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Faculty Senate Minutes

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The University of Southern Mississippi

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 11, 2019, 2:00 p.m.

Scianna Hall 1048 (Hattiesburg)

IVN to North Academic Building 101 (Gulf Park) and

Stennis Building 1020, Room 118

Present: Micheal Davis, Shahid Karim, Tom Rishel, Charlie Scheer, Lindsey Conlin-Maxwell, Jae-Hwa Shin, Leffi Cewe-Malloy, Damon Franke, Nicolle Jordan, Brian LaPierre, Kevin Greene (proxy), Jeremy Scott, Richard Perry, Timothy Tesh, Jennifer Courts, Louis Rackoff, Bob Press (Kate Greene interim), Amber Cole, Shinhua Liu, John Lambert, John Miller, Michelle Jeanfreau, Lilian Hill (proxy), Anne Sylvest, Gary Krebs, Catharine Bomhold (proxy), Michael Madson, Joe Olmi, Susan Hrostowski, Tamara Hurst, Susan Mayfield-Johnson, Lisa Green, Kimberly Ward (proxy), Robert Leaf, Donald (Don) Redalje, Jennifer Brannock, Lin Agler, Westley (Lee) Follett (proxy), Kalyn Lamey, Whitney Martin, Sharon Rouse (proxy)

Absent: E. Susan Howell, Gopinath Subramanian, David Lee, Bonnie Harbaugh

1.0 Organizational Items

1.1 Call to Order The meeting was called to order by Susan Hrostowski at 2:08.

1.2 Roll Call

1.3 Recognition of Quorum (23)

1.4 Recognition of $\frac{2}{3}$ membership for voting on Bylaws and Resolutions (31)

2.0 Adoption of Agenda

- Approved unanimously by voice vote.

3.0 Program

- President Bennett attended the meeting and spoke regarding the reorganization of the coastal operations. He indicated that there has been no predetermined decision made about the coast and that the process used to determine changes in our coastal operations is operating under the proper oversight. He ensures that everyone will have an opportunity to voice their opinions.

3.1 Provost Moser:

- Provost Moser indicated that he understands anxiety around changes; however, he believes that the institution is missing opportunities on the coast and it is essential that we leverage these opportunities.
- The process of developing a plan for coastal operations started approximately one year ago with a group of faculty and staff reviewing documents prepared by research partners.
- The Coastal Operations Leadership Team (COLT) was created with the goal of ensuring our academic and research programs best serve our students and coastal community.

- Provost Moser is aware that faculty has expressed concerns about certain areas being underrepresented on the leadership team and he indicated that adjustments will be made to address those concerns.
- While working with external stakeholders and Gulf Park, GCRL, and Stennis faculty and staff, among others, The COLT has determined three thematic areas (pillars) of focus.

3.2 Dr. Funderburk:

- Dr. Funderburk identified the three pillars as follows:
 - Understanding the Ocean and Coasts
 - This goes beyond ocean science.
 - Improving Coastal Resilience
 - The “human” element.
 - Supporting the Blue Economy
 - The portion of the economy that would not exist without the ocean (shipping, logistics, casinos, etc.).

3.3 Dr. Graham

- Dr. Graham directs interested parties to the following website:
 - www.usm.edu/coastal-operations
 - Here faculty and staff are offered the opportunity to submit an idea or review (comment on) previously submitted ideas.
 - The 36 submitted ideas can be viewed on the website.
 - The website also indicates the process by which all of these ideas and comments will be synthesized and evaluated.

4.0 Approval of Minutes

4.1 June and September, 2019

- Approved unanimously by voice vote.

5.0 Officer Reports

5.1 President

In President Bennett’s cabinet meeting, Dr. Jennifer Stollman presented a program on LGBTQIA issues. The executive cabinet and deans discussed the need to ensure that the campus remain an accepting and safe space for all students, faculty, and staff. There was some discussion about the need for more gender non-specific bathrooms on campus and for the development of fields in SOAR for preferred pronouns and names.

President Bennett emphasized that faculty should review their grade rosters and intervene with under-performing students. Students who have several absences and/or have poor grades should be contacted and mentored to prevent failures and drop outs.

Ms. Serna Cantrell has been hired as the new Associate Vice President and Dean of Students. She will be responsible for the Dean of Students office; Office of Disability Accommodations; Student Counseling Services; Student Health Services; Center for Military Veterans, Service Members, and Families; and Student Support and Outreach.

In response to many questions about the Gulf Coast reorganization, the Provost, Dr. Casey Maugh-Funderburk and Dr. Monty Graham were asked to address the Senate today.

5.2 President-Elect: No report

5.3 Secretary: No report

5.4 Secretary-Elect: No report

6.0 Decision / Action Items

7.0 Standing Committee Reports

7.1 Bylaws: No report

7.2 Elections

There were several updates to the faculty senate membership as a result of members changing responsibilities and/or leaving the university.

- Michelle Jeanfreau is now representing the School of Child and Family Sciences
- Scott Milroy stepped down as a representative for Gulf Park and was replaced by Whitney Martin
- Lisa Green is the representative for the School of Professional Nursing Practice
- Jae-Hwa Shin and Lindsey Conlin-Maxwell are representing the School of Communication

The Elections Chair, President, and Secretary all collaborated to ensure that Senate membership is correct and complete.

7.4 Faculty Handbook

7.4.1 Bylaws need to address the term of the appointment to UFHC.

7.4.2 Should deferral of tenure be allowed for one or multiple one year extensions?

- Sense of the Senate: Deferrals of tenure should be allowed beyond one year under extenuating circumstances.

7.4.3 Should an extension be allowed for third-year review?

- Sense of the Senate: Deferrals of tenure should be allowed beyond one year under extenuating circumstances.

7.4.4 Should teaching track be allowed to vote on promotion?

- Sense of the Senate: Teaching track positions may vote on promotions, as determined by each school's individual documents. The school's promotion and tenure committee

recommendation is signed by all committee members and the recommendation is sent simultaneously to the candidate and the director.

7.5 Academics

Academics Committee:

Kevin Greene-Chair

Lee Follett

Damon Franke

Robert Leaf

Shahid Karim

T.J. Tesh

Ex-officio-Susan Hrostowski

The Academics committee met on 10/01/19 to discuss our charge/s for the academic year. We participated in lively discussions about the rising costs of textbooks, the changes to the GEC, impending degree program review, and the nature of centralized advising in relation to student success and retention. We deliberated over all four of these exceedingly massive topics in order to determine our committee's priorities. We were all in agreement that focusing and unearthing information about increasing textbook prices as well as advising models across colleges, schools, and programs are certainly achievable measures within the 2019-2020 academic year. Our most spirited discussions, though, stemmed from the uncertain nature of the GEC's future structure and the programmatic review which will no doubt follow a reshuffling of the core curriculum.

We came to consensus on the GEC issue that large university committees as well as individual faculty efforts are in place to wrestle with what will likely be a very challenging process. We as a committee, at this time, are not in a position to maneuver into the fray of this ongoing work. We did agree, however, on a few things as they relate to the GEC and its inevitable restructuring. First, the cost of textbooks and the GEC are somewhat linked, given the nature of core curricula and the importance of textbook adoption in those courses, particularly as it relates to introductory courses. Second, as the Academics Committee, we can collect qualitative and quantitative reactions to the potential changes posed by a remapping of the GEC in hope of gaining a better sense of faculty thought on the subject. Finally, with the looming and seemingly drastic changes the Gulf Park campus faces at present, any investigations into the faculty's concerns over an altered GEC footprint might be premature.

In a related but separate manner, we also agreed to wait and see of what is to come with the coast campus' reorganization and what impact it may have on programmatic review for Gulf Park. Given the nebulous nature of the multidisciplinary approaches to restructuring Gulf Park—i.e., Coastal Vision of Understanding the Ocean and Coasts, Improving Coastal Resilience, and Supporting the Blue Economy—there are tangible fears among coast faculty emerging from deep concerns of the likelihood of not only program review, but program elimination altogether. Finally, much of the Gulf Park reorg will no doubt fall under the purview of Senate's Gulf Coast committee, so we are cautious in overstepping boundaries without further communication with that body.

In the end, we are, as urged by faculty Senate president, in a wait and see holding pattern with the GEC and program review. We are for now committed to investigating textbook options and adaptations both from within and without the university. Within the next week the committee chair will hold a scheduled meeting with Cengage representatives concerning a macro-look at the world of university textbook possibilities as they stand in 2020. While not interested in Cengage's products per se, we've recognized their position as pioneers in the market and would like to know how they operate and with whom they compete against. Whatever comes of our work towards deescalating the costs of textbooks we also recognize that Barnes and Noble will definitely have \$.02 to contribute to further conversations. Finally, we've begun conversations on various advising models across colleges and schools, as they seem to be quite disparate given the tangible differences between disciplines. Some colleges/schools have virtual advising centers while, yet others are clinging to the faculty mentor model. Before we can evaluate the correlation between advising centers and student retention and success, we must first grasp with the multiple and varying models already in place on campus.

7.6 Administrative Evaluations: No report

7.7 Awards: In need of more members. Kalyn Lamey, Kate Greene, and Nicolle

Jordan volunteered.

7.8 Finance: No report

7.9 Governance

The Faculty Senate Governance Committee met by conference call on Wednesday October 9, 2019. Members present were Jennifer Courts, Jeremy Scott and Don Redalje (chair). The committee discussed a number of issues that are of concern for the faculty:

1. Employee Handbook section 3.11 – Contractual Obligation of Faculty.

All faculty under 9-month contracts received a copy of this section along with our contracts for the 2019-2020 academic year. There are a number of concerns voiced by the faculty about this statement. Who developed this statement? Why was the statement included in the Employee Handbook when it involves only faculty? Why were faculty not consulted about this new policy

and allowed time to review and comment on its content? Why was it not submitted for inclusion in the Faculty Handbook? What does it mean when it states "... a faculty member is guaranteed to be on campus a minimum of four days regardless of primary instructional delivery ...?" Although there are portions of the new policy that need to be addressed to be consistent with what faculty actually do in their roles of teaching, research and scholarly endeavors and service, the main concern is that the process by which the new policy was developed and approved did not include any participation by faculty (apparently) and did not follow the principle of shared governance as defined in the Faculty Handbook.

The Faculty Senate Governance Committee, and many other faculty who have voiced concerns, feels that because of the process by which this new policy was developed and became part of the USM Employee Handbook this new policy is a direct affront to the foundational principle of Shared Governance. The committee suggests that, in conjunction with the Faculty Senate Faculty Handbook Committee, a more appropriate version of the Contractual Obligations of Faculty policy be developed, submitted to the Faculty Senate for review and approval and then forwarded to the University Faculty Handbook Committee for consideration of inclusion in that document. This more appropriate policy statement should include words to the effect that it supersedes any statements that may be included in the USM Employee Handbook in this regard.

2. Resubmission of the Redefining the Culture of Leadership at The University of Southern Mississippi: A Proposal to Supplement the Plan for Academic Reorganization: Vision 2020.

This proposal was developed by the USM Chapter of the AAUP and members of the Faculty Senate (many of these Senators are members of the AAUP Chapter). It was reviewed by the Senate and a formal Recommendation that endorsed the proposal was proposed, written considered and approved by the Senate. The formal Recommendation was submitted through the appropriate channels. The proposal was, apparently, rejected by the reorganization subcommittee chair that had the responsibility to review this proposal. It was not forwarded for further considerations.

The Faculty Senate Governance Committee is reviewing the proposal and updating the wording to be appropriate with the current university structure. This review will address the sections of the proposal that support faculty involvement in the process by which directors and deans are nominated and chosen and on the development of an Academic Leadership Institute that will provide directors and associate directors of schools with training and guidance to improve their leadership of the schools and programs. We plan to submit this revised proposal to the Senate for consideration for submission to the Provost. This task will be completed during this academic year.

3. Strengthening statements in the University Faculty Handbook on a) Academic Freedom and Shared Governance, and b) Director Periodic Review.

In the 2017-2018 Senate term, the Senate approved rewording of the then current Faculty Handbook sections on Shared Governance and Academic Freedom, and on the periodic review of chairs. The reorganization process has made it necessary for these previously approved

revisions to be revised further to be consistent with the new university structure. That task has been accomplished by the Senate Faculty Handbook Committee. However, there are some concerns that the Senate Governance Committee discussed about the wording is the current Faculty Handbook section 4.4.1 that states the school directors are evaluated annually only by the deans and not by the faculty of the schools. In the new structure, school directors are considered administrative staff and not faculty, yet many still fulfill all of the responsibilities of faculty including teaching and guiding undergraduate and graduate students, conducting research and other scholarly activities and performing service at all levels in the same manner as do all faculty.

The Senate Governance Committee is considering submitting a proposed revision of the Periodic Review of school directors and associate directors by the faculty on their roles as faculty that will be proposed to the Senate Handbook Committee. After review of a potential vote of support by the Senate, these revised statements would be submitted to the University Handbook Committee for their consideration.

7.10 Gulf Coast: No report

7.11 University Relations and Communication

MEMBERS:

Charles Scheer

Richard Perry

Mike Davis

Susan Howell

Lou Rackoff

MEETING: Monday, September 9, 2019

- There is little known about the specific landscape of what units are doing to utilize media to “promote” goings-on in their unit
- We acknowledged that there are a number of units that are doing great work that are not getting recognized due to inconsistent promotion and university relations
- Some are doing it on their own without any guidance
- In order to capture a sense of what the university’s specific units are doing to promote themselves, a survey was proposed
- We also discussed the possibility of having individual offices responsible for promotion (university communications, etc) do a “what’s going on” update
- Also future brainstorming and informational sessions on how to get the word out
- The LED display on Hardy & 49 was discussed

NEXT STEPS:

- We are going to put together a small survey of units to determine how they are using any form of communications media to promote themselves
- **Distribution in the late fall 2019**

7.12 Welfare and Environment: No report

8.0 Outside Committee Reports

9.0 Reports from Other University Advisory Bodies

10.0 Consent Items

11.0 Unfinished Business

12.0 New Business

13.0 Good of the Order

14.0 Announcements

14.1 Next Senate Meeting November 1, 2019

14.0 Adjourn