5-7-1999

Faculty Senate Minutes - May 7, 1999

USM Faculty Senate

Follow this and additional works at: http://aquila.usm.edu/faculty_senate_minutes

Recommended Citation

USM Faculty Senate, "Faculty Senate Minutes - May 7, 1999" (1999). Faculty Senate Minutes. Paper 3.
http://aquila.usm.edu/faculty_senate_minutes/3

This 1998/99 Minutes is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Senate Archive at The Aquila Digital Community. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Senate Minutes by an authorized administrator of The Aquila Digital Community. For more information, please contact Joshua.Cromwell@usm.edu.
The University of Southern Mississippi
Faculty Senate Minutes
May 7, 1999

Members Present: College of the Arts: Kimberley Davis, Shellie Nielsen; College of Education and Psychology: Janet Nelson, Jesse Palmer, John Rachal, Lillian Range; College of Health and Human Sciences: Jan Drummond, Michael Forster; College of Liberal Arts: Michael Dearmey, Linda Dysart Goff, Alexandra Jaffe, Art Kaul, Stephen Mallory, Stephen Oshrin; College of Nursing: Janie Butts; College of Science and Technology: Delia Anderson, Douglas McCain, Bob Coates, Dean Dunn, Gerald Mattson, Lawrence Mead, Karen Thrash; Institute of Marine Science: Steve Lohrenz; Gulf Park: Darlys Alford; USM Libraries: Sherry Laughlin, Karolyn Thompson.


Members Absent: College of Business Administration: Ernest King, Scott Magruder, Robert Smith; College of International and Continuing Education: Mark Miller.

Forum: Dr. Myron Henry, Provost
I discussed with the Strategic Plan Editing Committee what I might say to you today about the preliminary version of the Strategic Plan. That committee has carefully gone through the Senate's response to the plan as well as Jesse Palmer's response, and those discussions and responses will guide my remarks today. I would first like to address the process and the speed of the process. The Commission on the Future of the University (COFU) was the foundation for the strategic planning process. The COFU was a broad based committee and the process was very inclusive. The result was a 22 page document, 11 major headings, and about 100 bullets. If you have a 22 page document that paints a major direction for the university, then your strategic plan has to develop, provide detail, and define some of the major headings. This accounts for the size of the plan. The COFU process began in the fall of 1997. In the fall of 1998, input was requested from directly reporting units--those that report directly to the Provost. These units were asked to reflect upon the COFU report and to define what it meant for that unit. Those responses, due by November 29th, were varied and thoughtful and filled a notebook about 4 inches thick. There were many interpretations as to what the COFU meant. In October a process was put in place to select a Strategic Planning Committee. Three Senators and two others from the Senate's list were selected, and the committee began work around Thanksgiving. The committee was first divided into two subcommittees: Academic and Research, and Environmental and Vice Presidential. The subcommittees produced reports and then an editing subcommittee merged these reports and edited it. The preliminary version was dated March 31st. The Strategic Planning Committee voted 23 to 0 out of a possible 24 to support that version. Next in the process was the feedback loop. The committee decided to send the preliminary version to every full time employee of the University. It's my understanding that we've never had such a comprehensive feedback process for any other document. The committee decided to put out a good product, knowing there would be criticism about the expense. We did not want to produce a document that would not look like a quality product. I feel strongly that every employee should also have a copy of the final version.

Jesse Palmer: You might want to talk about the fast pace of the process.

Myron Henry: This really started in the fall of 1997 with the COFU report. Much groundwork was done by the COFU. October 1st was the call for colleagues to look at the COFU report and comment. We will take an entire academic year to finish the strategic planning document; I'm not sure that's fast paced. The committee knew that it had to have enough time after a preliminary version was issued in order to review feedback before the end of the academic year. How would I characterize the feedback we've received? Overall, it has been very constructive and positive. Units have responded in different ways,
some using their strategic planning committees, others using their college councils. Many units were very supportive of the preliminary plan: Liberal Arts, Education and Psychology, Science and Technology, Nursing, the Institute for Marine Science, the Institute for Disability Studies, the Gulf Coast, International and Continuing Education, USM Libraries, Health and Human Sciences. Many of these unit responses also listed things for the Strategic Planning Committee to consider or reconsider. We received many positive responses from individuals. We asked that responses come through organizational units because we didn't want to compromise the units' decision making and priority setting processes. We received a few departmental responses that came through the colleges but also came directly to the committee, and most of these were constructive. We received more qualified responses from the Honors College and the College of Business Administration. Overall, these responses were positive, but not as much as those I listed earlier. The College of the Arts response was measured, with several supportive statements and several concerns dealing primarily with budget. The Faculty Senate response was unclear. The Editing Committee received every response but two: one was anonymous and was very difficult to read, and the other had personnel discussion integrated with the response. The committee will be reviewing every response and suggestion.

Stella Elakovich: I think the response has been very positive, and the committee is looking at every suggestion.

Steve Lohrenz: There were many valid comments. Some other comments indicated that the intent of the plan was misunderstood. In other instances, specific suggestions were made that were too specific to be appropriate for a strategic plan, but should nevertheless be given consideration.

Myron Henry: The Editing Subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee considered every comment carefully in making their final revisions. I would like to respond to some of the issues you reported from your discussion:

**Staff compensation issues**: A concensus was reached by the committee that greater efforts should be made to address staff compensation issues, while still making a significant effort to address faculty compensation concerns.

**Who will govern decision making**: There's always a concern about that, whether or not you have a strategic plan. The committee chose to leave some of that undefined in the document because the purpose of the document is to set major directions. There is a lot of structure involved in the decision making process: departments, colleges, governance. There was thinking that many decisions will begin at the department level and then move forward from there.

**Decentralized decision making**: This document is an effort to have units make decisions and be responsible for them. This university may not be accustomed to that.

**Flagship programs would be identified and others left to dwindle**: This document doesn't say that. It says we have to make choices because we can't do it all. The document leaves open the criteria to be used to make those choices. Some criteria may be unique to given units.

Lawrence Meade: This response is an extrapolation made from experience at this university.

Myron Henry: That past practice is not explicit in this document. When you have small units, you have to ask yourself how these units are serving the mission of the university, and some small units are serving the mission of the university very well. We do need some programs that are known as the best in the world.

Dean Dunn: One reason for this perception is our level budget and the repetitive references to budget in the document.

Myron Henry: We need programs that compete with the very best, but all of our programs have to be good and we have to evaluate their purposes.

Michael Dearmey: The last time the question of size came up was 1986/1987 when the IHL issued a statement that departments with less than a critical mass could be combined. This was embarrassing for the university because of the departments that were combined. There is not enough administrative support for education as opposed to career and vocational departments that have far larger numbers of students. Just because a program is large, it shouldn't be a signature program.

Myron Henry: There is a core to a university, but at the same time there is the question of resources. Quality and quantity are often partners. You have to have enough quantity to have quality.

**New resources from existing resources**: If we're going to have new programs, this is probably true. But what do we mean by reallocating? When a senior faculty member retires, there may be a decision to use some of those personnel funds in other ways. If we don't reallocate, then what we have today, we will have tomorrow. We have to find ways of changing and leading, but we want to choose carefully how we do it. I'm not interested in doing anything suddenly and with great disruption. That is why we have a 3-5 year
strategic plan. We are not getting huge number of dollars in next year. Budgets will be flat except for salaries.

No space for larger classes: This is a valid point and I'm sure the committee will address it.

Academic Council to review the General Education Core: The responses about this weigh in on both sides. The governance process has the Academic Council reviewing the curriculum that it does not develop. The curriculum is developed in departments and colleges. The Academic Council looks at the rigor of the courses and it reviews whether courses meet standards.

Art Kaul: Is there any assurance that a group that restructures the GEC will be composed of faculty?

Myron Henry: Absolutely. Faculty develop curriculum. The governance process won't be compromised. Courses are developed in departments; interdisciplinary courses are developed across departmental units, and the Academic Council has oversight.

Concern about the exceedingly commercial tone of the document: The issue of resources has to be examined more widely, and we have to have a greater understanding of where our resources come from. Regarding the issue of quality: we are addressing quality when we talk about reform of the GEC. It is quality when you talk about benchmarks to decide whether you have strong programs. This document talks about defining quality for specific programs.

John Rachal: I didn't see anything in the document that addresses the university's role as social critic. It seemed to be heavily weighted on the side of the business of education.

Myron Henry: The faculty section addresses scholarship in service to society, and teaching and learning.

What is sufficient independence with regard to corporate supporters: I don't know. This depends upon circumstances and contracts. When the university engages a corporate partner, it has to maintain its integrity and distance. This says that it is O.K. to work with these partners, but you must preserve independence.

Counting beans to measure productivity: This document invites other measures. It doesn't have all the answers.

Boyer's view of scholarship: Most people responded very favorably to the faculty section on rewards. Scholarship is dictated by the mission of the unit.

Reorganization/history of not trusting: Part of the purpose of the strategic plan is to put it out there and to get an understanding of the issues. This is an effort to open up the process, not to close it down.

Kimberley Davis: Would you comment on the statement about adequate funding and also the concern that smaller units might get put on the back burner.

Myron Henry: We are never funded adequately. We always have to figure out ways to fund good things. Eight out of 10 visits to my office are to ask for support for things that cost money. You are extrapolating that smaller units would be put on the back burner. Some smaller units serve lots of lower division students. Other small units have to consider whether they are mission critical.

Gerald Mattson: The document doesn't speak to the issue that a significant number of our students take their core at other institutions.

Myron Henry: It is difficult to address that. With our articulation agreements, we have to accept those courses, even when they don't align with ours. We are not going to close our doors to transfer students. About all we can do is assure that they perform well when they are here.

Dean Dunn: Your predecessor told us that we are about 2,000 students underfunded. What is the status of your office in lobbying for a more equitable application of the formula?

Myron Henry: My office plays a role in this, but leadership comes from the President's office. The formula was abandoned because it compromised Ole Miss. We are the lowest funded on a per capita basis. North Mississippi has traditionally carried a lot of clout, but that is shifting. We will have political muscle eventually. The fact that we prevailed at the IHL on two controversial topics (Polymer Science degree change and the Gulf Coast) is significant.

Kimberley Davis: Can you discuss the process for excluding information from the Strategic Plan?

Myron Henry: This document represents the views of the committee members, the COFU report, and information from units. It is a consensus document, even though choices were not always unanimous.

Lawrence Meade: You've mentioned several times that we are extrapolating from the document and you've discussed your interpretations of it. Shouldn't the final document be sufficiently unambiguous that intelligent people can understand it?

Myron Henry: It would be the first such document I've seen that is not subject to interpretation. Sometimes it is best that interpretations take place by those closest to the scene. It is more of an enabling document than a prescriptive one.
What is next? The editing committee is going through every comment and the full committee will meet to discuss and vote on the changes. The final version will be printed after graduation and each faculty and staff member will get a copy. The final plan will guide the budgeting and planning process each year. Each year there will be a feedback process. At three years, there will be a more macro examination, considering what has been done and what hasn’t. Between three and five years the process will begin again, but will not be as elaborate.

Business Meeting
1.0 Call to Order  The Business meeting was called to order at 3:20.
2.0 Approval of Agenda  The agenda was approved as distributed.
3.0 Approval of Minutes  The minutes were approved as distributed.
4.0 Executive Committee Reports
4.1 President's Report  Jesse Palmer
President Palmer recognized the newly elected Senators. This is the last meeting for the outgoing Senate and terms for the new Senate begin with the June meeting. Newly elected Senators:
College of the Arts:  DeAnna Douglas
College of Business Administration:  Bob Smith reelected
College of Education and Psychology:  Sheila Alber
College of Health and Human Sciences:  Michael Forster reelected, Susan Hubble, Mary Frances Nettles
College of Liberal Arts:  Karen Austin, David Goff, Allan McBride reelected
College of Science and Technology:  David Beckett, Dean Dunn reelected, Charles Hoyle, Grayson Rayburn
USM Libraries:  Sherry Laughlin reelected
Gulf Park:  J. Pat Smith
The election of Senate officers will take place at the June meeting. Dan Surry has resigned to take a position at South Alabama. Marvin Lanmon has been appointed to take his place.
Budget:  The original 7.5% salary pool was reduced by 1/2% and shifted to the staff pool. 4% has been established as satisfactory performance. The range of raises can be 4% to 10% without rationale. Deans will be allowed to take some of the raise pool to address equity and compression issues. If a faculty member has an equity or compression issue, they should request that it be addressed through the chair.
Dean Dunn:  Did anyone give any rationale for the shift in the funds?
President Palmer:  The only discussion I heard was in the Deans Council, and that vote was unanimous. I did not vote on that issue in the Deans’ Council.
Michael Dearmey:  Were administrative raises defined?
President Palmer:  No, but they are in the same pool. Promotion money will not come out of this pool. The university has set aside $90,000 to increase operating budgets to cover phone rate increases.
Announcements:  A freshman retention program will be implemented in the fall. Faculty may be asked questions about attendance or performance of freshman. Faculty may also be asked to volunteer to serve as an academic link with freshman residence halls. The legislative forum held this morning featured area legislators who reviewed the 1999 session. Two Senate issues will be referred to next year’s committees:  1) A review of the process of student evaluations of faculty to ensure confidentiality will be referred to the Administration and Faculty Evaluations Committee; and 2) The option for nine month faculty to be paid over twelve months will be referred to the Benefits and Work Environment Committee.
4.2 President-Elect's Report  Art Kaul
The Graduate Council endorsed the Faculty Senate resolution regarding online courses.
4.3 Secretary's Report  Sherry Laughlin  No Report
4.4 Secretary-Elect's Report  Shellie Nielsen  Proxies were read and an attendance roster was passed.

5.0 Committee Reports
5.1 Academic and Governance Committee  Karen Thrash
The committee presented a resolution concerning new procedures for handling final grades for Army and Air Force ROTC students:

Resolution Regarding Handling Final Grades for Army and Air Force ROTC Students
In a memo dated March 22, 1999, new procedures for handling final grades for Army and Air Force ROTC
students were distributed to faculty. There is some confusion about whether the policies outlined in the memo are binding, as the wording in Item A indicates that professors are "encouraged" to administer exams early. While some professors may be able to accommodate this request, an official policy establishing exceptional arrangements for ROTC graduates as outlined in this memo is unacceptable. Special arrangements should not be granted for one group of students over all others. Faculty members have been repeatedly admonished to administer final exams at the scheduled date and time, and yet we are now asked to administer early exams for select students. Administering early or separate exams for some students places a burden on the professor and could compromise the exam for other students taking the exam at a later time. The process for distributing grade information to individuals outside the registrar's office is questionable at best--perhaps even a violation of the Buckley amendment. Therefore, the Faculty Senate recommends that either

a) Commissioning of ROTC officers take place on a date after graduation, or
b) The exam schedule be amended so that all exams will have been administered and sufficient time allowed for grading of the exams prior to the time that the ROTC would need to have the grades.
In all cases, grades should be distributed to and through the Registrar's office only.

Discussion: Traditionally ROTC students are commissioned on Friday morning of exam week. The procedure referenced in the memo of March 22 is being implemented now. There are usually fewer than 20 students involved. In the past these students have been commissioned without any verification that they had finished degree requirements. Faculty are still liable under the Buckley amendment even if the student provides a signed release. Many students walk through graduation before they've met the requirements. Dean Dunn moved and Karolyn Thompson seconded that the Senate rules be suspended so that the resolution could be voted on today. The resolution passed unanimously.

The Academic and Governance Committee presented the following recommendation:

In view of continued faculty concern regarding the erosion of faculty control over curricular matters, the Academic and Governance Committee recommends the formation of a Faculty Senate Task Force to review and revise, as necessary, the Faculty handbook. In particular, we recommend that the Task Force pay special attention to faculty control over course offerings, specialties of new faculty members, elimination or addition of program focus areas, and input on selection and retention of department chairs. We recommend that the members of the Task Force be non-administrator faculty, chosen by the Faculty Senate President--perhaps four or five from the Senate and two from outside the Senate membership.

Since many of the matters of concern to faculty relate to governance, the committee recommends that the Task Force take a close look at the AAUP policy documents on governance. Those guidelines address, as well as curricular issues, guidelines for faculty input on budget and are intended to "foster constructive joint thought and action, both within the institutional structure and in protection of its integrity against improper intrusions." In order to take full advantage of the expertise and advantages offered by the AAUP, the committee further recommends that the Faculty Senate appoint a Senate delegate to be our liaison with the AAUP. This position could be a rotating position within the Senate, and it is recommended that the Senate ask for additional money to cover the $117 annual membership fee.

The recommendation was unanimously approved.

5.2 Administrative and Faculty Evaluations Bill Powell
Jesse Palmer reported that the return rate on administrative evaluations was 70%.

5.3 Athletic Liaison Trellis Green
Dean Dunn reported that Trellis Green has met with Athletic Director Giannini. He is eager to speak to the Senate and will do so in September or November. He appears to be concerned about academics. He is interested in discussing possible faculty discounts for athletic event tickets.

5.4 Awards Linda Dysart Goff
Lillian Range reported that the University's HEADWAE nominee was Marjorie Wheeler. This award is
given for excellence in teaching, research/scholarly and creative activity, and service. In addition to the overall winner, the Awards Committee recognizes the following college winners:

Dr. Vivien Carver, Professor of Community Health, College of Health and Human Sciences
Dr. Frances Karnes, Professor of Special Education, College of Education and Psychology
Dr. William Lyddon, Associate Professor of Psychology, College of Education and Psychology
Dr. Thomas Richardson, Professor of English, College of Liberal Arts
Dr. Williams Sackley, Associate Professor of Finance, College of Business Administration
Dr. Dana Ragsdale, Professor of Music, College of the Arts
Mrs. Karolyn Thompson, USM Libraries
Dr. Joanne Tornow, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, College of Science and Technology

5.5 Benefits and Work Environment  Mike Forster  No report

5.6 Constitution and Bylaws  Sherry Laughlin  No report

5.7 Elections  Mary Dayne Gregg

5.8 Environment  Richard Conville

The Faculty Senate Environment Committee recently undertook a survey to determine how other universities handle planning of their campus environment. This survey was not a scientific sample of all U.S. universities and colleges; rather, it focused on soliciting information from a number of benchmark schools around the country, institutions we believed could serve as possible models for how a university campus should develop policies and procedures for dealing with issues surrounding the natural environment. We gathered information on the following schools: University of Alabama, University of Alabama-Birmingham, Duke University, Florida State University, Kent State University, University of North Carolina, Sam Houston State University, and University of Washington.

From a preliminary analysis of our survey responses, we learned that the schools we surveyed generally had well-developed mechanisms for planning and managing the natural environment of their campuses:

Most have Master Plans for their campus. These plans address a number of matters, including guidelines for decision making in the areas of campus architecture, landscaping, and conservation, and how to handle decisions about new construction and future land use. These Master Plans are typically developed in consultation with all campus constituencies, including faculty.

The implementation of the Master Plans at these universities is generally overseen by a specific office on campus staffed by qualified individuals. For example, the Office of Facilities Planning and Operations at Kent State includes both a University Architect and a University Horticulturist. Such individuals guide the efforts of those who carry out specific tasks, such as landscaping or tree planting, typically a Physical Plant unit.

Though most of these schools have a specific office that oversees the implementation of their Master Plans, these entities are generally advised by some kind of campus committee that includes faculty. The University of North Carolina has a Building and Grounds Committee, composed of faculty, staff, and students. The University of Alabama has a Campus Master Plan Committee made up of faculty, staff, students, and local community members. And Florida State University has a Campus Development and Space Committee, composed of administrators, faculty, and students, which has responsibility for, among other things, making recommendations on "any modification or addition to site, physical plant or landscaping on campus."

Overall, the survey has revealed that USM is far behind any of the institutions surveyed in terms of planning for and managing its campus environment. Thus, the Faculty Senate Environment Committee recommends the following resolution for the Faculty Senate's consideration:

We recommend that USM devise a procedure that guarantees wide public consultation on issues concerning the Campus Environment.
We recommend that USM hire a University Landscape Architect to direct planning and policy generation regarding the Campus Environment.
We also recommend that USM develop a university-level review and planning committee on the Campus Environment (composed of faculty, students, staff, community, and alumni members) to be chaired by the University Landscape Architect.

The recommendation was approved by the Senate.

5.9 Faculty Development Norma Cuellar No report
5.10 Technology Dan Surry No report
5.11 University Club Kim Herzinger No report
5.12 Parking Bill Scarborough
The new small parking lot near Marsh Hall has been designated for visitors and parking meters may be put there. The big issue to be resolved now is the number of violations that will be allowed (paid or unpaid) before a vehicle is towed. Separate parking lots for faculty and staff are being discussed, with higher fines for violators who park there.

6.0 Old Business None

7.0 New Business
Darlys Alford reported that the College of Business on the Gulf Coast has restricted all faculty to one course only during the summer and they are recruiting Hattiesburg faculty to teach. President Palmer indicated that he would look into this.

8.0 Announcements

9.0 Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 4:20.

Respectfully submitted, Sherry Laughlin, Faculty Senate Secretary