

2-6-2015

## Faculty Senate Minutes - February 6, 2015

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/Hardy Hall 346  
February 6, 2015**

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

**Members Absent:** D. Booth, O. Harvey, R. Griffitt

**Guests:** Bill Powell, Jeff May, Sheri Rawls

**Business Meeting**

1.0 Remarks from Administration

1.1 President Rodney Bennett

- 1.1.1 Announced the retirement of Joe Paul. The university will plan events for his retirement.
- 1.1.2 Legislative update – During the IHL meeting on USM campus (w/Presidents) in October, it was agreed that the 8 universities of MS would focus on a single request for a salary program to support merit-based faculty and staff raises. The request is for an across the board 5% increase, which is \$36,268,518 across system. The USM portion of this is \$7,910,000 based upon HR data of those who would be eligible.
- 1.1.3 Reed Green Coliseum – USM Athletic Director Bill McGillis held an open forum about plans to renovate Reed Green Coliseum. If there is support for it, it could be a tremendous boost. President Bennett suggested inviting McGillis to a Faculty Senate meeting to present plans.
- 1.1.4 IHL Commissioner Hank Bounds has accepted the presidency of the University of Nebraska system. His last day with IHL is April 12. It is not currently known how the Board will proceed with an appointment to replace Bounds.

1.2 Provost Denis Wiesenburg

- 1.2.1 Honor Bands are to be present on campus the weekend of Feb. 7-8.
- 1.2.2 SSIT Meeting
- 1.2.3 Prov. Wiesenburg met with the Student Success Implementation Team and they have created a new website, [www.usm.edu/success](http://www.usm.edu/success).
- 1.2.4 One recommendation from the team was to hire an associate provost for student success. There will be no net addition of senior level administrators in the Provost's office. Prov. Wiesenburg clarified this will not add a new position but will eliminate Dr. Cynthia Easterling's position upon her retirement. A new position, the Associate Provost for Academic Excellence, will be created. The position is meant to cover

the student success elements recommended by the SSIT as well as faculty development. A search committee has been formed. It is expected that this position will be filled by the summer.

- 1.2.5 Andrew Haley will serve on the Commencement Speaker Committee.
- 1.2.6 Deans are in the final stages of FY16 budgets. Prov. Wiesenburg will present them to Doug Vinzant as soon as they are in.
- 1.2.7 Department Chairs are meeting on the Gulf Park campus next week

## 2.0 Officer Reports

### 2.1 Pres. Press entered the following report:

“Welcome everyone. We have a busy spring term ahead for the Senate. Committee chairs have been asked to wrap up their targeted projects by sometime in March to allow time in April to begin assessing the impact and to identify a chair-elect for their committees.

I want to thank Jennifer Anderson for the countless ways in which she has been engaged in helping the Senate as a whole and especially our Senate committees to be effective. And my thanks to Teresa Welsh, our Secretary-elect, for the quiet and efficient leadership in many ways on the Executive committee

As you know, Dr. Lachel Story, has accepted a position as an Assistant Dean in the College of Nursing. Under the Senate bylaws, anyone with a rank higher than chair is no longer eligible to be on the Senate. I want to express my deep appreciation for Lachel’s service to the Senate. She has worked tirelessly and professionally in many ways to serve the faculty through the Senate. Lisa Nored today has also announced her resignation as Senator due to other duties which leave her little time for the Senate. I appreciate her service to the Senate over the years.

Senator Hayden has advised the Senate Executive Committee that the College of Nursing has identified Dr. Bonnie Lee Harbaugh is their choice to fill the Senate vacancy from their College. Dr. Harbaugh is Chair of the Department of Systems Leadership and Health Outcomes in the College of Nursing. She holds the rank of Professor and has past experience as a member and officer in the Faculty Senate. I submit to you now her name for the consent of the Senate to fill the vacancy for the interim period through the May meeting this year.

[Dr. Harbaugh was approved without objection by the Senate; Dr. Press greeted her upon her return to the Senate meeting room.]

Under the bylaws, if a vacancy occurs in the office of President-elect after the December meeting of the Senate, the office remains vacant until the next Senate election of officers. The Senate will elect both a President and a President-elect at our May meeting.

But the transition should not be too difficult. We have plenty of Senators with experience in campus meetings and leadership. Our secretary-elect will be on the new Executive team as Secretary. I will be stepping down from the Senate this spring at the completion of my current term in office, but like other past presidents, we will be available to share our experiences and ideas – if called upon.

As we study and discuss bylaws, vacancies, and other issues, we are at our best when we focus not on personalities or individuals but on principles and the role of the Senate as a strong voice for faculty.

Our main faculty issue remains salaries. I believe the President will have something to say about that. At the President’s suggestion, I have written to the Presidents of the other Faculty Senates in

the state colleges and universities to see how we can lobby for salary increases. The SGA presidents have already begun such an effort.

The plans for a new coliseum as a community event center as well as a sports center will require wide community support. The Senate has a chance to join in developing such support.

USM is hiring new senior administrators in charge of enrollment and in student success. I encourage you to meet with the candidates in the planned open forums that will be announced.”

2.2 Sec. Anderson reminded senators to copy all members of the Executive Committee (Press, Anderson, Welsh, Roberson) on electronic correspondence.

2.3 Sec-Elect Welsh reported that the following issues have come through the MachForm (from the Faculty Senate Webpage) as well as Executive Committee actions:

2/4/2015

Concern was expressed over the closure of the Center for Research Support and retirement of Dr. J.T. Johnson. The Center for Research Support provides a critical role in assisting faculty and graduate students in conducting research and in obtaining, implementing, and maintaining grants. Request was made to Faculty Senate to request data from the Center for Research Support showing the number of dissertations, research studies, and grants supported through the center and to contact the VP for Research as to the plan for how the current responsibilities of the Center will be fulfilled moving forward. (<http://www.usm.edu/research/center-research-support>).

Forwarded to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Prov. Wiesenburg, VP for Research Dr. Cannon, and Chair of the Research Committee.

1/29/2015

Concern was expressed about the absence of faculty on the Search Committee for Associate VP for Enrollment Management and Admissions.

Forwarded to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Prov. Wiesenburg.

1/23/2015

A proposal that chairs should be ineligible to serve as members of the Faculty Senate.

Forwarded to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Prov. Wiesenburg, Chair of the Bylaws Committee and Chair of the Elections Committee.

12/15/2014

Request for discussion of grade due dates and request for a full week after the last final to get grades into SOAR and request to develop a policy/procedure for spousal/partner hires. Forwarded to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Prov. Wiesenburg, Chair of the Teaching and Service Committee, Chair of the Handbook Committee.

### 3.0 Committee Reports/Discussion

#### 3.1 Senate Committees

##### 3.1.1 Academics and Governance

3.1.1.1 Sen. Holt stated that current points for ongoing discussion in committee include: Academicians to be required to post CVs online; Mandatory rubrics; Gender equity; Membership of chairs on faculty senate; and a Policy to protect existing faculty salaries to prevent compression.

- 3.1.1.2 A Faculty Senate Resolution in support of gender equity in pay was unanimously passed.
- 3.1.2 Administrative Evaluation – Sen. Shelley sent the following report: The analyses are nearly complete and they could use some help on formatting letters and distributing them. There were 343 responses, which is substantially more than the last few years.
- 3.1.3 Awards
  - 3.1.3.1 Sen. Barry reported that the Faculty Excellence Awards were determined following the December Faculty Senate meeting, with recommendations sent to the Provost. The two recipients—one for Teaching, one for Service—were notified in mid-December.
  - 3.1.3.2 The applications for the Junior Faculty Awards have been received and are in the process of review by the committee. The committee will meet on February 16<sup>th</sup> to determine our ranking recommendations for the three awards—which include creativity, research, and teaching. Recommendations are due to the Provost’s Office on February 19<sup>th</sup>.
  - 3.1.3.3 Sen. Barry has been working with Cynthia Easterling on the program for the May 1<sup>st</sup> Faculty Awards Ceremony. Reminder that this event will precede our May 1<sup>st</sup> Faculty Senate meeting, both of which will be at Trent Lott Center.
- 3.1.4 Bylaws - Sen. Roberson stated that the Bylaws Committee met and offers the following report:
  - 3.1.4.1 The committee anticipates discussion at the February meeting that will further inform necessary revisions to the bylaws. The committee plans to distribute suggested revisions to the Senate at least 14 days prior to the March meeting. This committee identified the following as possible revisions.
  - 3.1.4.2 The current bylaws posted on the Web site do not reflect the last amendments adopted by the prior Senate. The committee will include these in the next draft.
  - 3.1.4.3 The committee identified several typos, which need to be corrected.
  - 3.1.4.4 The bylaws need to further clarify language regarding “advise and consent” from the Senate (e.g., when the President submits a recommendation to fill a vacant position)
  - 3.1.4.5 The bylaws refer to May, April, and February elections. The committee asks the Election Committee to review these sections and advise the bylaws committee on necessary corrections.
  - 3.1.4.6 The committee seeks input on the Senate’s desire to retain language in the eligibility that allows chairs to serve.
  - 3.1.4.7 The Bylaws committee questioned the rationale for allowing a vacant officer’s position to remain vacant if it occurs after December and has contacted Dave Beckett for information.

- 3.1.4.8 An anonymous comment was sent in regarding eligibility of Chairs for membership in the senate.
- 3.1.4.9 A straw poll was taken and a majority voted to retain the language regarding eligibility of chairs to serve as Faculty Senators.
- 3.1.5 Communications - Sen. Tardy stated two goals of the Communications Committee:
  - 3.1.5.1 Facilitate communication by creation of a template for faculty senators to introduce themselves to colleagues, then pass along a summary of minutes. Some colleges have periodic meetings of faculty senators with their college's faculty and with their dean.
  - 3.1.5.2 Facilitate issues by doing a faculty survey. The Communications Committee will send out a request for input.
- 3.1.6 Finance – Sen. Zantow reported that they meet monthly with CFO Vinzant. The budget revision for 2014-15 was \$6.9 million, and it was about a \$6.7 million reduction. The 2015-16 budget will be finalized in April. There has not yet been a decision regarding an increase in summer pay. The pouring rights contract is up for bid, and restructuring of debt bonds will save the University \$500,000. They are working on improving transportation and replacing trailers on the Gulf Park campus.
- 3.1.7 Elections - Sen. Alford reported they were working on a unified ballot spreadsheet, which should be finalized by Monday. They may do a test ballot. Marine Science wants to be considered Hattiesburg.
- 3.1.8 Handbook/University Handbook Committee - Sen. Davis reported that Dr. Deanne Nuwer was on a leave of absence and a proxy was approved for her on the University Handbook Committee.
- 3.1.9 University Relations - Sen. Miller reported that the Community Creative Initiative was exciting and in progress.
- 3.1.10 University Welfare and Environmental Concerns – The committee will meet with Rebecca Wordrick Mally on Feb. 20. Mally will visit the senate at a later date.

### 3.2 University Committees

- 3.2.1 Institutional Diversity Committee - Sen. Hrostowski, who is also Chair of the Institutional Diversity Committee, reported that the Committee is in the process of writing their bylaws and if anyone is interested in serving on this committee, please contact her.
- 3.2.2 Student Success Implementation Team
  - 3.2.2.1 Sen. Price reported that the Web site ([www.usm.edu/success](http://www.usm.edu/success)) is up and has great resources for students, faculty and parents and will have links for feedback and success stories as well as information about advising.

3.2.2.2 The Student Success Implementation Team (SSIT) had a call for grants for Initiatives on Curricular and Student Success. Eight applications were awarded a total of \$59,695 (from the \$60,000 designated one-time funds). Represented departments included were Human Performance & Recreation, English, Construction, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Medical Laboratory Sciences, Psychology, Social Work, and Child and Family Studies. Projects are underway for spring through fall 2015. All funds must be spent by December 31, 2015. Recipients will prepare and present an implementation and impact report to the Office of the Provost upon completion of the project (by early Spring 2016).

### 3.2.3 QEP Research and Design Team

3.2.3.1 Sen. Barry reported that the QEP R&D Team met on Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>. There are four action teams in the QEP with everyone serving on one of the teams: (1) Assessment; (2) Experiential Learning; (3) Gateway Course; and (4) PR and Communication.

3.2.3.2 The QEP has a set budget because the QEP implementation is a SACSCOC requirement.

3.2.3.3 The Gateway Course Action Team is currently reviewing travel grant applications submitted by teams teaching specific gateway courses (submitted by invitation based on DFW data) to send them to a Gateway to Completion Conference, designed to improve student success in high-risk, gateway courses.

3.2.3.4 As a reminder:

3.2.3.4.1 The QEP Topic, *Eagles Engaged*, is about active learning and has two components: 1) supporting learning in historically difficult/gateway courses and 2) enhancing experiential learning opportunities. (The experiential learning opportunities are not limited to gateway courses.)

3.2.3.4.2 The goals of the QEP (approved by Dr. Bennett and the Executive Cabinet this summer) are to increase the percentage of students:

- Reporting spending more than 10 hours/week preparing for class/engaged in learning outside of class
- Successfully meeting student learning outcomes in historically difficult/gateway courses
- Successfully completing historically difficult/gateway courses
- Reporting satisfaction/time spent with advisor discussing long-term goals and career goals
- Engaging in experiential learning opportunities
- Persisting and graduating

- 3.2.3.5 Chairs and directors were sent a survey to gather baseline data and information about experiential learning components which already exist at USM. It is due February 20<sup>th</sup>. Faculty Senate members who are chairs/directors, please complete this survey; others, please encourage your chairs/directors! It is very important to have baseline data for the QEP and SACSCOC.
  - 3.2.3.6 We are working on the review of the literature to begin writing the QEP proposal. Writing is underway and we will begin to make edits to drafts by our next meeting, which is scheduled for Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>.
  - 3.2.4 Strategic Planning Committee - Sen. Fletcher reported that the draft was finished and they have a final USM master plan.
  - 3.2.5 Gulf Coast Faculty Council sent a letter to President Bennett in support of “the work done by the Research Initiative on Social Justice and Equality (RISE) regarding the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index. The Faculty Council also supports the findings documented by RISE, encouraging the University of Southern Mississippi to continue efforts to support our LGBT campus community.” A copy of the letter of support, along with the Interim Campus Climate Index report was made available to the senate.
- 4.0 New Business - Both Membership in the Senate and Filling Vacancies in the Senate was discussed. Both issues have been sent to joint committees for discussion. All input should be sent to the Executive Committee. Sen. Fletcher sent a compilation of related issues to the listserv. Also send input regarding those concerns to the Executive Committee.