3-1-2019

Faculty Senate Minutes - March 1, 2019

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi  
Faculty Senate Meeting  

Friday, March 1, 2019, 2:00 p.m.  
Union Hall of Honors (Hattiesburg)  
IVN to North Academic Building 125 (Gulf Park) and  
Stennis Building 1103 Center for Higher Learning Conference Room  

Present: Mac Alford, Cindy Handley (proxy), Cheryl Jenkins (proxy), Leffi Cewe-Malloy, Charlie Scheer, Nicolle Jordan (proxy), Brian LaPierre, Kevin Greene, Sharon Rouse, Susan Howell, Jeremy Scott, Jonathan Yarrington (proxy), Scott Milroy (proxy), Jennifer Courts, Charles McCormick (proxy), Ann Marie Kinnell, Bob Press, Eric Saillant, David Holt, Tom Rishel, Lee Follett, Don Redalje, Amber Cole (proxy), Mike Morgan, John Lambert, Melinda McLelland, Melinda Bowens, Catharine Bomhold (proxy), Susan Hrostowski, Kim Ward, Jennifer Brannock, Winston Choi (proxy), Anne Sylvest (proxy), Bradley Green, Bonnie Harbaugh  

Absent: Miles Doleac, Lilian Hill, David Lee, Tim Rehner, Ashley Krebs  

1.0 Organizational Items  
   1.1 Call to Order  
   1.2 Roll Call  
   1.3 Recognition of Quorum (20)  
   1.4 Recognition of ⅔ membership for voting on Bylaws and Resolutions (26)  

2.0 Adoption of Agenda: Approved unanimously by voice vote  

3.0 Program  

3.1 Steven Moser, Provost  
   - The Provost spoke about enrollment numbers (at this point in time)  
     • As of March 1, there were 8,283 Freshmen which is up from 7,567 last year. Transfers (1,320) are down from (1,440) from last year. This is similar to transfer enrollment at MSU. Note, the university is still collecting data.  
     • Retention from fall to spring is the highest it has been in 10 years.  
     • The Council of Directors is having “conversations” in several areas:  
       o Ways to capture market (dual enrollment for example)  
       o Helping with annual evaluation documents to improve consistency across campus
Workload policy and defining what it means to be “under contract”. Goal is consistency across campus.

- There are some scheduling issues with the fall schedule (Thanksgiving week off, 2 weeks of classes after the break, and then graduation). It is a logistical issue that will be tested in the upcoming semester.

3.2 Krystyna Varnado, Associate Vice President for Human Resources

- Diversity hire funding opportunities, invested in HR recruitment of diversity candidates, limited set of funding
- Toolkit for hiring adjuncts to ensure process is handled correctly
- Krystyna encouraged committees to work with HR partner
- The most important HR issues from her perspective include compensation and leadership development.

4.0 Approval of Minutes: Sharon R. moved, Kim W. seconded. Approved unanimously by voice vote.

4.1 February 2019

5.0 Officer Reports

5.1 President (Mac Alford)

1. Aaliyah Elbert will be serving a new role as the liaison between the SGA and the Faculty Senate. She will complement the work of the Welfare and Environment Committee, which is establishing partnerships with the SGA from our end.

2. Students should expect a tuition increase of 3.5-4% this fall. This is not as high as last time (5%), but is still a substantial increase. If part of the PERS increase is handled by the State, and not the University, the increase will remain on the smaller end.

3. April 1-5 is Employee Appreciation Week. There’ll be free tickets for a baseball game on that Tuesday and a picnic lunch with music on that Friday.

4. The new website should be online by the third week of May.

5.2 President-Elect (Susan Hrostowski): No report

5.3 Secretary (Melinda McLelland): No report

5.4 Secretary-Elect (Amber Cole): No report
6.0 Decision / Action Items

6.1 None

7.0 Standing Committee Reports

7.1 Academics (Kevin Green):

Last academic year, the FS Academics Committee introduced a resolution to recommend the dissolution of the University’s Online Learning Steering Committee so that it could “reform with a new structure, new membership, and a new charge.” The resolution was vetted and passed by the Senate in our April 2018 meeting.

The newly constituted University Online Learning Committee met on Wednesday, February 13 at 1pm. The meeting was productive and helped move the committee’s charge in a forward direction. At present, the committee consists of all faculty: LaWanda Baskin (School of Leadership and Advance Nursing Practice), Catharine Bomhold (Chair) (School of Library and Information Science), Kevin Greene (School of Humanities), Sungsoo Kim (School of Marketing), Kelley Stricklin (School of Education), Lindsay Wright (School of Child and Family Sciences), Fan Zhang (School of Construction and Design). The committee represents a wide-spectrum of online instruction as it exists across the university. We would like to stress the point, especially to the Senate, that the committee is made up entirely of university teaching and research faculty.

Areas of feedback as requested by the Faculty Senate drove the discussion. Those included:

1. Support needed for faculty teaching online – from workshops and trainings to other types of resources; identification of best practices and where we are successful and where we need improvement
2. Best practices for regular and substantive interaction in online courses (and how to communicate what that means)
3. Academic integrity and proctoring – recommendations for best practices for proctoring, maximizing integrity, etc.
4. Support needed for fully online students – best practices in the fields and initiatives or programs we should enhance or pursue
5. Input on how to ensure that fully online students get online seats (and how well efforts this fall to reserve seats for fully online students works); general recommendations for managing seat access for students from different campuses

The Meeting Discussion

1. Expectation for all faculty teaching online to complete Quality Matters rubric certification by spring 2020 (need to look into how fully online adjuncts will do so)
2. Explore Possibility of ‘guide to teaching online’ or other document for faculty new to online teaching
3. Discussion of areas above, particularly best practices for regular and substantive interaction in online courses (and how to communicate what that means). Academic integrity and proctoring – recommendations for best practices for proctoring, maximizing integrity, etc.
4. We’ve created Canvas shell for the group, divide topics into modules, upload materials, and use discussion board for conversation about next steps
5. Currently we’re in a research gathering, getting to know-each-other phase. Our plan is to begin working towards tangible objectives in the fall with further developments by the end of the calendar year.
6. Our next meeting is planned for mid-April

7.2 Administrative Evaluations (Melinda McLelland): No Report
7.3 Awards (Bradley Green):

   The Faculty Senate Teaching Award went to Dr. Cindy Blackwell. The Faculty Senate Award’s Committee is currently considering applicants for the Junior Faculty Awards and the Faculty Senate Scholarship. The Junior Faculty Awards and Scholarship award reviews will be completed by April 1.

7.4 Bylaws (Kim Ward): No Report
7.5 Elections (Tom Rishel):

   The Elections Committee worked via email to begin to identify senate positions that will require new or renewed representation under the newly proposed senate structure. Before this work was finalized, the university-wide re-organization committee disputed the proposed structure. The dispute prompted meetings among various groups and individuals in an attempt to resolve the differences between the two proposed structures. Those meetings have not yet produced a definitive result. Thus the work of the Elections Committee has been “on hold” awaiting a final, approved structure for the senate.

7.6 Finance (Mike Morgan):

   We had a meeting with the VPFA, Allyson Easterwood, on Monday, February 18th and the following topics were discussed:

   - Student Payment Plan: Beginning in fall 2019, the University will require payment prior to the semester start date of each term. Class schedules for students who fail to meet the payment deadline of August 10, 2019, for the fall 2019 semester will be subject to cancellation.
a. Payment may be fulfilled by one of the following options: (1) payment in full of the student’s responsibility (institutional charges minus anticipated financial aid); or (2) enrollment in a payment plan.

- HR is still working on a Compensation Policy.
- Based on the adoption of the initial IHL appropriation bill last week, we are hopeful that the legislature will appropriate funding to the IHL to cover the increase in the employer share of PERS. Otherwise, we expect flat funding.
- The Cook Library renovations are still planned and include
  1. mechanical/electrical/roofing work
  2. Student Advising Center
  3. Bower Center
- A contractor has been selected and approved for the McCain Library water intrusion project. Work will begin summer 2019.
- The University is moving forward with its plans to demolish Pine Haven Apartments. Based on cost, the project may be completed in two phases.
- The indoor volleyball facility is on schedule with plans to open in August.

7.7 Governance (Don Redalje):

Report of the Faculty Senate Governance Committee

In attendance: Ann Marie Kinnell, Jennifer Courts, Jeremy Scott and Don Redalje

The Faculty Senate Governance Committee met by conference call on February 21, 2019. We addressed the following 3 items:

1. Our prior recommendations to the Senate on sections 2.12 and 8.4.7 of the current Faculty Handbook
   a. In the 2017-2018 Faculty Senate term, the Governance Committee submitted suggestions for additional wording to be added to the current text of sections 2.12 and 8.4.7 of the current Faculty Handbook (included at the end of the minutes). The Senate responded favorably to the suggestions, but no further action was taken at that time. The Governance Committee discussed the status of the suggested additional text and decided to forward our suggestions to the Faculty Senate Faculty Handbook Committee, chaired by Jeremy Scott, also a member of this committee. We agreed that the FS Handbook Committee could evaluate our suggestions and consider forwarding them to the University Faculty Handbook Committee for consideration. We acknowledge that although the post-reorganization Faculty Handbook will be different from the previous document used as the
basis for our suggestions, we urge the various Faculty Handbook Committees to consider supporting the spirit of the suggested revisions for the new post-reorganization Faculty Handbook.

2. The issue of any potential Senate action in regard to statements made by coach Hopson vis-a-vis the decision not to consider former coach Briles to a position with USM football.
   a. The committee discussed the situation with the comments made by coach Hopson about the university not considering former coach Briles for a position on the football staff. Although we were concerned by the events surrounding Coach Hopson, it was considered to be beyond the purview of the Faculty Senate Governance committee to recommend an action to the Faculty Senate.

3. The issue of anxiety and concern over the secrecy involved with the reorganization process at USM.
   a. The committee recognizes that the level of secrecy involved with the reorganization process has led to a high level of anxiety and mistrust among the university community. Further, because reorganization committee members are prohibited from openly discussing the process rumors abound on campus. While we recognize that the members of the various reorganization committees work diligently toward the end of improving the university, they represent a very small percentage of the USM community. This is not a sustainable model for university governance. The committee initially contemplated preparing a draft resolution for the Senate to consider stating that the secrecy involved in the reorganization is inconsistent with the foundational principle of shared governance and to urge a more open and inclusive process for the reorganization moving forward. After some discussion, we came to the conclusion that greater communication of the activities of the reorganization committees and subsequent developed initiatives, as well as regular updates to the Academic Reorganization portion of the Office of the Provost website could help to reduce the levels of stress and anxiety felt by the faculty, staff, and students of USM. We advocate for greater openness and communication in the reorganization process moving forward.

After the Governance Committee read their statement, a motion was made and seconded to convert the statement into a Recommendation for the President and Provost. See recommendation below.

**Recommendation of the USM Faculty Senate:**

The USM Faculty Senate recommends and advocates for greater openness and communication in the reorganization process moving forward. The Faculty Senate recognizes that the level of secrecy involved with the reorganization process has led to a high level of anxiety and mistrust among the university community. Further, because many reorganization committee members are prohibited from openly discussing the process, rumors abound on campus. While we recognize that the members of the various
reorganization committees worked diligently toward the end of improving the university, they represent a very small percentage of the USM community. This is not a sustainable model for university governance. The Faculty Senate Governance Committee initially contemplated preparing a draft resolution for the Senate to consider stating that the secrecy involved in the reorganization is inconsistent with the foundational principle of shared governance and to urge a more open and inclusive process for the reorganization moving forward. After some discussion, the Faculty Senate came to the conclusion that greater communication of the activities of the reorganization committees and subsequent developed initiatives, as well as regular updates to the Academic Reorganization portion of the Office of the Provost website could help to reduce the levels of stress and anxiety felt by the faculty, staff, and students of USM.

7.8 Gulf Coast (Lee Follett): No report

7.9 Handbook (Jeremy Scott):

Committee members met via email and we support the idea that was proposed by the Governance Committee to add new language to the Handbook.

7.10 University Relations and Communication (Nicolle Jordan):

The Committee chair emailed the other Committee members, asking whether they found it prudent to contact Jim Coll, Director of University Communications, regarding the controversy surrounding Art Briles as a football coach candidate. Given the evidence that the root of the problem may be Coach Jay Hopson, who generated negative media coverage during the controversy, it seemed that the FS University Communications Committee might express concern to Coll about the potential problem.

One Committee member responded that they did not see the issue as within the purview of this FS University Communications Committee. Other Committee members did not respond, leading the Chair to conclude that these members concur with the one who responded. No further action was taken.

7.11 Welfare and Environment (Bob Press):

**Paid maternal leave** (currently we have no policy) mothers – and fathers – must cover costs from their annual or sick leave pay. Most universities do not either.

[As previously noted, CSRW and the Senate are now exploring the topic jointly. Here is an update from Eric Saillant, a member of the committee.]

Dossier parental/maternity leave benefits: Examination of the Mississippi *Code* suggested that leave can't be donated for maternity, and a note from the Attorney General stipulates that no statute provides maternity leave benefits for state employees. Evaluation of possible options for improvement of current policies will continue in discussion with Human Resources. The survey of employees’ experience with parental/maternity benefit across the university is postponed until schools and
colleges have adapted to the new university structure. Current investigations focus on examining policies for workload modifications for an employee with a new child.

Of related interest: UM has established a higher education union, and one of the issues mentioned was “lack of policy on family and parental leave. Wilkerson said Mississippi’s higher education only has the federal policy which says an employee can only take 12 weeks unpaid leave when many other universities offer some type of paid leave.”

UM Faculty, Staff Establish First Higher Education Union in Mississippi (November 26, 2018) by Talbert Toole

1. **Compression and Inversion:** I recommend the Senate invite the Human Resources team to update us on where this stands. It is an issue that will not go away until addressed, and we plan to keep raising it. The Administration has expressed agreement that this is an important issue, but so far, at least as far as we know, there has been no plan drawn up to indicate who is suffering from this and no plan to address it as funds become available. But ultimately lack of action on this may end up costing the University more as discouraged faculty at lower pay leave only to be replaced by less experienced faculty hired at current higher rates. The Senate should invite Human Resources staff to update us.

2. **Equal pay for equal work.** The Committee is not clear at this point what Human Resources is doing on this issue after an initial discussion at Senate retreat. The Senate should invite that office to update us on this critical issue. The Administration has expressed strong support for this on numerous occasions.

3. **Gun policy:** no update. The issue as previously reported is that USM apparently can expand the spaces it deems ‘non-public’ beyond what it already has, given that Ole Miss apparently has done so.

4. **Air quality of workspaces at USM.** No update.

5. **Faculty Survey:** Two Committee members (Cindy Hadley and Bradley Green) have committed to design and distribute this as soon as possible.

8.0 Outside Committee Reports - None

9.0 Reports from Other University Advisory Bodies

10.0 Consent Items

10.1 Charles Scheer (Criminal Justice) to replace Josh Hill: Approved unanimously by voice vote.

11.0 Unfinished Business

11.1 None

12.0 New Business
12.1 None

13.0 Good of the Order

14.0 Announcements

14.1 Next Senate Meeting: April 5, 2:00 p.m., Union Hall of Honors with IVN to North Academic Building 125 (Gulf Park)

14.2 Senate Executive Committee meeting with the President, March 25, 8:00–9:15 a.m., President’s Conference Room, Aubrey Lucas Administration Building

14.2 Next Staff Council meeting: March 7, 9:30–11:00 a.m., Trent Lott 207

15.0 Adjourn

2.12 ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND SHARED GOVERNANCE

Academic freedom and shared governance are long-established and living principles at The University of Southern Mississippi. The University cherishes the free exchange of ideas, diversity of thought, joint decision making, and individuals’ assumption of responsibility.

Academic freedom is fundamental to the central values and purposes of a university, which in turn protects freedom of inquiry and speech. Faculty and students must be able to study, learn, speak, teach, research, and publish, without fear of intimidation or reprisal, free from political interference, in an environment of tolerance for and engagement with divergent opinions. Each faculty member is entitled to freedom from institutional censorship or disciplinary action in discussing his or her subject in the classroom, and when speaking or writing outside the classroom as an individual. It is understood, however, that with academic freedom there must be concomitant responsibility for statements, speeches, and actions.

The University of Southern Mississippi believes in the widely accepted principles of shared governance at all academic levels within the university. Therefore, the University recognizes that the faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process. The University also endorses a consultative process by which academic decisions are made through a joint effort of faculty, faculty governance bodies/committees, and administrators and with the cooperation and support of the affected faculty constituency while taking into account consideration of dissenting voices from faculty and faculty governance bodies/committees.

The President’s authority derives from the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning. As the chief executive officer of the University, the President is largely
responsible for the maintenance of existing institutional resources and the creation of new ones; has ultimate managerial responsibility for a large number of nonacademic activities; and by the nature of the office is the chief spokesperson for the University. In these and other areas the President's task is to plan, organize, direct, and represent, and in these functions the President should receive the general support of the faculty. The University recognizes that the faculty and faculty governance bodies should be consulted and involved in decision making as appropriate with respect to such matters as long-range plans for the institution, the allocation and use of fiscal and physical resources, and the selection of academic officers, particularly for Deans, school Directors and Chair/Program Coordinators.

The University of Southern Mississippi acknowledges that true faculty participation in the governance of academic affairs requires good faith on the part of both faculty and administration and a genuine commitment by both to a program of shared governance.

1 This policy draws from the 1966 “Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities” jointly formulated by the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education, and the American Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

8.4.7 Chairs/Directors Periodic Review.

An academic chair or director (hereafter described simply as “chair”) is appointed by the dean of the college following consultation with the department/school faculty and the provost.

While a chair’s performance may be reviewed by the dean at any time, under normal circumstances a chair will receive annual reviews by the unit’s Personnel Committee as per the guidelines set forth in the Faculty Handbook (Chapter 8, Section 4) and by the dean according to procedures established by the dean and approved by the provost. In addition, a chair will undergo periodic term reviews as outlined below. A newly appointed chair will be reviewed during the spring semester of his/her third year of service, regardless of whether that service has been on an interim or permanent basis. Subsequent terms of appointment will normally be for five years. A newly appointed chair would therefore be evaluated in his/her third year and eighth year as chair. There is no limit to the number of terms a chair may serve; however, a chair must undergo a review before reappointment for each term. The final results of the review process for the chair and/or director must be presented to the faculty in the affected academic unit. In addition, the final results of the review must be presented to the provost.
A Periodic Review will proceed as follows:

1. Early in the fall semester of the fifth year of a continuing chair (spring semester in the third year for newly appointed chairs), the dean of the college will determine whether a chair wishes to be considered for another term. At this time Chairs/Directors have the opportunity to decline reappointment. If the answer is affirmative, the dean will promptly begin proceedings with the Corps of Instruction that will culminate in a vote for or against reappointment.

2. If the faculty favors reappointment, and if the dean concurs, the chair and the department will be informed immediately of the chair’s reappointment for a five-year term. If the faculty favors reappointment, and the Dean does not concur, the Dean will be obligated to provide the faculty with a justification for non-reappointment.

3. If the faculty recommends against reappointment, and if the dean concurs, the chair will be immediately informed that his/her term as chair will lapse at the close of the current contract. If the dean does not concur with the faculty’s recommendation, he/she may reappoint the chair for a subsequent term. If the Dean reappoints a Chair/Director without the support of the department faculty the Dean will be obligated to provide the faculty with a justification for reappointment.

4. If the chair is not reappointed, the process for filling the position should begin promptly. After discussions with the department faculty and the provost, the dean will decide: 1) when and how the search will be conducted; 2) whether an interim chair/director should be appointed, and 3) whether an internal or external search will be conducted.

5. Current chairs initial terms will be staggered upon implementation of this policy. Individual appointments within a college will be for 3, 4, or 5 years. The method of assigning the initial appointments is left to the discretion of the Dean.

6. The chair may request a hearing with the provost on a dean’s decision not to reappoint.

Note:

In the case of termination of appointment due to malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance, action may be taken immediately and is not subject to the guidelines of the term review process. Nevertheless, a chair will normally receive a 90-day notice of removal.

Should a chair choose to resign, the review process (if initiated) will end, and the resignation will be the means through which the appointment is not renewed.