



ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE

Uncorrected Minutes of February 12, 2021

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular monthly meeting in the Parker Ballroom of the Hunter Henry Center and via Webex at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, February 12, 2021.

Members absent and excused were: Cecelia Cook, Darrin Dodds, Charles Freeman, Derek Marshall, Angela Savage, Paul Spurlin, and Samuel Winer.

The meeting was called to order by Senate President Rebecca Robichaux-Davis.

President Robichaux-Davis asked for any corrections to the minutes of the January 15, 2021 meeting. Hearing no corrections, President Robichaux-Davis accepted the minutes as presented.

GUESTS

Dr. Dana Franz, Chair, University Committee on Courses and Curricula

Dr. Tracey Baham, Director, Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness

Dr. Franz and Dr. Baham gave a PowerPoint presentation on the national articulation system, Interstate Passport. This presentation is included at the end of these minutes in Appendix 1. Dr. Franz said she is asking that the Faculty Senate adopt a resolution supporting Mississippi State University moving forward with joining the Interstate Passport group.

Senator Williams said he does not feel he knows enough about the program to vote on a resolution at this point. President Robichaux-Davis asked if Senator Williams would like to have a Town Hall Discussion on this matter before the March Faculty Senate Meeting. Senator Williams replied he would be in favor of a Town Hall discussion of the matter or sending the proposal through a standing committee of the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Franz said the current working groups are finding the student learning outcomes of Interstate Passport to be in alignment with the student learning outcomes suggested by their professional organizations. She said Interstate passport has aligned their criteria to the various national accrediting bodies.

Senator Zuckerman said she is in support of holding a Town Hall discussion on this subject. She said she has been involved with the working group for the social sciences and her understanding of this has evolved through her involvement.

Senator Miller asked if this would allow any student to take any class on campus as long as it applied to the criteria. Dr. Franz replied it is hoped that programs will look at what will be beneficial to their students, but students could take a wide variety of courses. She said it is desired to move away from the cafeteria style we currently have for gen ed. Senator Miller asked what that means for class sizes and prerequisites. Dr. Franz said class sizes are something that is still being considered. She said a signature assignment could be anything from a part of an exam, an open-ended question, a speech, and so on. If we do it correctly, it could spread our students across all of our gen ed courses.

Senator Miller asked if departments would have the ability to mark specific classes as gen ed classes. Dr. Franz replied if there is a good reason to specify which gen ed courses students should take, those courses may be specified. Senator Miller asked if a student from another major wanted to complete one of their gen ed requirements in an Interior Design course, could the Department of Interior Design earmark specific courses for gen ed, or could the student take any of the courses offered by the Department of Interior Design. Dr. Franz replied it would be up to the program areas to determine, but if there are parts of the gen ed curriculum in which it does not matter, that should be specified as well.

Senator Pelaez asked what would happen with the foreign languages. She asked if it would depend on the department or college. Dr. Franz said foreign language will still be a part of humanities and every student will need to take 6 hours of humanities. It is up to the program areas to determine which courses meet the humanities requirement. She said she hopes this initiative provides a framework for the program areas to think strategically and critically about what they are asking their students to take for their general education.

Senator Pelaez asked if this has been successful at other universities. She said something similar was done in Buffalo, NY and it was disastrous for small departments. Dr. Baham said this began with Western Accreditation which is similar to SACSCOC. This has been done at schools on the west coast for many years and is just now starting to spread out across the country creating national articulation agreements. It has been very successful helping students to transfer more easily across programs so colleges are not creating something too specific and

tying it into something like a college specific first-year experience course. A student attending a university which is a part of Interstate Passport can reasonably assume they are getting an equivalent education in these courses which would transfer seamlessly to other institutions. The statistics show student performance increased when they transferred between institutions who were in a similar kind of program versus those who were not in a program like this.

Senator Williams asked if, as an example, this shows what a third level Spanish education should look like. President Robichaux-Davis replied it was not that specific. She said it described broad categories. Senator Williams asked if this would change any of our current curriculum requirements. President Robichaux-Davis replied it would not.

Senator Miller said she is in a small department and they struggle with an overflow of their own students. She said she is concerned if other students across campus take these courses and it creates a competition for seats. Dr. Franz said that this would not require these courses to be offered as gen ed courses. The department can determine this.

Senator Pelaez said she wanted to make sure she was clear that none of the current requirements of the College of Arts & Sciences would have to change as a result of adopting this program. President Robichaux-Davis replied Senator Pelaez is correct, a requirement such as third level language would not have to change.

Senator Pelaez asked what this will gain us. Dr. Franz replied we will be able to say that our gen ed classes are aligned to the notional recommendations of what students should be learning in the particular categories. Discipline specific requirements are not affected by this. Dr. Franz said this is just clarifying what the learning outcome of the different gen ed categories looks like.

Senator King asked if some of the courses currently approved for gen ed could possibly be removed. President Robichaux-Davis replied it was possible. Dr. Franz said every course which is currently gen ed will look at either how to align to the rubric or they will decide to not be offered as gen ed anymore.

Senator Davis made a motion to end discussion until the Town Hall meeting. Secretary Follett seconded the motion.

The motion to end the discussion passed by unanimous electronic vote.

Dr. Thomas Bourgeois, Interim Associate Vice President for Student Success

Dr. Bourgeois said he is engaging in a listening tour engaging different groups about what the student success process should look like at Mississippi State. He said there is discussion about what does student success mean at MSU. There are metrics such as retention and graduation

rates, but it goes way beyond these. Job placement rates, student satisfaction, alumni feedback, and career services are just some other metrics to be considered. Information is being gathered from all constituency groups regarding student success. Addressing student success is something that is needed at MSU, especially when you look at trends in freshman and sophomore retention and graduation rates. He said he is meeting with these groups to gauge what our metrics should be moving forward. He said he will also be addressing other areas identified by the Task Force such as advising and FYE courses. Student success models need to be integrated into courses. Dr. Bourgeois said he welcomes feedback and will answer questions.

President Robichaux-Davis said there will be faculty listening sessions for faculty to be able to provide feedback to Dr. Bourgeois about student success.

Dr. David Shaw, Provost and Executive Vice President

Dr. Shaw said the re-evaluation of gen ed is something that is critically important. He said the more he understands about what the Interstate Passport initiative is going to do, the more excited he is about it. Dr. Shaw said he is not surprised that the senators would like to hold a Town Hall discussion to deliberate on it further. We need to be very deliberative about this and understand the reach and ramifications of these decisions. As we go through this process, we need to think about what are the learning outcomes that we have in mind for our gen ed program at Mississippi State. He said much of the feedback so far is that we are trying to develop critical thinking, mathematical literacy, and critical writing skills. Dr. Shaw said we need to thoroughly discuss this and determine how to move forward in a way that fits Mississippi State University. He asked that faculty ask any question they might have so we can arrive at a unified decision.

Dr. Shaw said Dr. Bourgeois is doing a lot of listening right now. He said there is a lot of difference in thought on this campus about what student success means, approaches that need to be taken, and the outcomes expected. We are not where we should be in terms of our graduation rates, retention rates, and all the factors we use to gauge student success. Dr. Shaw asked the senators to be thinking about how we can help our students achieve the outcomes we want them to have not only in terms of graduation and retention, but by success in life.

Dr. Shaw said the recording of the General Faculty Meeting and the results of the various Task Forces are available online. He encouraged the senators to look at them. The Online Education Task Force is expecting to have a final report next week and the Faculty Evaluation Task Force should be presenting their report either next week or the week after. Dr. Shaw said he is really pleased with the caliber of thought and great faculty involvement on all these Task Forces.

Dr. Shaw said the University is monitoring the weather situation for next week very carefully. He said he wants faculty to be prepared to potentially go to all online instruction if the weather affects our normal operation. This would allow us to maintain continuity and keep everyone safe.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

Greetings, Senators! I hope your Spring semester has been productive and successful so far in terms of research, teaching, and service. While we initially saw a spike in the number of COVID cases across our campus, the number of cases seems to have leveled off as we continue to employ the mitigation strategies that have been successful in the past.

Many of the university standing committees on which I serve have met this past month, but weekly COVID-19 meetings have continued to be at the forefront of my work this past month. We have been in discussions about adherence to the face covering policy while inside buildings, particularly in the student union and new signage has been posted concerning this. We have also been in discussion about study abroad opportunities for the summer, as well as summer camps hosted on our campus.

Besides attending meetings of the university standing committees on which I serve and the COVID-19 future planning committee, I also have met with Thomas Bourgeois during this past month to discuss faculty input concerning new student success initiatives. Additionally, I have been asked to meet monthly with Jim Dunne concerning his new role with faculty affairs and development. Our first meeting will be February 17th. I am also serving on a new committee formed by Dr. Shaw which has been charged with developing a new student survey of teaching instrument. Dr. Eric Moyen is chairing that committee. We are hoping to provide Dr. Shaw with a new student survey of teaching instrument by the end of the semester.

I will be attending the 2021 Annual COIA (Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics) Meeting on February 19th and 20th. The COIA is an organization representing the elected faculty governance bodies of NCAA Division 1 universities in activities that are related to the administration and governance of intercollegiate athletics. The mission of the COIA is to promote academic integrity within member universities and represent the interests of the faculties, student-athletes, and non-athlete students in issues related to college sports. The main topics of this year's meeting will be Name, Image and Likeness legislation, sports gambling issues, and diversity and social justice in athletics.

To celebrate Mississippi State's 143rd birthday, we will launch our Twitter account on February 28, 2021. If you are on Twitter, please follow us. Our Twitter handle will be @msstateRHFacSen. Mondays will be "Motivation Monday" in which we will tweet a motivational quote to help followers get off to a good start to their week. Tuesdays will be "True Talk Tuesday" in which

we will tweet a quote from someone on campus (a student leader, staff member, faculty member, administrator) about what’s going on in their corner of MSU that week. On Wellness Wednesdays, we will tweet a wellness tip to help followers get over hump day. On Throwback Thursdays, we will tweet about what was going on that week on our campus a year to 20 or more years ago. Then, on Faculty Fridays, we will tweet about individual Senators and the work in which they are engaging. Additionally, we will tweet about upcoming meetings in terms of guest speakers and AOPs or other business that will be brought forward. Links to the Faculty Senate Website will also be included.

Status of AOPs:

The following AOPs are not under review to the best of my knowledge, but are past the four-year review cycle:

AOP	Title	Date
10.05	Nepotism	12/5/2012
10.08	Classroom Regulations	4/26/2016
11.11	Auditing a Class	11/3/2016
13.06	Sabbatical Leave for Faculty Members of State IHL	6/9/2014
13.12	Summer School Teaching	3/28/2016
31.02	Legal Resident Status	2/5/2013

Reports from Committees on which I Serve:

Athletic Council – This council met on January 13th. Christine Jackson gave us a report from Athletic Academics. The overall student-athlete grade point average for the previous semester was 3.16 which was the 7th semester in a row of an overall grade point average higher than 3.0. All teams had a team grade point average over 3.0 except football. Men’s and women’s golf teams had the highest grade point averages for men’s teams and women’s teams, respectively. Over half of our student athletes (268) made the Bulldog Honor Roll. We won the Halbrook Award for the highest female graduation rate for MS Public Universities. Bracky Brett gave a report from the Compliance Office through which he shared that his office is back to holding monthly meetings for all coaches and staff. Brett Harvey spoke at their January meeting. There is pending NCAA legislation that will open up the one-time transfer exception for sports that do not currently have that (football, basketball, baseball). MS legislators will be drafting a Name, Image & Likeness bill which will be introduced during this next legislative session. John Cohen reported that 42 student athletes earned their SEC Graduate Patch at the December 2020 Graduation.

COVID-19 Future Planning Task Force – In response to a question brought up at our January RHFS meeting, the following statement concerning driving while “attending class” was made

through a Cowbell Well message sent out on January 29th: “Students enrolled in synchronous online or hybrid classes are reminded that driving while using your video camera to join class is very dangerous. All forms of distracted driving can lead to injurious or deadly results. It also likely means you are unable to engage meaningfully in the class session. If you are in need of a location to join your class remotely, we have identified spaces all around campus where you can do so quietly and safely.” We have recently received concerns from employees in the Student Union about students standing in food lines and not wearing masks. We are addressing this through new signage that indicates in order to be served you must be wearing a mask, as well as through increased monitoring of individuals in the Student Union. We have received 33 proposals for summer camps and conferences so far. Approval of these will be on a one-by-one basis. Our weekly meetings will continue through May 2021 and beyond if needed. We are in discussions about guidelines, requirements, and protocols for summer 2021 study abroad programs, both faculty-led and provider-led. Other information from our meetings continues to be provided through emailed updates from the Provost and Cowbell Well emails sent from the Division of Student Affairs. If you have any feedback and/or thoughts regarding our current COVID-19 situation and protocols, please send them my way or communicate them directly to Drs. Hyatt and Shaw.

Executive Council – This council met on January 25th. Julie Jordan presented OP 70:04, Export Control. There were no substantive changes; the only changes were the addition of language to clarify what the OP already stated. The OP was accepted as presented. Dr. Shaw presented five AOPs which all passed: AOP 10.14, The Adoption and Sale of Textbooks and Other Instructional Materials; AOP 12.01, Academic Add-Drop Policy; AOP 12.17, Undergraduate Academic Fresh Start; AOP 12.22, Undergraduate Student Course Load; and AOP 13.03, Responsibilities in Instruction and Curriculum.

Executive Enrollment Management Committee – This committee met on January 29, 2021. We are continuing to see a slight increase in enrollment as compared to the spring 2020 enrollment. We had 2,322 students take advantage of the Winter Session. Both Meridian and Campus 5, our online campus, are both seeing increases in enrollment. We have six new approved online programs – one bachelor’s degree, four master’s degrees and one doctoral degree with several other degree programs and certificate programs in the process of getting approved. Freshman applications for fall 2021 are up as compared to fall 2020. Graduate school enrollment is up almost 180% from spring 2020. COVID-19 seems to have positively impacted graduate enrollment.

Game Day and Special Events – The committee has not met since my last report.

Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council – This council has not met yet. Our first meeting will be Thursday, February 18th.

Information Technology Council –This council met on February 2nd. “Lightning Round Interviews” have begun for the Director of Enterprise Information Systems. On January 14th, our system went offline due to a fire in the basement at the Butler Guest House. It was down for 3 hours. On January 28th, the MSU entire network was down for 3 hours. Employees were notified about this outage via email. Our Network Refresh is now being scheduled for academic buildings and administration buildings with most of the work being completed on Fridays. Faculty who will be impacted by this will be notified ahead of time so that they can plan accordingly. The Canvas to Banner grade transfer function will go live on February 16th. ITS is offering several training sessions for faculty on how to transfer grades from Canvas to Banner. OPA is working to redesign MSU ID cards. The new design will likely be horizontal.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee – This committee has not met since my last report.

Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee – This committee has not met since my last report.

Sustainability Committee – This committee has not met since my last report.

Senator Gregory asked for the director of sustainability to address the senate. President Robichaux-Davis replied she would extend an invitation.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE VICE PRESIDENT

Academic Deans Council –

January 2021 meeting was scheduled for January 21st.

- AOP 13.05 Faculty Grievance Procedures
- Meeting was canceled but a vote was still called for the AOP via email.

February 2021 meeting is scheduled for February 17th.

Community Engagement Committee –

Communicated with Dr. Kathleen Thomas. The committee is being restructured and looks to get back to a regular meeting cycle later in the Spring 2021 semester.

Committee on Campus Access –

First meeting of the Spring 2021 semester was held on February 1st.

- Introduction of new/additional members to the committee.
- Discussion of the budget (funding formula) for the committee to use at its discretion.
- Mr. Dumas and Mr. Ramsey detailed the ADA compliant projects and access areas that have been constructed over the past few years.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee –

No additional meeting since December 2020.

Textbook Committee –

In AOP 10.14, one of the things we all voted to include was the location of the current textbook committee. It should be listed in the Directory of Standing Committees page on the MSU website. <https://www.msstate.edu/directory/standing-committees?show=member>. Type in Textbook and here you go! <https://www.msstate.edu/directory/standing-committees?criteria=committee&term=Textbook>

Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery Committee –

The committee chairs look to host a meeting in Mid-February.

FACULTY DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic Affairs

1. AOP 12.04 Final Examination Policy

Secretary Follett, on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.04 Final Examination Policy.

Senator Tagert asked if the test taking time can still be limited in Canvas even though the test must be available over the specified window. Secretary Follett replied the time available to complete the exam once accessed can be limited.

Senator Pelaez asked if online tests can be given outside the normal meeting time of a synchronous class. Secretary Follett replied a synchronous course is limited to holding the exam during the specified time unless the proper approvals have been granted as outlined in this policy.

The motion to accept AOP 12.04 Final Examination Policy as presented passed by unanimous electronic vote.

2. AOP 12.09 Class Attendance and Reporting Absences

Secretary Follett, on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented the report on AOP 12.09 Class Attendance and Reporting Absences.

Senator Pelaez asked if adding the word “reasonable” will allow the students to challenge attendance policies more easily. Secretary Follett replied “reasonable” is the purview of the

instructor and may actually strengthen the position of the instructor. Instructors must adhere to the restrictions outlined in the policy, but the attendance policy is reasonable if the instructor says it is.

The motion to accept AOP 12.09 Class Attendance and Reporting Absences passed by majority electronic vote.

Ancillary Affairs No Report

Charter & Bylaws

1. Faculty Senate Reapportionment

Senator Fontenot, on behalf of the Charter & Bylaws Committee, presented the reapportionment report. No seat redistribution is recommended.

The motion to accept the reapportionment report as presented passed by unanimous electronic vote.

Faculty Affairs

1. Letter of Request: Teaching Loads, Online Teaching: RE: AOP 13.23 Faculty Workload

Senator Sherman-Morris, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, presented the report on the Letter of Request. She explained the committee feels modifications to AOP 13.23 Faculty Workload address the concerns in the Letter of Request.

Senator Pelaez asked who decides the workloads. Senator Sherman-Morris said there is other language in the policy which states that this is not just a department head decision. She said the added language ensures there is something in writing which describe how workload is affected. Senator Pelaez asked who writes the internal guidance. Senator Sherman-Morris replied the policy does not describe this, but there are probably different procedures in place for different departments and colleges.

Senator Memili thanked the committee for considering this change. He said that shifting the appointment of faculty has an effect on research productivity and teaching.

The motion to accept the report on the Letter of Request and the modifications to AOP 13.23 Faculty Workload as presented passed by majority electronic vote.

Student Affairs No Report

University Resources No Report

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Senator Sherman-Morris said Faculty Senate approved AOP 13.22 Guidelines for Adjunct Faculty, Visiting Faculty, Visiting Scholar, and Visiting Executive Appointments at a previous meeting. The policy was reviewed by Legal Counsel and they struck a sentence the Faculty Senate added and stated we are not allowed to promise state resources. She said the Faculty Affairs committee discussed the removal of this sentence and decided the sentence is not essential to the policy.

Senator Sherman-Morris, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, made a motion to reconsider AOP 13.22 Guidelines for Adjunct Faculty, Visiting Faculty, Visiting Scholar, and Visiting Executive Appointments with the sentence in question removed.

Senator Williams asked if the issue is that we may not agree to give resources or we just may not commit this to writing. President Robichaux-Davis said there are guidelines on how we appropriate state resources. We can provide resources if doing so adheres to these regulations. Senator Sherman-Morris said we may not promise resources.

The motion of the Faculty Affairs Committee to approve AOP 13.22 with the sentence in question stricken passed by unanimous electronic vote.

Senator Pelaez asked if contracts with Visiting Scholars can contain promises of compensation and other assets such as office space. President Robichaux-Davis replied departments can still include these terms when the resources are available. She said we cannot have policy which requires all departments on campus provide the same types of things or say we are going to do anything.

Secretary Follett made a motion to adjourn. Vice President Barrett seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn passed by unanimous electronic vote at 3:45 p.m.

Submitted for correction and approval.

Randy Follett, Secretary

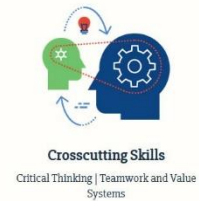
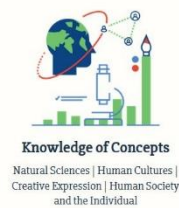
Jason Cory, Administrative Assistant II

GENERAL EDUCATION UPDATE

DR. DANA FRANZ & DR. TRACEY BAHAM

1

OPPORTUNITY FOR INTERSTATE PASSPORT



Excerpt from Oral Communication Rubric Draft

Category 4: Preparation for Performance	Proficient	Emerging	Inadequate
Selects topic that is salient and relevant to audience	Topic selected is interesting and relevant for the audience.	Topic selected is somewhat interesting and mildly relevant for the audience.	Topic selected is not interesting or relevant to the audience.
Selects and critically evaluates appropriate materials	Selects relevant support materials. Tracks to the original sources for key concepts and data.	Selects some supporting material, yet lacks sense of clear citations and overall support.	Does not select supporting material and lacks clear sense of citations and overall support.

IMPLICATIONS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION

Adjustments that will be necessary:

Oral Communication

Fine Arts is transformed to **Creative
Discovery**

Teamwork*

Critical Thinking*

*One course may fulfill a major category
AND Teamwork or Critical Thinking

3

CALL TO ACTION

- Interstate Passport is an opportunity to make general education more flexible for transfer students and benchmarks our courses with national learning outcomes.
- **Need a resolution from Faculty Senate to move forward with Interstate Passport.**