Faculty Senate Minutes - November 12, 2004

USM Faculty Senate

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The University of Southern Mississippi

Faculty Senate Minutes

November 12, 2004

Hall of Honors

2:00pm

1.0 Call to order: 2:05pm

2.0 Approval of October 8, 2004 minutes: moved, seconded, and approved.

3.0 Approval of Agenda: moved, seconded and approved, with a change suggested by Senate President Dave Beckett, to move 5.1.1 up, and to move 5.1.2 down, and with some additions to his report (see 5.16).

4.0 Post-Tenure (P-T) Review Ad Hoc Committee Report

The IHL requires that the P-T review policy be brought into compliance in two areas: the termination process, and an appeals process.

Senator Mary Lux presented the ad hoc committee’s work of modifying USM’s Post-Tenure (P-T) Review Policy to meet IHL compliance standards. Senator Myron Henry also presented a draft of revised and additional language related to tying P-T review sanctions and appeals directly to the termination of tenured faculty policy in the 2004 Faculty Handbook for Senate consideration. See attached drafts.

The ad hoc committee has added language to item 10 of the original document to add that sanctions may include termination under the inefficiency clause. In discussion of item 1 of the P-T review policy, Senators supported language stating that the P-T review process originates at the department level, is based on overall unsatisfactory department annual evaluations over a period of time, and further agreed that the appeal process for annual evaluations in the 2004 handbook was applicable to P-T review.

Related discussion by Senators about the proposed changes to P-T review concerned: The nature of departmental evaluations based on the professors’ stated goals
and objectives; the weighting of scholarly activities (research, teaching, service); what mechanisms will trigger P-T review interventions for unsatisfactory performance; the length of time before sanctions are imposed; the specificity of what an “overall unsatisfactory” evaluation means.

Senators generally agreed to use more precise language concerning the usage of “overall” to avoid diverse interpretations, and to try to standardize, as much as possible, the departmental faculty evaluation process. Senators strongly agreed that the core of the P-T review process is based upon annual reviews performed at the departmental level based on goals and objectives of the faculty.

Action on these changes will be taken at a special meeting, to be held on December 9, 2004, at 5:00pm in the Cook Library, room 123. Faculty were encouraged to share the proposed P-T review changes and document with their faculty for feedback prior to the December meeting.

5.0 Officer’s Reports

5.1 President

5.1.1 Introduction of New Senators

Tim Rehner, from the College of Health

Kay Harris, from the Gulf Coast

Jennifer Torres from the College of Arts and Letters

Will Watson from the Gulf Coast

5.1.2 Follow up on Gulf Coast Incident

Dr. Beckett has spoken to Dr. Stevenson, Dr. Grimes, and Dr. Pood about the Gulf Coast incident. Dr. Beckett’s report of the facts: On Thursday, October 7, 2004, Dr. Diane Stevenson was speaking to her class, and told the class that a significant number of classes on the Gulf Coast would be taught online, and use distance learning in the future. The information that she related to the students apparently came from a presentation Dr. Grimes gave to the Gulf Coast campus. Two students were worried about the increase in and move to distance learning, and these students purportedly talked to 2 Gulf Coast faculty members about it. The 2 G.C. faculty members reported the students’ concerns upwards, and the concern reached Dean Pood. Dr. Pood disagreed with what Dr. Stevens had purportedly said to her class about online and distance learning although he had not spoken to Dr. Stevenson himself. It was reported that various
administrators, including Dean Pood, in the College of the Arts and Letters left messages and tried to contact Dr. Stevenson, but they were unable to reach her. They gave the impression that she was difficult to reach. Dr. Stevenson said however, that she was out of town in NY that weekend and when she returned there were not any messages from administrators trying to reach her. Though Dr. Pood had not spoken to Dr. Stevenson about the students’ stated concerns, he asked Dr. Malone (Chief Operating Officer for the Gulf Coast campus) to visit Dr. Stevenson’s next class period and correct the information given to the students. On October 12 Dr. Malone and Mr. Richard Farley (Director of Customer Services) went to Dr. Stevenson’s classroom uninvited and spoke to her class without her permission. When Dr. Stevenson came to teach, she found the two administrators talking to her class. A heated discussion between Dr. Stevenson and Dr. Malone ensued in the hall. Later in the day Mr. Farley went to Dr. Stevenson’s next class and repeated the assertions that the Gulf Coast was not moving to “distance and online” courses. However, this second class had no idea what Mr. Farley was talking about since Dr. Stevenson had not spoken to this class about the distance education issue.

Dr. Beckett reported great concern about the Gulf Coast incident and presented his and faculty concerns to Dr. Grimes. Dr. Stevenson was indicted, tried and convicted of problematic behavior without being given the opportunity to defend herself. Further, the department chair, Dr. David Wheeler, was not given the opportunity to handle the situation. Dr. Grimes’ view of the matter was that it was not handled well. There is an agreement between Dr. Beckett and Dr. Grimes that in the future: 1) non-academic personnel will not enter classrooms uninvited and that specifically Dr. Malone and Mr. Farley will stay out of Gulf Coast classrooms unless there is a warranted emergency or invited, 2) if there is a problem with a faculty member the first contact with that faculty member should be their immediate supervisor in the academic chain of command. 3) Dr. Grimes will speak to faculty, staff, and students on the Gulf Coast campus about the future of online and distance learning.

Discussion among Senators focused on Dr. Stevenson and whether she had resigned because of the incident. It was stated by Senator Kay Harris that Dr. Stevenson had spoken with Dr. Wheeler in early October about possibly resigning in May 2005 for other reasons. But she had changed her mind on October 11th.

Discussion also addressed when immediate intrusive intervention by non-academic chain of command administrators might be necessary. These included emergency situations. Senators agreed that faculty members have the right to tell their side of any concerns that students bring to the administration. This was not done in the Gulf Coast Incident.

Most senators agreed that faculty members have the discretion to speak about non-classroom academic events happening in the campus community that may affect students, particularly when that information comes from the Provost.
In light of the Gulf Coast Incident, the Faculty Senate agreed that a special meeting should be called in December to pass a resolution that reflects the Senate’s and the faculty members’ extreme concern. The contents of the resolution were discussed. Senators identified these items for consideration: a) a personal apology to Dr. Stevenson, 2) reprimand for those who invaded the classroom, 3) clear sentiment that academic courtesy, policy and chain of command should be followed consistently, 4) Academic Council should be involved in and consulted about distant learning and online class plans in a meaningful way.

In a unanimous voice vote, the Academic Governance Committee, along with Dr. Beckett, was charged to write a draft resolution for consideration at a special December meeting.

5.1.3 IBM

A recent announcement by the University to partner with IBM for computers was discussed. President Beckett stated that faculty could still request and purchase non-IBM products. IBM’s problems with power supply was identified and discussed.

5.1.4 Latest on Awards Committee

5.1.5 Research Titles/Positions

Dr. Ed Jackson is the committee chair for a University Committee defining titles and promotion processes for non-tenure track, Research and Clinical faculty (i.e. Assistant Research Professor). Senators Myron Henry, Don Redalje, and Janice Thompson agreed to serve as reviewers of Dr. Jackson’s committees proposed policies.

5.1.6 Other

5.1.6.1 President Beckett reported that the IHL had asked USM to submit a revised report to them about how many faculty members were rated unsatisfactory in the P-T process. Deans met again regarding the P-T review report originally sent to IHL which reported that 18 faculty had been found unsatisfactory in P-T review. (President Beckett was not invited to this meeting.) The purpose of this meeting was to revise the report for the IHL. He stated that the “new” number of faculty undergoing the P-T process is markedly lower than 18. He further stated that if the number of faculty who received unsatisfactory on P-T Review exceeds zero, then an ad hoc meaning of unsatisfactory was used once again, resulting in another flawed report. The reason for this is that departments had not been part of the P-T review process. Discussion among senators involved whether there were any faculty names submitted on the “new” list and if there was, were those faculty notified of his or
her presence on this list. President Beckett will report more on this matter, as he
is able.

5.1.6.2 Two appointees were required from the Faculty Senate to serve on the
Faculty Handbook Committee. The Faculty Senate appointee is Senator Myron
Henry. Faculty member appointee, who is not a senator, is Dr. Michael
Forrester.

5.1.6.3 Senator Ray Folse’s term on the President’s Council (PC) is expiring; we
need a new representative from the Faculty Senate. President Dave Beckett and
the senate enthusiastically congratulated Senator Folse for the outstanding work
he has done on the PC.

Senator Anne Wallace was nominated, seconded and elected the new PC
representative from the Faculty Senate by unanimous acclamation.

5.1.6.4 A volunteer to serve as USM’s liaison to the Coalition on Intercollegiate
Athletics was called for. Senator Gerry Matson agreed to serve.

5.2  President-Elect

5.2.1  Provost Council Report – No report

5.3  Secretary

5.3.1  The secretary is traveling, the Secretary-Elect is substituting today.

5.4  Secretary-Elect

5.4.1  Status on Committees- Please check the Faculty Senate website for your
committee assignments.

5.4.2  FAR is going to be available in People Soft on November 20, 2004. It is due
January 7th. Beginning March 1, 2005, the system will be continuously
accessible through December 30, so real-time updates can occur. Ask your
college technology officers if you need further instructions.
6.0 Forum Speakers:

6.1 Kay Wall spoke on library financial status. Her presentation illustrated consistently declining funds, along with the increased efficiencies she states has allowed the USM Libraries to remain viable. She reported that $130,000 is needed right now to maintain the status quo. Discussion ensued between Dr. Wall and the senators about what sort of help is needed, why student fees are not being utilized to assist the library budget, how to raise private monies, and how research grant indirect funds may be used to sustain the library. The Faculty Senators were in agreement that the library is an essential service for teaching and research, and attention to its funding is important for the University’s missions.

6.2 Carrie Gray spoke about the Catalyst, an undergraduate student research journal. She stated that students could publish original research reports, papers on service learning, internship and laboratory experiences, art commentary, critiques, etc. She encouraged faculty to make students aware of this publishing opportunity. Senators asked Ms. Gray questions about how to submit, co-authorship issues with faculty, and copywriting of articles.

7.0 Committee Reports

7.1 Academic and Governance – Senator Duhon had no report

7.2 Administration and Faculty Evaluations - Ray Folse

Senator Folse explained that evaluations of administrative personnel are being prepared, and that the Provost’s office will send them out to all faculty. Dr. J.T. Johnson processes the surveys, and the results are given to the Faculty Senate President. Administrative evaluations go to the person evaluated and the supervisor of the administrator. For instance, Dr. Thames’ evaluation results will be sent to the IHL, and the Provost’s evaluation to Dr. Thames.

7.3 Awards - Dr. Beckett, Alan Thompson

7.3.1 Dr. Beckett reported that the Provost and Deans met about Faculty Awards, without asking for Faculty Senate input. Dr. Beckett called Dr. Grimes. It appears that each College will be giving faculty awards, and that the Faculty Senate will be awarding some faculty awards. Dr. Beckett is pursuing funding from the Provost office for the awards to be determined by the senate. Dr. Beckett assured the senate that he would, along with Alan Thompson, monitor the situation. The aim is to keep the Faculty Senate involved in awarding University-wide awards. In the long run, there should be more faculty awards. Senator Margot Hall reported that HEADWAE award recipient was selected with Faculty Senate Awards Committee involvement over the summer, but has not been formally announced yet. Senator Hall also reported that Dr. Cynthia Moore asked her if the awards committee worked well last year, and Senator Hall reported that it did.

7.4 Budget - Senator Myron Henry, No report
7.5 Constitution and Bylaws- No report

7.6 Faculty Welfare- No report

7.7 Government Relations- J. Pat Smith reminded us that the State Legislature was discussing bond bills to fund education.

7.8 Technology- No report

7.9 Elections- No report.

7.10 Ad hoc committee reports and liaison reports

7.10.1 Merit Pay- No report

7.10.2 Recruitment and Retention No report

7.10.3 President’s Council (PC)

The Senate appreciates the fine service Senator Ray Folse provided as a Faculty Senate Representative of the PC. Senator Folse reports that a new PC issue is the handling of department carry-over funds.

7.10.4 AAUP- No report

7.10.5 Transportation- No report

8.0 Old Business

8.1 Update on Provost Search

8.1.1 Susan Hubble reported that the Provost Search was underway with 28 applicants, and they were in the process of evaluating applications. In December they will begin narrowing the list. She assured the senate that the committee was committed to finding quality candidates, and that expediency was not the major principle guiding the search. Dr. Thames has asked Dr. Grimes to find another Gulf Park/Gulf Coast representative for the committee. If any Gulf Coast faculty members are interested, they should contact Dr. Grimes. Senator Hubble also stated that the committee was working on a fair system of evaluation of the candidates when they meet with University staff, faculty, administrators and students.

9.0 New Business

10.0 Other

10.1 Dr. Beckett reported that there is an upcoming meeting with Dr. Thames, and that he will ask about faculty hires for the coming year.

10.2 Dr. Beckett was congratulated on his huge win in the USM Faculty-Staff Golf Tournament. He will be going on to Las Vegas in early December to continue in the competition.
11.0 Adjournment

11.1 The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Members Present and Those Represented by Proxy (in parentheses): 41/43 Senators present or represented by proxy.

College of the Arts and Letters

Joe Brumbeloe
Amy Chasteen-Miller
Phillip Gentile
Kate Greene
Stephen Judd
John Meyer (Philippe Gentile)
Bill Powell
Bill Scarborough (Amy Young)
Paula Smithka
Jennifer Torres
Anne Wallace

USM Gulf Coast

Allisa Beck
J. Pat Smith
Wil Watson
Kay Harris
College of Business
James Crockett (David Duhon)
David Duhon
Bill Gunther
Laurie Babin

Coastal and Marine Sciences
Chet Rakocinski
Don Redalje

University Libraries
Mary Beth Applin (Barton Spencer)
Barton Spencer

College of Education and Psychology
Taralynn Hartsell
Melanie Norton
Joe Olmi
Janice Thompson
Dan Tingstrom

College of Health
Amal Khoury (Margot Hall)

Bonnie Harbaugh

Susan Hubble (Margot Hall)

Mary Frances Nettles (Myron Henry)

Tim Rehner

Mary Lux

College of Science and Technology

David Beckett

Randy Buchanan

Peter Butko

Raymond Folse

Mary Dayne Gregg

Myron Henry

Gerald Mattson

Absent: Gail Russell, Alan Thompson