Faculty Senate Minutes - November 2, 2018

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi
Faculty Senate Meeting

Friday, November 2, 2018, 2:00 p.m.
North Academic Building 101 (Gulf Park), IVN to Scianna Hall 1015 (Hattiesburg)


Absent: David Lee, Josh Hill, Miles Doleac, Bonnie Harbaugh, 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 Dr. Amy Miller, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
   - Dr. Miller presented the revised Student Academic Integrity Policy to the senate. The policy is in the final stages of approval. Dr. Miller answered questions about the policy which was emailed to faculty senate members. Cindy Blackwell, the Academic Integrity Officer for the University, welcomes questions regarding the policy. She is currently developing workshops for faculty and staff interested in learning more about academic integrity.

3.2 Steven R. Moser, Provost
   - Dr. Moser presented the Academic Structure and Evaluation Committee proposal for Initiative #1 Annual Evaluations of Faculty Performance and Initiative #2 Academic Structure and Evaluation. He also presented the proposed faculty workload policy. The documents should have been shared with faculty by deans/directors in previous weeks. Dr. Moser indicated a desire to hear back from faculty regarding the proposals. Feedback is due to directors by November 12. Dr. Moser addressed senator questions in regards to the three documents.

4.0 Approval of Minutes:
4.1 October 2018: Lillian H. moved to approve, David H. seconded, Approved unanimously by voice vote
5.0 Officer Reports

5.1 President (Mac Alford):

Option 1 of the Academic Calendar was approved. This was the schedule similar to the current one, but final exams will occur the week directly after Thanksgiving next year. Option 1 was tweaked slightly so that the Monday following Thanksgiving would be a “dead day,” and commencement would be moved to Saturday.

The Academic Integrity Policy has been revised.

The revision includes information about trained facilitators in each College (could help professors meeting with students for the first time), “recommended sanctions” (professors still have authority, but consistency is key); and how to deal with students who are not in your class (advertising the writing of papers).

Flowers were sent on behalf of the Faculty Senate to Chris Winstead, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences after the death of his mother.

Sexual Harassment and Misconduct—The President wanted to remind us to be vigilant and responsible in these areas. Too much of his time, he thinks, is dealing with fallout of these unnecessary problems.

Planning or renovation activities should involve Chris Crenshaw (Physical Plant).

Changes to Committee on Committees--six people total; need nominations for the four faculty representatives.

We need names by November 9 for faculty members that will be recognized at football game. I suggest lifetime award winners from last May, or perhaps Teaching and Service Award winners. Will pass responsibility to the Awards Committee.

5.2 President-Elect (Susan Hrostowski): No report

5.3 Secretary (Melinda McLelland):

An email was sent to the faculty senate webpage regarding the outcomes of the schedule change implemented in the fall. The email was read to the faculty senate.

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):

1. Online Learning Committee
   a. 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 meeting.
   b. Since the approval of the resolution and in conjunction with Vice Provost Amy Miller’s office, the committee, under its old charge and bylaws has been dissolved. Dr. Miller is now in the process of reshaping the committee with recommendations from College Deans. As I understand it, the committee will consist of 7 faculty members from both fully online programs and faculty teaching online GEC courses within traditional delivery programs. There will be no administrative members or ex-officio members, so the committee will solely consist of faculty. Dr. Miller is in the process of seeking out candidates in concert with the deans and should have a final list within the coming weeks. She has asked me personally to join the committee as I teach massive sections of online GEC History courses for the School of Humanities. So there will be Faculty Senate representation on the committee and there may in fact be more from this body serving as well. With any luck this committee will be formed by the end of semester leaving next spring as our stepping off point.
   c. We the academics committee would like to continue to suggest that the OLLC focus on important areas for exploration:
      i. The Department of Education requires that online courses have "Substantive, Regular Interaction" between instructor and student; but what exactly does that mean, what does that look like? Who is responsible for the quality of online pedagogy? Who draws the line? The departments? Schools? Colleges? How does online teaching impact faculty course loads? How can we prevent faculty burnout from online teaching? How do we prevent campus students from filling seats intended for fully online students in fully online programs? What is the long-term university strategy in respect to the future of Online Learning at Southern Miss?

2. Athletic Advisors in our Canvas Shells
   a. Some of you may have noticed the sudden emergence of athletic advisor names within your Canvas shells. This measure emerged about the middle of the semester and constituted a not there one day and there the next. It’s my understanding there have been many conversations about this particular issue, including substantiated evidence that, prior to this new change, athletes were providing advisors with their login and password information who were in turn entering our courses in disguise. This initiative is a collaboration between the Student Academic Enhancement Program and Dr. Miller’s office. In speaking with Provost Miller, she indicated that advisors have the lowest level access, cannot manipulate the management system, nor can they type or enter enter information. They are observers only. In addition, this measure has circumvented
the various emails and forms intending to document student athlete performance which have, in some cases, burdened faculty work loads and streamlined work flow for overstretched athletic advisors. Advisors are now able to track performance with less bureaucracy.

b. Nevertheless, concerns remain. Why weren’t we informed about this change in policy? Dr. Miller responded to this question as a communication breakdown between various players in this initiative and the measure ultimately caught faculty by surprise. Should the Senate be interested, further questions need be asked about student athlete comparisons by one advisor assigned to several students within one course, for example, or other day to day on the ground issues. I hope to glean responses and/or experiences from those of you familiar with this new policy.

3. Finally, academics is beginning conversations intended to generate ideas and approaches to an investigation into the impact the new scheduling is having on faculty. In speaking with Dr. Miller, she revealed that her office is conducting both qualitative and quantitative research on student impact with some solid results. It seems to us on the academics committee that we should perhaps do the same for our colleagues. I’ve spoken anecdotally across the massive College of Arts and Sciences and many are having a wide array of experiences affecting pedagogy and student interaction that should be documented and further understood. We will continue to work towards the possibility of generating data which explores this particular issue. If we want to gauge the impact this new schedule is having on faculty beyond registration and advisement we might consider exploring this on our own terms. Academics will meet again between now and our December meeting so that we will have more concrete ideas and details next month. Any ideas or points of concern are most welcome.

7.2 Administrative Evaluations (Melinda McLelland): No report

7.3 Awards (Bradley Green): No report

7.4: Bylaws (Kim Ward):

**COMMITTEE:** Faculty Senate Bylaws Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 10/29/2018

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE** (in BOLD): Kim Ward, Catharine Bomhold, Donald Redelje, Brian LaPierre, David Lee

**ACTIONS OF MEETING**

**Agenda Item:**
Review the current Faculty Senate Bylaws and discuss any updates needed, in accordance with the University reorganization and current faculty needs. These updates/changes will be compiled and proposed to the Faculty Senate for approval.

**Discussion:**
Discussion included topics regarding the following:

1) In accordance with the reorganization, terminology should be updated (e.g. directors, colleges, etc)
2) The composition of the Faculty Senate (e.g. colleges/schools representation formula)
3) Research faculty members and additional school equivalents being represented on faculty senate
4) Qualifications of who is eligible for officer positions for Faculty Senate
5) Clarification of election voting procedure (written vs. affirmation)
6) Secretary and Secretary-Elect responsibilities/workload

Action Taken:
Duties were assigned throughout the meeting per academic areas, specific university contact, and preferences. Individual members are to obtain information relating to their assignment and report back to the committee as time allows.
Kim Ward was elected chair of the committee.
A date for the next meeting was decided.

NEXT MEETING:  November 29th, 2018 at 1:00p.m.

7.5 Elections (Tom Rishel): No Report

7.6 Finance (Amber Cole):
We had a meeting with VPFA, Allyson Easterwood, on Friday, October 19th and the following questions were asked and topics were discussed:

Questions:

1. In the last 24 months, how many new positions have been added to the provost’s and deans’ offices? Will have this information to us at our next meeting
2. How many dollars have been committed or added to what might have been “old” positions? Will have this information to us at our next meeting

Other topics

1. Summer pay: HR is currently looking at summer pay at other IHL institutions to compare our pay with others.
2. The IHL has adopted a new policy on financial sustainability, which includes the establishment of industry benchmarks for three measures of financial health (Days of Cash on Hand, Debt Coverage, and Reserve Adequacy). As of June 30, 2017, the University’s ratios fell below benchmark requirements. However, in the last fiscal year (FY 2018), the University is now meeting or exceeding IHL benchmarks for two ratios (Days of Cash on Hand and debt coverage) and improvement was made in the other measure (reserve adequacy). If reserve balances grow as planned and we do not increase debt, we should meet/exceed the reserve adequacy benchmark in 5 years. Because of the plan to not further
leverage the University, there are no short term plans for new construction projects requiring the issuance of bonds by the University.

3. Legislative bond funds were allocated to USM in a previous fiscal year for the renovation of Bolton Hall for academic classrooms and offices. However, bids for this project were in excess of what was budgeted. Therefore, the funds for this project were reallocated to the JGH project and the new advising center in the library.

4. $7M in legislative bond funds were allocated to USM during the 2018 Legislative session. These funds are dedicated to repair and renovation projects, including mechanical/electrical/roofing for the Cook Library, McCain Library water intrusion issues and the re-roofing of Bond Hall.

5. The next “priority” projects using legislative bond funding are:
   a. Renovation of the Kinesiology building
   b. Safety/Parking/Transit improvements
   c. Renovation of Southern Hall

   Funding for these projects is dependent upon the receipt of state bond funds.

6. HR is still developing/revising a Compensation Policy and job grading structure.

   Our next meeting will be on Friday, November 30th at 10 a.m.

7. Governance (Don Redalje):

   1. The Governance Committee met electronically to finalize the text and design of a poll that was to be distributed to all faculty, including those who are not members of the Corps of Instruction, to get their preference for how the Senate would best serve the faculty. That poll was distributed to all faculty earlier this week. It should be noted that if you have filters set in your university e-mail server account, the poll may have been put into your spam folder. That did happen for some faculty that I spoke with. Please let the faculty you represent know that if they did not get the poll to look for it in their e-mail spam folder.

   2. The committee discussed who on the faculty we represent. Do we only represent the Corps of Instruction or do we represent all of the faculty, including Research Professors (all ranks), adjunct professor and any other faculty not defined as being members of the Corps of Instruction. This is a topic that could be addressed by the Senate in a wider discussion. Should some of these non-Corps of Instruction faculty be allowed to serve on the Senate? In many universities Research Professors (all ranks) can serve and have even been elected to be President of their Faculty Senate. The class of faculty we want to discuss are those who will be or have been at USM for more than a 1 year temporary position. These faculty need to be represented (as do all faculty) and we should consider if we want to allow them to serve on the Senate. The committee will be discussing this
more in the future. We have just begun to consider this issue and we will work with the
Bylaws Committee as we continue to consider these issues.

3. The committee will continue to address the issue from last year of strengthening the
Faculty Handbook statement of shared governance (section 2.12) and on the evaluation of
school directors (modified from section 8.4.7 to account for the new academic structure).

7.8 Gulf Coast (Lee Follett): No report

7.9 Handbook (Jeremy Scott): No report

7.10 University Relations and Communication (Nicolle Jordan):

The Faculty Senate University Relations & Communication Committee met on October
9, 2018.
We explored the possibility of proposing a resolution to recognize former chairs who
were not hired as directors. We decided that we need more information: what would the
goals of the resolution be, and who else might deserve such recognition besides former
chairs?

Website presence: We also discussed the deplorable state of the USM Wikipedia page.
Since the office of University Communications does not attend to it, we discussed the
possibility of finding an alum who might be willing to take on the project. We also
discussed the outdated official USM website. Faculty would like to (and need) know
what the plan is for updating it. Who is the webmaster? How do we handle alumni, etc.
who can’t navigate the new homepage? There are outdated directors’ names, etc. It does
affect recruitment. What is the timeline for updating?

Finally, we addressed questions about faculty responsibility for recruitment. Are we
expected/obliged to ‘fill our classes’? This remains to be articulated in annual review and
promotion guidelines, and it should be. Is job security on the line? The cmte intends to
contact the FS Faculty Academic Affairs Cmte about this issue. Is there/should there be a
university-wide expectation for faculty participation in recruitment?

7.11 Welfare and Environment (Bob Press):

1. **Parental leave policy** (Eric Saillant)

I have contacted IHL to find out if there would be any issue to USM establishing
a standalone paid parental leave and have not received an answer yet. I hope to get that
answer in the next few days.

The next steps will depend on the answer IHL gives. Improving our policy on
parental leave could be a way to increase diversity in the University by making us more
attractive to potential new parents applying for faculty jobs so the focus on diversity
could be leveraged to support some change in parental leave policies.
2. **Liaison with students (Winston Choi)**
   Their main issues these days can be summarized as following:

   (1) Many students concern the present Academic calendar: shorter periods, longer classes, etc. They are preparing to change this, and hopefully faculty will support their opinions.

   (2) Student body has been separated between Hattiesburg and Gulf Park. They are now better than before since they started to communicate each other, but it would be better to unite these bodies.

   (3) One of their proposals – syllabus bank: it sounds a very useful for students. In addition, if faculty cooperate this, students can check the classes out before registering classes.

3. **Campus firearms policy.** Study continues on the greater identification of other Mississippi campuses of no-gun areas compared to USM.

4. **Environment.** The Committee is looking at indoor climate. Two or three years ago, the School of Music conducted a self-study as part of its reaccreditation process. The study revealed serious issues with the indoor air quality in both of our music buildings. The Committee will look into this further, and gather more information about other buildings on campus and create a report on findings. This is especially important for those living with asthma and can have an impact on the quality of life of many of our students and faculty.

5. **Diversity hiring.** An idea worth considering is paying a bonus for minority hiring. Another way the University is looking at: new training for faculty hiring committees that focuses more directly involving points for minority hiring.

6. **Faculty morale and weariness. Holistic evaluations?** While this is hard to pin down, some of it appears linked to longer class times. For faculty who were accustomed to 50 minute classes, the leap to 90 has been a big one. Part of it appears to be related to evaluations. There have been many faculty concerns about lack of research time given schedule changes. Some Professors who used to teach two days a week are now teaching five days a week, leaving few opportunities with blocks of time for research. Coupled with what for many is still an eight-hour office hours norm, research time dwindles further. As one faculty member said, raising an old issue, the University has to decide what it wants to focus on.

   An idea being voiced by some is a move toward what could be called ‘holistic’ evaluations. For example, if one were to look at faculty accomplishments in a year not in terms of decimal points and fixed ‘quotas’ for research, teaching, service, but in as a glass of sand with different colors, some years the research portion might be higher than teaching, or vice versa; some years service might be higher. By having performance standards for promotion and tenure on a multi-year basis, with shifting proportions,
faculty could be relieved of pressure of trying to meet the same proportion every year in the three areas of teaching, faculty, research.

7. **Mental health report**

Report by Bradley Green, committee member

1) I want to continue to move forward on recommending a partnership with Headspace. I think we are not yet at the point for a resolution, and before we draft a memo for the Senate President to discuss at cabinet I think we need the senate to weigh in on whether partnering with Headspace is something that carries majority support.

As a reminder, it will cost the university nothing to partner, the benefits of mindfulness meditation are well documented in the empirical literature, no one will be required to join Headspace, but if the university partners the cost of membership will drop from about $96 per year to $36 per year. If the university wanted to support faculty and staff joining (a good investment for the university) to cost would be limited to whatever portion of the $36 annual fee the university wished to provide.

Suggestion: vote on supporting this partnership.

2) There needs to be improvement to USM web information about mental health services available for employees. The services available in the area are scant and can be hard to identify. A person in distress should not have to solve a complex puzzle to find help.

Furthermore, some of the services available are terribly expensive, or just plain terrible. It would be a huge benefit to USM employees if a mental health provider information repository were hosted on the USM website, prominently. People in distress should not have to solve a puzzle to find the information repository either.

Everything stated above goes for students too. The lack of available services, the difficulty finding them, and the difficulty paying for them. Our training clinic is one of the primary providers of services for students in distress, and the cases we see tend to be serious. I know first-hand how great the need is. Not only do we need to help connect students with services, we need university help with outreach, so they are always aware that help is available, and that there are multiple sources of help available.

I don’t think this is ready for resolution either, but could go into a memo for cabinet discussion.

3) Faculty need much better support for understanding student mental health problems and knowing how to help those students. There are models for how to do this well at other universities. I hate training more than the average person, but this is one type of training I could support. This could go into a memo for cabinet.
4) I have had police ask about the availability of training for understanding people with mental health problems, and how to best manage them. I have had questions about crisis intervention as well. I have personally seen police handling a person who was mentally ill, and making false assumptions about the motives of their behaviors. It can have tragic consequences. There are police departments training officers in mental health awareness and crisis intervention, so there is no need to reinvent the wheel to do this. It would be beneficial to our students, employees, and police officers to implement such training. This probably needs to be brought up at a senate meeting, as it has not been previously considered. Then it could go forward as a memo.

5) USM does not appear to have anything resembling an employee assistance program, and I expect we will not have one for quite some time to come. If we do not put the need on the table, and start planning for one, we will never have one. There are models at sister institutions in the state (e.g., MSU and Ole Miss). This might be something that could go into a memo for cabinet.

8.0 Outside Committee Reports: No reports

9.0 Reports from Other University Advisory Bodies: No reports

10.0 Consent Items
   10.1 One-year appointment of Elaine Molaisone (School of Kinesiology and Nutrition)
       - No opposition

11.0 Unfinished Business

11.1 None

12.0 New Business
   12.1 Annual Evaluation (ASEC proposal 1)
   12.2 Promotion and Tenure (ASEC proposal 2)
   12.3 Faculty Workload Policy

13.0 Good of the Order

14.0 Announcements
   14.1 Next Senate Meeting: December 14, 2:00 p.m., Union Hall of Honors (NOTE: Second Friday of December and different room) with IVN to North Academic Building 125 (Gulf Park)
   14.2 Next Senate Executive Meeting: TBA
   14.3 Next Senate Administration Meeting: March
   14.4 Next Staff Council meeting: December 13, 9:30–11:00 a.m., Trent Lott 207
14.5 Legislative Forum, co-sponsored with the Staff Council and SGA, Friday, November 16, 1:30–3:30 p.m., both Hattiesburg (Joe Paul Theater, Cochran Center) and Gulf Coast locations (Fleming Auditorium)

14.6 Faculty Leadership Institute applications due Nov. 9, 2018 (Discuss with School Director or Dean to ensure that participation in the FLI fits well in your scope of work.
   The application includes a three-page CV and a one-page leadership philosophy)

14.7 Lucas Endowment for Faculty Excellence, applications due Nov. 5

14.8 Excellence in Service, Teaching, and Librarianship Award applications due Nov. 12

15.0 Adjourn