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Faculty Senate Minutes--November 6, 2020

USM Faculty Senate

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USM Faculty Senate, "Faculty Senate Minutes--November 6, 2020" (2020). *Faculty Senate Minutes*. 223.
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Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Friday, November 6th, 2020, 2:00p.m.
Via Zoom

Call to Order

President Lillian Hill called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Roll Call

Members present include: Shahid Karim, Tom Rishel, Wes Johnson, Lindsey Conlin-Maxwell, Jae-Hwa Shin, Damon Franke, Emily Stanbeck, Brian LaPierre, Mary Funk, Jeremy Scott, Richard Perry, Timothy Tesh, Jennifer Courts, Leffi Cewe-Malloy, Louis Rackoff, Joanne Burnette, Robert Press, Nell Adkins, Shinhua Liu, John Miller, Michelle Jeanfreau, Lillian Hill, Alisa Lowrey, Gary Krebs, Catharine Bomhold, Tamara Hurst, Susan Mayfield-Johnson (Proxy: Kim Ward), Bonnie Harbaugh, Kimberly Ward, Denis Wiesenburg, Jennifer Brannock, Lin Agler, Patsy Anderson, Kalyn Lamey, Sharon Rouse, Joe Olmi, Sergei Nazarenko, Robert Leaf, Whitney Martin, Raj Kallaru, Gregory Bradley, Tammy Greer.

Members who were not in attendance include: Michael Davis, Nell Adkins, Bonnie Harbaugh, Lisa Green

Quorum: A quorum (22) was established and recognized. (40 members present).

Voting Membership Present: $\frac{2}{3}$ membership for voting on Bylaws and Resolutions (29) was established. (40 members were present).

Adoption of Agenda

A motion to accept the agenda was made. The motion was seconded. The motion to accept the agenda was approved by the majority of the members.

Motion to Modify the Agenda

A motion to modify the agenda to allow the speakers to have the floor prior to the approval of the minutes was made. The motion was seconded. The motion to modify the agenda was approved by the majority of the members.

Program

President Bennett and Provost Moser were invited to address the faculty and answer questions regarding the most recent announcement "Charting Our Coastal Future" reorganization. President Bennett addressed the Faculty Senate by reading a lengthy statement which included reasoning for the decisions. Provost Moser followed with supporting statements for the President's remarks and offered to meet with members of Faculty Senate leadership throughout the semester. Faculty Senators discussed the presentations in detail.

**Approval of the Minutes
(October 2nd)**

A motion to accept the minutes as is was made. The motion was seconded. The motion to accept

the October 2nd meeting minutes was approved by the majority of the members.

(October 15th)

A motion to accept the minutes as is was made. The motion was seconded. The motion to accept the October 15th meeting minutes was approved by the majority of the members.

Officer Reports

President – President Hill reported she would work with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to set up future meetings with the administration.

President-Elect- No report.

Secretary- Faculty Senate is now completely full, along with robust committees and chairs for each committee.

Secretary-Elect- No report.

Committee Reports

Academics- No report.

Administrative Evaluation- No report.

Awards- No report

Bylaws- no report

Elections- No report

Finance- No report

Faculty Handbook Advisory – Reported a proposal for a periodic review of School Directors. Reported that USM Legal Counsel had drafted language for inclusion into the Faculty Handbook which the committee did not feel supported faculty. It was reported and 3.11 Faculty Obligations policy would be removed by vote in an upcoming meeting and would be replaced, with Faculty Senate approval, with 3.5.1.

Motion to Accept Proposal 3.5.1

A motion was made to accept 3.5.1 “Responsibilities as Engaged Citizens of the USM Community”. The motion was seconded. The motion to accept 3.5.1 was approved by the majority of the members.

Governance- Governance Committee submitted Resolution #3 for the consideration of the Faculty Senate.

Motion to Suspend Robert’s Rules of Order

A motion was made to suspend Robert’s Rules of Order. The motion was seconded. The motion to suspend Robert’s Rules of Order was approved by the majority of the members.

Motion to Approve Resolution #3

A motion was made to approve Resolution #3. The motion was seconded. The motion to approve Resolution #3 was approved by the majority of the members.

Gulf Coast- Dr. Funderburk attended GCFC meeting last week to discuss questions related to the coastal reorganization. The chair of the committee urged all Faculty Senators to send any highlights to the chair of the committee if you attend any meeting related to the Charting Our Coastal Future.

University Relations and Communications- Committee has met several times and are working on several projects such as information sharing tracking, Faculty Senate newsletter, and meeting with University Communications.

Welfare and Environment- Committee reported they are working with SGA and Staff Council, clarification on COVID-19 protocols, a survey regarding Gulf Park reorganization, as well as met with VP Varnado regarding DEI and EAP access. Submitted Resolution #4 for consideration to the Faculty Senate.

Motion to Accept Resolution #4

A motion was made to accept Resolution #4. The motion was seconded. The motion to accept Resolution #4 was approved by the majority of the members.

Motion to Reinstate Robert's Rules of Order

A motion to reinstate Robert's Rules of Order was made. The motion was seconded. The motion to reinstate Robert's Rules of Order was approved by the majority of the members.

Outside Committee Reports/Other University Advisory Committees' Reports- No reports.

Consent Items -None

Unfinished Business- No unfinished business.

New Business

No new business.

Good of the Order

On November 17th, the USM Center for Human Rights and Civil Liberties will host a panel discussion entitled "Respectful Conversation Across Ideological Divides" via Zoom. All are welcome to attend.

Announcements

No announcements.

Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made. The motion was seconded. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved by the majority of the members.

4.8 Directors Periodic Review.

A school director is appointed by the dean of the college following consultation with the school faculty and the provost.

While a school director's performance may be reviewed by the dean at any time, under normal circumstances a director will receive annual reviews by the school promotion and tenure committee as per the guidelines set for by the school and by the dean according to procedures established by the dean and approved by the provost. In addition, a director will undergo periodic term reviews as outlined below. A newly appointed director 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 director would therefore be evaluated in his/her third year and eighth year as director. There is no limit to the number of terms a director may serve; however, a director must undergo a review before reappointment for each term. The final results of the review process for the 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.

The periodic review will proceed as follows:

Early in the spring semester of the fifth year of a continuing director (spring semester in the third year for newly appointed directors), the dean of the college will determine whether a director wishes to be considered for another term. At this time, 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.

If the faculty favors reappointment, and if the dean concurs, the school and the director will be informed immediately of the director'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.

If the faculty recommends against reappointment, and if the dean concurs, the director will be immediately informed that his/her term as director 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 director for a subsequent term. If the dean reappoints a director without the support of the school faculty the dean will be obligated to provide the faculty with a justification for reappointment.

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

The director may request a hearing with the provost on a dean's decision not to reappoint.

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 director will normally receive a 90-day notice of removal.

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

Rationale:

Periodic review processes for chairs of departments existed prior to our new organizational structure. This aligns with the process that was used previously for chairs of departments.

Faculty Handbook Notice – September 2020

Notice

The Faculty Handbook is a guide to University offices, activities, and policies that affect members of the Faculty, as defined herein. The Faculty Handbook is not a comprehensive, self-contained policy document, and neither is it a contract of employment. Material in the Faculty Handbook does not replace, amend, or abridge approved policies of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (“IHL Policies and Bylaws”) or The University of Southern Mississippi Employee Handbook (“Employee Handbook”). **The policies of the Employee Handbook do not usurp any rights to which faculty may be entitled under the Faculty Handbook.** Governance and standing committee bylaws shall not supersede the authority of the University President as designated by the State Institutions of Higher Learning Board of Trustees or the State of Mississippi.

The Faculty Handbook may be amended from time to time in accord with the bylaws of the Faculty Handbook Committee. University policies referenced herein may be obtained from the [University’s Institutional Policies](#) webpage; Board policies referenced herein may be obtained from the [IHL](#) website. The Faculty Handbook is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to all policies governing faculty. Information about employment benefits and policies that apply to all employees of the University, such as those regarding harassment and discrimination, can be found in the Employee Handbook or obtained from the University’s [Department of Human Resources](#).

Employee Handbook Notice – September 2020

About This Handbook

The employee handbook is maintained by University Human Resources and is the official employee handbook for all faculty and staff of the University. This handbook is intended to provide important information on employment policies, practices, procedures, and resources for all employees of The University of Southern Mississippi. However, this handbook is not a contract, and the policies contained herein do not give rise to contractual rights.

Because some policies and procedures require periodic updating, the University reserves the right to change, eliminate and supplement the information in this handbook from time to time as deemed necessary to meet the needs of the University, with or without notice to the employee.

Neither this handbook nor any supplements thereto replace, amend, abridge, or anticipate federal or state law, or the Policies and Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning. This edition (September 2020) of the Employee Handbook repeals and supersedes all previous editions; is effective on the date it is published on the University’s web site; and governs all matters and proceedings, whether pending or future.

This handbook is not the only document containing personnel-related and other policies of The University of Southern Mississippi. Approved policies are published on the USM website and in other handbooks and manuals, including, but not limited to, the Faculty Handbook. In addition, college, school, departmental, and divisional policies, procedures, or guidelines may exist and must be followed by employees as appropriate. **The policies and procedures in this handbook take precedence over any and all other policies that might exist throughout the University, except as supplanted by specific provisions of the Faculty Handbook applicable to faculty only.**

Employment shall be “at will” and shall be terminable “at will” by the University or the staff member with or without cause. Any oral or written statements or promises to the contrary, other than contracts issued by the Board of Trustees of Institutions of Higher Learning, are not binding upon the University. If you have questions concerning interpretations of the policies contained in this handbook, please contact University Human Resources.

Rejected Notice Changes – September 2020

Notice:

The Faculty Handbook is a guide to University offices, activities, and policies that affect members of the Faculty, as defined herein. **The Faculty Handbook is not a comprehensive, self-contained policy document, and neither is it a contract of employment.** The Faculty Handbook is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to all policies governing the faculty, nor is it contract of employment. However, it does provide guidance for the relationships between the University and the faculty. Material in the Faculty Handbook does not replace, amend, or abridge approved policies of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (“IHL Policies and Bylaws”) and the Policies and Bylaws of the IHL therefore take precedence and control in any conflict with the policies of the Faculty Handbook. **or The University of Southern Mississippi Employee Handbook (“Employee Handbook”). In the event of conflicts between the Faculty Handbook and either the IHL Policies and Bylaws or the Employee Handbook, the latter documents are controlling and take precedence.** Policies outlined in the University of Southern Mississippi Employee Handbook also apply to the faculty. The policies and procedures in the Employee Handbook take precedence over any and all other policies that might exist throughout the University, except those supplanted by specific provisions of the Faculty Handbook applicable to faculty only.

The Faculty Handbook may be amended from time to time in accord with the bylaws of the Faculty Handbook Committee. University policies referenced herein may be obtained from the University’s Institutional Policies webpage; Board policies referenced herein may be obtained from the IHL website. **The Faculty Handbook is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to all policies governing faculty.** Information about employment benefits and policies that apply to all employees of the University, such as those regarding harassment and discrimination, can be found in the Employee Handbook or obtained from the University’s Department of Human Resources.

Yellow = Proposed Changes Causing Problem – this section only

Blue = Proposed Changes No Problem – this section only

Appendix C

3.5.1 Responsibilities as Engaged Citizens of the University Community

Recognizing that diverse contributions across disciplines advance the Academy, full-time members of the corps of instruction at the University of Southern Mississippi are to be fully engaged citizens of the University community. Fully engaged citizens equitably contribute to the teaching, research/creative activities, and service missions of the institution. This is accomplished through various activities that include, but are not limited to, the following: intentionally and conscientiously teaching and mentoring students; striving to advance one's own scholarly pursuits; contributing to shared governance through active engagement on school, college, and University committees; supporting colleagues; and complying with institutional policies.

To this end, faculty are expected to be routinely present and participatory throughout the entire period of their employment contract. A faculty member's teaching schedule and office hours should be arranged so that a faculty member is guaranteed to be present a reasonable amount of time each week throughout the entire period of their employment contract. This time on campus must be allotted and scheduled such that faculty are regularly available for teaching, advising, student engagement, collaboration, service, attendance at faculty meetings, and the equitable participation in the life of the School, College, and University.

Faculty are encouraged to engage in valuable research, fieldwork, creative activity, conferences, and service opportunities that advance the Academy and require time away from the University. Time away may be short-lived (e.g. conferences) or extended (e.g. remote research) and can affect the assigned duties (teaching, service, and other scholarly activities) of all school faculty. The Director should be notified any time a faculty member is away from their routine campus schedule.

If during the annual evaluation, a faculty member receives an assignment of does not meet expectations in one of the three categories of faculty workload (teaching, research/creative activities, service), the director may require a faculty member's teaching schedule and office hours to be assigned during the next evaluation period. This assignment will guarantee the faculty member to be on campus a minimum of four days a week regardless of primary instructional delivery method (face-to-face, online, or hybrid) to perform their normal duties (teaching, research/creative activities, service) and to provide additional opportunities for mentoring. Faculty are no longer subject to this requirement if they receive an assessment of meets expectations for all three faculty workload categories in a subsequent annual evaluation.

Rationale

The administration has requested an additional tool to work with underperforming faculty. This addition to the faculty handbook creates such a tool that does not unduly burden faculty who are fully engaged citizens of the University community.

Included here for comparison with proposed Faculty Handbook Language Above

3.11 Contractual Obligations of Faculty

Recognizing that diverse contributions across disciplines advance the Academy, full-time members of the corps of instruction at the University of Southern Mississippi are to be fully engaged citizens of the University community. Fully engaged citizens equitably contribute to the teaching, research/creative activities, and service missions of the institution. This is accomplished through various behaviors that include, but are not limited to, the following: intentionally and conscientiously teaching and mentoring students; striving to advance one's own scholarly pursuits; contributing to shared governance through active engagement on school, college, and University committees; supporting colleagues; and complying with institutional policies.

To this end, faculty are expected to be routinely physically present and participatory throughout the entire period of their employment contract including the weeks prior to the start of class and after the end of class each semester. During these weeks, faculty will engage in curriculum development, assessment activities, student advisement, in-service activities, faculty meetings, personnel meetings, class preparations, scholarly pursuits, and other activities as directed for the functioning and governance of the school.

A faculty member's teaching schedule and office hours should be scheduled so that a faculty member is guaranteed to be on campus a reasonable amount of time each week throughout the entire period of their employment. Typically, a faculty member's teaching schedule and office hours should be scheduled so that a faculty member is guaranteed to be on campus a minimum of four days a week regardless of primary instructional delivery (face-to-face, online, hybrid), unless otherwise approved. This time on campus must be allotted and scheduled such that faculty are regularly available for teaching, advising, student engagement, collaboration, service, attendance at faculty meetings, and the equitable participation in the life of the School, College, and University. Directors are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

Faculty are encouraged to engage in valuable research, fieldwork, creative activity, conferences, and service opportunities that advance the Academy which may, at times, require time away from the University. Time away may be short-lived (e.g. conferences) or extended (e.g. remote research) and can affect the assigned duties (teaching, service, and other scholarly activities) of all school faculty. The Director must approve any time away from the faculty member's routine schedule. This approval must be obtained prior to any official proposal submission or confirmation to external constituents if applicable. This ensures that normal assigned duties (teaching, service, and other scholarly activities), are mitigated under a plan approved by the Director.

Appendix D

Faculty Senate Governance Committee Report, October 2020

The Faculty Senate Governance Committee met twice during October 2020, first on October 10/6 and again on 10/13.

The 10/6 initial meeting was designed to determine the issues to be addressed by the Governance Committee during the 2020-21 academic year. During this meeting we discussed the lack of shared governance demonstrated by the formation of secretive committees by the administration; the faculty contractual obligation (Employee Handbook 3.11); and the problem of addressing pressure to work outside of faculty contracts.

Resolutions were drafted addressing all three of these issues and circulated to members of the Governance Committee for review.

The pressing nature of the resolution on lack of shared governance after the Charting Our Coastal Future announcement resulted in a follow-up meeting scheduled for 10/13.

In this second meeting, the committee completed editing and review of the first resolution drafted addressing shared governance. The final version of the resolution was subsequently submitted to the Faculty Senate at the Special Session on 10/15/2020.

The second resolution on faculty contractual obligation (Employee Handbook 3.11), is submitted with this report for full discussion at the Faculty Senate meeting on 11.6.20.

In service and dedication to USM,
Jennifer Courts

Appendix E

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION #3, 2020-2021

Authored by: **Faculty Senate Governance Committee**

Introduced by: **Faculty Senate Governance Committee**

A FACULTY SENATE **Resolution Regarding Faculty Contractual Obligation**

WHEREAS The University operates under the principle of participatory or shared governance, with many institutional decisions being made with the advice and input from advisory bodies to the President (UFH 1.8); and

WHEREAS President Bennett has stated recently he takes very seriously the role of shared governance is a key tenet of academia; and

WHEREAS Policy 3.11 (Faculty Contractual Obligations) was placed in The University of Southern Mississippi Employee Handbook without direct collaboration with existing faculty governing bodies; and

WHEREAS this is the only policy in The University of Southern Mississippi Employee Handbook that impacts only the Faculty; and

WHEREAS this policy reflects a business model for higher education that treats faculty as employees and does not account for the central role faculty play in defining the University; and

WHEREAS faculty are fully engaged citizens equitably contributing to the teaching, research/creative activities, and service missions of the University both when present on campus and when working remotely; and

WHEREAS faculty are regularly available for teaching, advising, student engagement, collaboration, service, attendance at faculty meetings, and the equitable participation in the life of the School, College, and University both when present on campus and when working remotely;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED the addition of Policy 3.11 to The University of Southern Mississippi Employee Handbook is in violation of the Faculty Handbook which states the University operates under the principle of participatory or shared governance (UFH 1.8); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate in the spirit of shared governance strongly urges the removal of policy 3.11 from the USM Employee Handbook, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate supports a new Faculty Contractual Obligation statement that takes into account the diverse nature and location of faculty work be drafted following The University of Southern Mississippi policy for shared governance to be included in the USM Faculty Handbook.

Appendix F

Resolution No. Nov. 6, 2020

The Faculty Senate wishes to acknowledge the Administration's leadership in preparing USM for the summer and fall semesters about safety precautions in the midst of the pandemic. Many faculty also assisted in its planning and implementation, an example how faculty are always ready to work in cooperation with the Administration in true shared governance. It is with this background of cooperation that the Faculty Senate now proposes three actions by the Administration, specifically President Bennet and Provost Moser:

Whereas the Faculty Senate has conducted a survey of faculty with regards to their concerns about the recently-announced Gulf Coast reorganization, resulting in more than 60 faculty expressing specific concerns, anxiety, and professional uncertainty about a range of issues regarding the reorganization, and

Whereas one of the consistent regrets expressed by faculty members in this survey was the lack of true shared governance regarding the planned reorganization; and

Whereas a copy of these concerns will be made available to the Administration; and

Whereas the Faculty Senate in a special session October 15, 2020, unanimously passed two Resolutions condemning this lack of shared governance:

Now, therefore, trusting that the Administration wants to begin to rebuild trust and a true sense of shared governance with the faculty and its representative body, the Faculty Senate, not just taking in suggestions but discussing them with the Faculty Senate, the only body that represents all faculty, be it resolved that:

1. the Administration, to the extent possible and in a timely manner, respond to the Faculty Senate and Gulf Coast faculty, regarding expressed concerns about the planned Gulf Coast reorganization.
2. President Bennett is requested to respond openly to the Faculty Senate as quickly as possible to the two Faculty Senate Resolutions on shared governance, preferably at a meeting of the Faculty Senate, where he is invited to resume his earlier pattern of attending most Faculty Senate meetings. which are open to the public;
3. That the Administration share these three Resolutions with the Cabinet, all Deans and Directors as soon as possible.
4. Finally, President Bennett is invited to resume his previous welcome pattern of attending, often with Provost Moser, Faculty Senate meetings as a way of helping communicate his plans and hear from faculty leaders in the spirit of shared governance.

Respectfully submitted,

Faculty Senate Welfare and Environment Committee on behalf of the Faculty Senate