

12-2-2022

## Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes--December 2, 2022

Faculty Senate

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**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**  
Friday, December 2, 2:00 p.m.  
Via Zoom

**Call to Order**

President Denis Wiesenburg called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Roll Call**

Members present:

Adkins, Nell	Kilgore, Jonathan
Anderson, Patsy	McCardle, Emileigh
Arnau, Randolph	Mclain, Nina
Bai, Fengwei	Mistretta, Vincenzo
Beedle, Jon (proxy for Mary Funk)	Morgan, Hani
Bernstein, Joshua	Nazarenko, Sergei
Bomhold, Catharine	Press, Bob
Burnett, Joanne	Puckett, Mark
Ciraldo, Nick	Salyers, Candice
Courts, Jennifer	Scott, Jeremy
Cullum, Terry	Shaw, Joyce
Darnell, Zack	Shin, Jae-Hwa
Donahue, Paul "Tyler"	Spuhler, Bryan
Franke, Damon	Stanback, Emily
Funchess, Tanya	Troughton, Lennie
Greer, Tammy	Wallace, Maria
Gulledge, Laura	Wang, Wei
Hrostowski, Susan	Wiesenburg, Denis
Kanuri, Srindidhi	Zhang, Fan

Members who were not in attendance:

Bradley, Greg  
Funk, Mary  
Grivno, Max  
LeBert, Amy  
Mezzadri, Danilo  
Smith, Kim

Quorum: A quorum (22) was established and recognized. (38 members present).

Voting Membership Present:  $\frac{2}{3}$  membership for voting on Bylaws and Resolutions (29) was established. (38 members 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.

## **Approval of the Minutes (previous month)**

A motion to accept the November, 2022 minutes was made. The motion was seconded. The motion to accept the April meeting minutes was approved by the majority of the members.

## **Program**

Note that the Gulf Coast committee report will be moved up after the officer reports.

## **5.0 Officer Reports**

### **5.1 President:**

President's Report for Faculty Senate December 2, 2022

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee did not meet with President Joe Paul and Interim Provost Gordon Cannon this month as our one of the Provost listening sessions was scheduled at the same time as our meeting. When I did meet with President Paul and the university Leadership Team on November 15, one of the agenda items was a proposal for a new university policy that requires all faculty-only policies be placed in the USM Faculty Handbook following the standard procedures outlined in the Handbook. I mentioned in my last report that the Faculty Senate Executive committee had requested establishment of this policy pursuant to the policy on Faculty Contract Obligations that was placed in the USM Employee Handbook in July 2019 without any faculty input. Provost Cannon presented the new policy to the deans and vice presidents at the Leadership Team meeting so they could review and comment on the proposed policy. Significantly, President Paul told the group that he supported the policy. We hope it will be approved early next year.

The College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Senators learned in a meeting with Dean Winstead that USM might revert to calendar year evaluations for faculty instead of the academic year that we changed to under the last administration. I confirmed this planned change with Interim Provost Cannon who advised me, "at IHL's request we are moving faculty evaluations back to the calendar year. Board staff pointed out that we were the only IHL (institution) that performed evaluations on the academic year schedule and it was problematic for their reporting." He reported, "I am not familiar with the reasoning behind why it was changed to begin with but (it) makes sense to me that we proceed with going back to calendar year. This was discussed at the last Dean's Council meeting and the Deans are working with the Directors and Allison Gillespie to devise the least disruptive transition plan for implementation." Personally, I believe that this is good news as we had a system that worked well and it was changed to one that had problems. We will hear more about this today under agenda item 6.1.

Overall, I would say that the Faculty Senate has been able to correct some problems created by the massive reorganization under the last administration. We were able to eliminate the 15-week academic semester that was detested by both faculty and students. We had the Contractual Obligations of Faculty policy removed from the USM Employee Handbook, and the University is about to change the Faculty evaluation schedule back to the calendar year which required some faculty to work when off contract. Much has been accomplished over the last two years.

As we end the year, I want to thank all Senators for their significant efforts this semester and I look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Following Denis's prepared statement, there was a discussion of the revised annual review process. The current understanding is that with exceptions (i.e. those at assistant level) people will be reviewed in Spring 2023 for the preceding 1.5 years to return USM to evaluations according to calendar year rather than academic year.

## **5.2 President-Elect:**

IHL Board Meeting, November 17, 2022

- Approved the request to increase the budget for Hickman Hall Renovation, from a pre-plan budget of \$500,000 to \$11,350,000. The Board also approved the request to modify the scope of the project to include renovating this residence hall to serve as departmental and office space. It will include code upgrades, a new elevator, updated bathroom facilities, along with new mechanical and electrical infrastructure.
- Approved the request to enter an agreement with Billie Billingsley Swinney (individually) and Billie Billingsley Swinney (Trustee of the Billie Billingsley Swinney Revocable Trust, for the purchase of real property located at 209 N. 36th Avenue
- Approved the request to add a new academic degree program. Proposed Program Title: Master of Science in Medicine (MSM) in Physician Assistant Studies
- During Executive Session:
  - o Trustee Ogletree made a motion that all provisions and requirements within IHL Board Policy 201.0509 Institutional Executive Officer/Commissioner of Higher Education Search Process that have not yet been completed be suspended for the remainder of the current University of Southern Mississippi (USM) IEO search, and that Dr. Joseph S. Paul be hired as President of USM effective November 1, 2022, at a state annual salary of \$450,000, and with a salary supplement of up to \$200,000 annually to be provided by one or more of the USM affiliated entities, that Dr. Paul be given a four-year employment contract and that Dr. Paul's new employment contract provide that he may be reimbursed for up to \$15,000 in actual moving expenses.
  - o 201.0509 – IEO Search
    - § D. Expedited Search Alternative The Board may, in its discretion, interview candidates that are known to the Board and consider their selection in accordance

o 201.0510 APPLICATION BY INTERIM OR ACTING INSTITUTIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR INSTITUTIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION

§ “If the Board has chosen to appoint an acting or interim institutional executive officer at an institution, an individual that serves in that position after the formal circulation of the Advertisement requesting applications for an IEO shall not be considered as a candidate for the permanent IEO”

§ “This policy does not prohibit consideration of an individual who has completed service as an interim or acting IEO prior to the circulation of the formal Advertisement for”

- Academic Program Review

o Continue with stipulation

§ Master of Science (MS) in Geology

o Suspend (none)

o Delete

§ – Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) in Economics

### **5.3 Secretary:**

Everyone has been added to the Faculty Senate Teams page. Emily will clean up all existing committee pages in the coming weeks. She will also add a document to each committee page that will serve as a handbook for that committee. These handbooks will be used to record information about standard committee procedures that carry over from year to year, as well as to record the activities of committees during each year. At some point in the spring semester, committees should update their handbook to simplify the transition to the next academic year.

### **5.4 Secretary-Elect:**

In our last meeting, we discussed the initiation of a working group of senators interested in supporting administration with community engagement efforts. I met with Christy Kayser, Director of the Center for Community Engagement, to hear her perceptions of what is needed in the community and how the university (including faculty senators) can support those needs. She recommended that the university assemble a task force of faculty, staff, and community members to conduct the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching’s 2024 accreditation process for community engaged institutions as a self-study. This self-study process could support the university in recognizing the important work it is already doing in Hattiesburg and in developing a plan for expanding meaningful and lasting engagement in the community. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee will present this information to President Paul and Provost Cannon at our next meeting with them (the November 30 meeting was canceled due to listening sessions for the Provost search). Following my meeting with Christy Kayser, the working group (Candice Salyers, Susan Hrostowski, Lennie Troughton, Bob Press, Catharine Bomhold) met to discuss her recommendations as well as their own insights and expertise from previous community engaged work and will gather again after the next FS Executive Committee meeting.

### Updates on Faculty Senate work from AY 2021-2022

In November of 2021, the Faculty Senate issued a statement of concern about sexual assault on campus that originated in the Welfare and Environment Committee. (*The Faculty Senate supports the initiative of USM students to call attention to sexual violence on campus and urges the administration to support student efforts to work towards a safer campus.*) At that same time, Bella Brocato presented a proposal for changes in the sexual assault policy to SGA as well as to Student Affairs. I recently met with students involved in the request to strengthen the sexual assault policy on campus to hear more about the progress of their efforts. Although it is not currently a focus of the Welfare & Environment Committee, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee recognizes the ongoing importance of this issue on campus. Because addressing this situation involves liaising with SGA to understand what initiatives student senators are moving forward, I have proposed to Dr. Jae-Hwa Shin, Chair of Communications and University Relations Committee, that my work on this issue could become part of that committee if she approves. In addition to connecting with SGA Advisor and Staff Council President-Elect Carl Thomas and our SGA Representative to the Faculty Senate, Jacob Gardner, five student senators have contacted me and expressed their intention to work on legislation related to sexual assault through SGA. Next week, I plan to meet with these student senators, the student officers of SAPA, Carl Thomas, and Dr. Lisa Wright (Health Educator in the Office of Health Promotion at Moffitt and Chair of the Wellness Committee on Staff Council) to better understand the ways in which these student-led initiatives are moving forward and what Faculty Senate can do to support the students at this time.

In the May 6, 2022 Faculty Senate meeting, Nicole Caulfield (Graduate Student in Psychology) made a presentation about her research exploring the intersection between sexual assault on college campuses and suicide risk. Although some of her data reflects nation-wide trends, some is specific to USM (and both are relevant for our university). She is following up that work with new research that specifically focuses on sexual assault and harassment at USM. Currently, she is writing the survey, but when it is complete in Spring 2023, she would like to share her findings with the Faculty Senate since so many senators expressed appreciation for her previous work on these important issues.

### **Gulf Coast Committee Report (moved up):**

There were updates on several issues related to the Gulf Coast campus. There are updates imminently expected on the issue of faculty affiliate status, and an update will be given later in the meeting. There are issues with limited food services on campus, including the lunch closure of dining areas that previously had been open for lunch; these issues impact students who live on campus.

There was a discussion of what academic programs and degrees are coming back to the Gulf Coast campus. Some programs are returning, and there are discussions about the possibility of others returning. At present there is not sufficient clarity about what programs are in fact being permanently closed.

There are also significant problems related to the use of buildings and physical space on the Gulf Coast campus. For example, library space is being used for administrative space, and the School of Coastal Resilience offices were transitioned mid-semester. There is a general sense that there needs to be more transparency, oversight, and disclosure with regard to issues related to buildings and physical space on campus. Damon Franke and Vincenzo Mezzadri have met with administrators, but are not certain about the prospects for a Design & Space Review committee specific to the Gulf Coast campus, which could bring together different constituencies to review these critical topics.

Finally, there was mention of the possibility of including in the reorganization survey some questions about the Gulf Coast campus—for example a question to gauge thoughts about the three pillars.

## **6.0 Discussion/Decision/Action Items**

### **6.1 Faculty Handbook Modification - Work Outside of Annual Contract**

This item was to add language to the Faculty Handbook to confirm that faculty are not required to complete extracontractual work. Most significantly, faculty recently have been required to submit documentation related to annual evaluations or complete committee work over the summer. A vote was taken on language modification to the Faculty Handbook to clarify that no extracontractual work be required of faculty. Vote total: 34 yes, 1 no, 1 abstain

### **6.2 USM “Wellness Center” (aka Volleyball Arena) Statement**

Senators discussed a Sense of the Senate statement related to the “Wellness Center” that was originally drafted by the Welfare & Environment committee and later rewritten by the Executive Committee after the release of a statement by the administration. Vote total: 28 yes, 4 no, 1 abstain

### **6.3 Provost Search Discussion**

There was a discussion about the Provost search, including the recent series of listening sessions.

### **6.4 Gulf Coast Faculty Affiliate Letters Update**

The update from Dean Winstead is that there was movement in getting letters of affiliation modified and back to faculty. They are working more broadly to create letter that will apply in a wide variety of circumstances. On issues related to voting, schools will determine protocol. There is clarification that affiliate letters are not contracts, but rather are letters of mutual understanding and shared expectations. The intention is to resolve the issue of affiliate letters by the end of the Fall 2022 semester.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Academics:**

Emileigh McCardle reported that the committee met this past month. The primary issue of discussion was students being dropped the day before classes start, causing issues with enrollment. Emileigh met with Barbara Madison, Director of Student Financial Services, to clarify the process. There is a hope to meet as a group with administrators including Amy Chasteen, enrollment management, and Allyson Easterwood to discuss the possibility of backing up the date on which students are dropped from their classes. One consideration is that dropping students too soon might lead to students not coming at all. Timing the drop date is a difficult balancing act.

### **Administrative Evaluation:**

Tammy Greer reported that the administrative evaluations have been sent out to directors and deans.

### **Awards:**

Jae Hwa Shin reported that Junior Faculty awards were due November 18. She's waiting to hear from Allison Gillespie to start the review process.

### **Bylaws:**

No report

### **Elections:**

No report. Still in phase of finding out who's eligible to serve on Faculty Senate.

### **Faculty Handbook Advisory:**

The committee met after the last Faculty Senate meeting. There was a vote to extend the remand process so that it goes back to school, and they met to come up with language. This will be brought to the December 12 University Faculty Handbook Committee meeting.

### **Finance:**

Nell Adkins met with Allyson Easterwood to get update on how we are doing. The University is feeling the impact of inflation and a revenue decrease across fall and spring, but is weathering the situation fairly well by shifting discretionary funds and contingency funds. The University did not spend all of the covid money received, so is in the process of using the last funds. Over



the past few years USM has built up a surplus, anticipating a down year—so while the current pattern is not sustainable, USM is in reasonable shape for the moment.

### **Governance:**

There was mention of the Faculty Handbook, but the report focused primarily on the committee's upcoming ombuds proposal and reorganization survey. The committee is working on a proposal for a new ombuds office at USM that would be more in line with how that position functions at peer institutions. The committee is also working on a survey for distribution that will gauge faculty experiences of the reorganization to determine what is working and what isn't working.

There was a discussion of Brian Leiter's (University of Chicago Law School) opinions related to new IHL requirements related to collegiality and the legality of holding faculty members to standards other than those under which they were hired.

### **University Relations and Communications:**

The committee sent questions to office of External Relations. What are their goals, and how can faculty participate? What is their role in recruitment? How can USM engage more effectively in the community?

### **Welfare and Environment:**

No report. The bulk of the committee's recent work was to draft the original TANF letter.

### **8.0 Outside Committee Reports**

No outside committee reports.

### **9.0 Reports from Other University Advisory Bodies**

No reports from other university advisory bodies.

### **10.0 Consent Items**

No consent items.

### **11.0 Unfinished Business**

No unfinished business.

### **12.0 New Business**

No new business.

### **13.0 Good of the Order**

An announcement was made about the Center for Faculty Development, College of Arts and Sciences, and AAUP event at the Brass Hat

Bob Press raised the issue of “huge” classes; Emileigh McCardle noted that she would like to look into the issue; Denis suggested that people email about what they regard as a “huge” class.

#### **14.0 Announcements**

##### **14.1 Next Faculty Senate Meeting on February 3, 2022 via Zoom**

#### **15.0 Motion to Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made. The motion was seconded. The motion passed by a majority of the Faculty Senate.