching (non-research) faculty has been approved by the Deans and Executive Cabinet. Now we have to look at what other institutions are doing – the issue for these positions is

tenure-track or no tenure track. Usually, for 80% teaching and 20% service is non-tenure track but multiple-year contracts instead. Right now we have professors of practice and instructors who are considered staff – we could eliminate that to faculty status with multiple-year contracts. We would like to have Faculty Senate bring this up for a vote.

6.0 Chad Driskell, Vice-President for External Affairs

Chad Driskell reported that the state economy is doing better. IHL was given about \$20 million this past year and should get about that much next year. If there is an increase in tax revenue, the legislature may fund an across-the-board salary increase for state employees. On the down side, the cost of Medicaid keeps going up and there is pressure to fully fund formulas previously adopted for k-12 funding and community college funding, which would hurt funding for state universities.

Driskell reported that they have used every tool to increase funding to USM and have been successful in obtaining funding for tornado damage, a new college of nursing, a 3-year bond package with other universities for \$30 million over 3 years, funding for the Gulf Park Research Lab (\$1 million for infrastructure), and for the Polymer Center.

7.0 Remarks from Administration

7.0 President Rodney Bennett

President Bennett spoke about the budget and emphasized that we do not have to accept budget cuts for 2016 – if the numbers are up, the planned cuts for 2016 may not be accepted. We can do something now and get the enrollment and retention numbers up. The greatest hope for a brighter future for USM is the fact that we're working together, soliciting ideas, and everything is transparent. Usually a university that has an open process comes out of it successfully. About 600 - 1,000 more students would allow a 2% salary increase – that is our number-one priority for us and for the system.

President Bennett requested feedback from faculty – are faculty getting enough information from the President's office? Is the President's office communicating often enough with the right amount of information? Several senators remarked that the information furnished by President Bennett's office was appropriate.

8.0 Senate Committee Reports/Discussion

Senate Committees

8.1. Academic and Governance

Sen. Holt, Chair of the Academics and Governance Committee presented a preliminary report but tabled a resolution on gender equity in order to conduct more statistical analysis.

8.2. Administrative Evaluation

Sen. Shelley, Chair of the Administrative Evaluations Committee, reported that there was only a 30% completion rate so far (completion rate is usually about 45%), so they would send out another reminder. She also noted they needed one additional member for the committee and Sen. Davis volunteered.

8.3. Handbook

Sen. Davis, Chair of the Handbook Committee, reported that the committee had not been complying with the requirement to post committee members and minutes online but that information will be posted.

University Committees

8.4. Quality Enhancement Plan Research and Design Team

Sen. Barry reported on behalf of the Quality Enhancement Plan Research and Design Team that they were in the process of reviewing the relevant literature related to research and best practices; they anticipate a 100-page document in the spring semester. In Fall 2015, the QEP Implementation Committee will work on implementing the program in preparation for the for the March 2016 SACS onsite visit.

8.5. Student Success Implementation Team

Sen. Price reported on behalf of the Student Success Implementation Team that they funded eight retention projects. The new policy of allowing students to withdraw in SOAR until mid-semester is controversial but will go forward this year and they will revisit the policy in the spring. There is some concern about recognition of student success efforts and they recommend adding language about student success to position ads. The committee supports recognition for course redesign to increase student engagement. They have a Web site (<http://www.usm.edu/institutional-effectiveness/sssc>), and they are working on developing resources for students, which will be out in the spring.

8.6. Strategic Planning Committee

Pres.-Elect Story reported on behalf of Sen. Fletcher for the Strategic Planning Committee and requested that faculty read the committee report sent via Faculty Senate listserv and submit comments and concerns to Sen. Fletcher. The Internal Forces (Strengths/Weaknesses) Subcommittee (Karen Reidenbach, Chair) and External Forces (Opportunities/Threats) Subcommittee (Sen. Fletcher, Chair) are currently working to create a SWOT analysis matrix and formulate a set of strategic issues.

Outcomes of the Mission, Vision, and Values Subcommittee (Dr. Joe Peyrefitte, Chair):

Draft Mission Statement

We are a community of engaged citizens, operating as a public, student-centered, doctoral-granting research university serving Mississippi, the nation, and the world. We are dedicated to scholarship and learning, engaging students at all levels in the creation and application of knowledge through leadership in research, creative activities, outreach, and service. We nurture student success by providing distinctive and competitive undergraduate, graduate, and educational programs embedded in a welcoming environment, preparing our students to embark on meaningful life endeavors.

Draft Values Statement

1. Academic and instructional excellence focused on student success
2. An inclusive community embracing diversity of people and ideas
3. A culture characterized by warmth and supportive connections among students, faculty, and staff
4. An approach to academics, research, and personal conduct based on integrity
5. Learning, research, and creative activities with local, national and international impacts
6. An engaging and evolving curriculum that fosters lifelong curiosity, critical thinking, and professionalism
7. Development of the skills necessary for students to succeed in a rapidly changing and global society, including collaboration, adaptability, perseverance, and information and global literacy
8. Community participation that promotes social responsibility and public citizenship

Draft Vision Statement

We aspire to ...

1. Be a premier university with quality programs and program recognition that makes us competitive with other leading institutions of higher learning.
2. Build upon our established commitment to community engagement to increase local, regional, and national collaborations and alliances.
3. Be a globally-integrated university with international students and research partnerships and a curriculum that facilitates students' awareness and understanding of our global society.
4. Be recognized regionally as the public university dedicated to the success of all of its students, regardless of their background, ethnicity, race, color, national origin, religion, social class, sex, sexual identity, disability, or age.
5. Be recognized regionally as the university community in which its members experience a sense of belongingness, warmth, and interconnectedness.

8.7. Evaluation of Teaching Committee

Sen. Meyers reported on behalf of the Evaluation of Teaching Committee that comments by students on their course evaluations will be available to chairs and deans beginning in 2015 but there should probably be an appeal process for faculty in case negative comments by students are misused.

8.8. Gulf Coast Faculty Council

Sen. Holt reported on behalf of the Gulf Coast Faculty Council that the Associate Provost position is still not filled so CoAL and CoST faculty were not able to complete an administration evaluation.

9.0 Old Business – none

10.0 New Business – none

11.0 Adjournment

Upon a motion by Sen. Tardy and second by Sen. Inglesias, the meeting was adjourned at 4:26 PM by unanimous voice vote.