



ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE

Uncorrected Minutes of March 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, March 12, 2021.

Members absent and excused were: Allison Eddy, Cecelia Cook, Kimberly Kelly and Samuel Winer.

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

President Robichaux-Davis said one year ago our Faculty Senate meeting was cancelled due to the global pandemic. On March 27th history was made when we held the first Virtual Faculty Senate meeting using Webex. She thanked past President Randy Follett for his leadership during such unexpected times. She also thanked the administration for their leadership throughout the past year. There was no instruction manual on how to do what we have done. The MSU family has been able to do what we hoped to do. She asked that the senators and guests reflect on the past year during a moment of silence. A moment of silence was observed.

President Robichaux-Davis asked for any corrections to the minutes of the February 12, 2021 meeting. Hearing no corrections, President Robichaux-Davis accepted the minutes as presented.

GUESTS

Dr. Mark Keenum, University President

Dr. Keenum said it is hard to believe we are over half-way through the spring semester. There are five weeks left in the semester with classes ending on April 19th and final exams beginning on April 22nd. Spring commencement ceremonies will be in-person on April 29th and 30th. Dr.

Shaw and Dr. Dickerson have been working very hard to plan the ceremonies. They will look very similar to the fall ceremonies.

Dr. Keenum said the state revenues are continuing to do extremely well. The February revenues were over \$54 million over estimates. Every month this fiscal year has recognized revenues significantly over estimates. Year to date, state revenues are over \$500 million over estimates.

Dr. Keenum said he is spending a lot of time meeting with state legislators. He recently met with Speaker of the House, Phillip Gunn; the Appropriations Chairman, Chairman Reed; Ways and Means Chairman, Chairman Lamar; Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman for IHL, Jim Beckett; and many other key leaders. Dr. Keenum said he has been communicating our financial position and reminding them of the important role that this university and all IHL institutions play to serve our state. If there was ever a time when the state of Mississippi needed to make a significant investment in this outstanding economic engine serving our state, it is now. The legislative leadership is strongly in favor of pay raises for k-12 teachers. Dr. Keenum said he strongly supports this. He said he has reminded our state leaders that the employees of Mississippi State University need a pay raise too. This is the time they need to invest in the people of the institutions for the outstanding work that we are doing. Dr. Keenum said a firm examined the economic impact that Mississippi State University has in the state of Mississippi. He said he felt their estimate was conservative at just under \$2 billion per year. Tens of thousands of jobs are generated directly or indirectly by MSU. One out of every 55 jobs in the state were created because of this University. Every dollar invested in MSU generates a return to the people of Mississippi of \$2.50. Dr. Keenum said he reminds our leaders that over the past 5 years our budget has been cut over 14.5% while the demands on our services, the demands of enrollment growth we have experienced, an increase in graduates, an increase in research dollars being generated, and all that we are doing to serve our constituents all across the state of Mississippi continually increases. Dr. Keenum said he has been very direct with his message to legislators and will continue to do so for the remainder of the budgetary session. He said he will be meeting with members of our Senate leadership including the Appropriations Committee Chair, Finance Committee Chair, and our sub-committee Chair. He will also be meeting with the Lieutenant Governor next week. Dr. Keenum said he has and will continue to spread the message that it is time to invest in higher education in the state of Mississippi.

Dr. Keenum said although the state revenues are \$500 million over estimates, the onset of the pandemic allowed for Mississippians to defer their state income taxes. The revenues from these deferred payments represent a good portion of the surplus but does not count as recurring budget dollars. The amount of recurring revenue is not known at this point. Dr.

Keenum said if half of the surplus was non-recurring funds, we would still have \$250 million to invest in our state. He said he will be aggressive in his messaging to our state leaders.

Dr. Keenum said at the General Faculty meeting he asked for patience with regard to sabbatical leave. We have 33 faculty who applied for six month leave and two that applied for one year sabbatical leave. He said he was not permitted to approve sabbaticals. This issue began in the summer of 2020 when one of our sister institutions was sued by one of their faculty members over the compensation the faculty member thought they should receive over sabbatical. This institution did not compensate sabbatical leave as Mississippi State and several other IHL schools do. The staff attorneys for IHL and the outside counsel for that university asked the Attorney General for an opinion on how we administer and compensate sabbatical leave. A staff attorney at the Attorney General's Office sent a memo that supported the way the university was compensating sabbatical leave according to the state statute. Dr. Keenum said this brought into question the way we and several other IHL institutions handle sabbatical leave. We have administered and compensated sabbatical leave the same way for at least four decades. A legal brief prepared by staff attorneys for several institutions. He said the brief was very well prepared and stated the statute is very clear and unambiguous and we are in compliance with the statute. On January 31st, Dr. Keenum received a phone call from Dr. Rankins while he was in the process of reviewing sabbatical requests. Dr. Rankins explained the situation with the sister institution and instructed him to not approve any sabbatical leave requests until the legal matter has been resolved. None of the IHL institutions except the university in question were briefed on the situation until this time. Dr. Keenum was asked by the other IHL institutions to speak to the board about the approval of sabbatical leave requests. He requested time with the IHL board during the February meeting. He spoke to the board in Executive Session and explained the issues and answered questions from the board. The board wants to make sure they are operating in accordance with the laws and does not want to do anything that may not be in alignment with the law. Dr. Keenum said he understands their desire to be comfortable with their decision. He reached out to the state Attorney General's Office for an opinion on the matter and hopes to have an opinion that we are in alignment with state law to present to the board at next week's meeting. Dr. Keenum said he also asked the board to grant him permission to approve the sabbatical requests for this year so they could be vetted by the IHL staff and ready to approve in the event that the board is in a position to approve them. This request was approved. Dr. Keenum said he also told the board if he had known about this legal issue earlier, he could have worked with lawmakers to amend the statute for clarity. January 31st is past all of the requisite legislative deadlines for the session. Dr. Keenum said his message to the board is that we have handled sabbatical leave this way for decades and so have our sister schools across the Southeastern Conference. We are in line with the state statute and our practice is the institutionalized manner for administering

sabbatical leave. Dr. Keenum said he is going to keep appealing to the board and is hopeful we will receive an opinion from the Attorney General.

Dr. Keenum said we have received an allotment of the Pfizer vaccine. These will be administered to our employees. Dr. Keenum said he asked the Governor to include university employees in the next phase of eligibility in the state. The Governor said he agreed that university employees should be included in the next phase regardless of age and expressed his interest in allowing everyone to be eligible to receive the vaccine within the recommendations of the manufacturers. Vaccinations on campus will begin next Tuesday for eligible employees. Dr. Keenum said he told the Governor that we can take care of our employees and students if we can receive a supply of vaccine. He said he hopes the restrictions are expanded and we receive a sufficient supply to vaccinate everyone on campus. The MSU Horse Park is also available as a vaccination site. Dr. Keenum requested that everyone who is eligible get vaccinated. President Biden said that he hoped by May 1st everyone would have the opportunity to get a vaccination and we could hold a celebration on July 4th. Dr. Keenum said he greatly appreciated his comments.

Senator Pelaez said she appreciated Dr. Keenum's efforts on sabbatical leave. She said it is imperative that we have it because we cannot have Research I status without it. She asked if there will be a mandate for students to be vaccinated and if there would be a strong advertising campaign supporting vaccination. Dr. Keenum said he agreed that a Research I university has to have a strong and robust sabbatical program. He said he explained to the board that sabbatical leave is faculty development and that it enhances faculty skill sets and enriches the university. It benefits our students, research prowess, reputation, and prestige. Dr. Keenum said the University will promote the vaccine as aggressively as we can. He said he could envision multiple shot clinics being set up around campus as we do for flu shots. He said our legal team said Mississippi law and IHL Board policies require certain vaccinations, but it does not include this vaccination. Until either state law or IHL policy changes we cannot legally require this vaccination. We also cannot require employees to be vaccinated, but we will highly encourage it. He said the University will also target parents to help encourage their children to get vaccinated.

Dr. Julie Jordan, Vice President for Research and Economic Development

Dr. Jordan said the National Science Foundation rankings for fiscal year 19 were recently released. Mississippi State University improved in almost all categories on our record \$264 million of expenditures and research. We recently submitted our fiscal year 20 results to the NSF and our research expenditures grew roughly 6% to almost \$280 million. We need to keep growing and we need to grow at a greater rate than other institutions to improve our rankings.

She thanked the faculty for their work in research and their creative endeavors that foster the ongoing growth in research at MSU.

Dr. Jordan said as Dr. Keenum stated our impact on the state economy is almost \$2 billion. She said this conservative estimated is based on a net impact using a counter-factual methodology. The research institution that performed the analysis looked at what would the net impact be if Mississippi State University did not exist. The entire detailed report will be available on the website next week. One of the findings of the report is that for every dollar students invest in MSU their incomes will increase \$3.30. Every dollar the state invests returns \$4.30. She said her office hosts seminars and tries to determine how to make better investments in the work that is happening to increase research productivity. Investments in patent costs have been increased by \$60,000 and we have seen an increase in the number of patent applications this year.

Dr. Jordan said her office is trying to make sure that the faculty have the research tools available that they need. Qualtrics and Stata have been added. She said although we have SPSS, we have learned there is an additional module which allows for imputation of missing data. We will be obtaining a university license for this module. She asked for faculty to provide feedback about the tools they would like to have so the options can be examined to determine if there is a broad need on campus. Symposium is now available. This tool allows you to host online research activities such as conferences and class projects. Dr. Jordan said as we start to hold more activities in-person, she would like faculty to think about how we can still use these tools. She said she feels it is a way to reach a broader audience including students and colleagues at other universities. Pivot is also being added. This will allow faculty to search against any number of variables or parameters to find funding opportunities. It will also allow faculty to identify colleagues with similar research interests to build teams for funding opportunities.

Dr. Jordan asked faculty to notify her office of any research or intellectual talks that will be held so they can include them in their weekly updates. She said she is appreciative of the library hiring a new data research librarian who is creating a new institutional data repository which should be online next week.

On March 25th, Dr. Sammy Kahn will be hosting a workshop for faculty interested in NSF career awards. Dr. Kahn is the Department Head of Electrical and Computer Engineering and has spent the last four years at the National Science Foundation as a program manager. We have had three career award winners announced in the last year and we have had 14 in the last ten years. She said she would love to increase these numbers. A seminar will be held this week on funding opportunities at the federal level. She said this will be hosted by Dr. Marty Fuller and herself.

Dr. Jordan said she is monitoring how priorities will change and how things will change under the new federal administration. Some of the priorities were forecasted when President Biden announced Dr. Eric Landers for the office of Science and Technology Policy. In an open letter to Dr. Landers from President Biden there were five questions: What can we learn from the pandemic in relation to science and technology; How can breakthroughs in science and technology create solutions to address climate change and propel market driven change starting with economic growth, improving health and growing jobs especially in communities that were left behind; How can the United States ensure that it is the world leader in technology and industries of the future and that we will be the leader in critical economic prosperity and national security areas especially related to competition with China; How do we guarantee that the fruits of science and technology are fully shared across America and all Americans. The benefits in science and technology remain unevenly distributed across racial, gender, economic and geographic lines. How can we make sure Americans from all backgrounds are drawn into both the creation and the rewards of science and technology; How can we ensure the long-term health of the science and technology of our country. She said these questions allow us to read into how some priorities will change in the federal funding landscape. Resilience is a term which will be used more and more. It is being used across all disciplines and in all sectors whether it is the health system, the environmental system, or the economic system. The terms data science and AI are also pervasive across all disciplines and all research areas. Dr. Jordan said the other thing that she does not see going away is the research security and protection of intellectual property from undue foreign influence.

Dr. Jordan said there are opportunities for funding in the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan. \$1.7 billion is earmarked to track variants of the Coronavirus. There is also \$600 million to the NSF with a lot of flexibility in the spending. One thing that is specified for the NSF funds is support for training the next generation of scientists and engineers. The plan also awards \$155 million to the National Institute of Standards and Technology to bolster the network of manufacturing research institutes. Manufacturing research institutes connect research institutions with manufacturers to promote economic development for the future. There will also be \$100 million to the Department of Education to fund research on how the pandemic is affecting learning and the consequences of remote learning. \$95 million is earmarked for the National Fish and Wildlife Service to help detect and prevent the introduction of zoonotic diseases. Dr. Jordan said she was encouraged to see that the stimulus package recognizes that the R&D sector was impacted and is willing to invest in science and technology efforts.

Mr. Cedric Gathings, Director of Strategic Planning and Implementation

Mr. Gathings said he is very excited to be back at Mississippi State University. He said when Dr. Shaw got his current position, he asked the question what can we do to take MSU from being good to great. We do some amazing work at MSU and we have some amazing students and

outstanding faculty and staff. Mr. Gathings said since he has come back, he has had the opportunity to meet with deans and vice presidents. He said he is currently in discussions with the deans to determine concerns with the plan previously shared with them. This plan created by Dr. Shaw and the vice presidents puts us ahead of other institutions and has positioned us to move our institution forward. Due to the pandemic, we are now doing things we previously said we couldn't. Mr. Gathings asked for grace with the release of the plan as he is in continuing discussion with deans and vice presidents and is reviewing the last three years of IE reports. He said he does not want to share information which may not be part of the final plan.

Mr. Gathings said through his discussions with Dr. Shaw, the vice presidents, and the deans he is creating the Transformational Plan. This will be a PowerPoint presentation outlining goals to help move us forward. He said the framework has been laid. We are entertaining hiring a branding firm to help take MSU's brand to the next step moving forward. A committee was formed called the Transformational Change Committee. Each vice president identified a member from their division to serve on this committee. Tracey Baham, Katy Echols and himself serve as the core members of the committee. The committee is working to identify strategies and approaches to move us forward. Mr. Gathings encouraged faculty to participate in the listening sessions which will be held by the firm contracted to help improve our branding. Tracey Baham will be facilitating data collection. She is working hard to ensure faculty and research are being represented well. Katy Echols is representing research. Mr. Gathings said he hopes to identify a firm in the next two weeks. Once the firm is identified, we will begin having discussions with faculty, staff, and students to start the developmental piece of the branding process.

Mr. Joseph Paige, Energy & Sustainability Coordinator

Mr. Paige thanked the senators for inviting him to address them. He said he has been with MSU for one year. Mr. Paige said he was an environmental engineer for the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality for seven years. He said his background is in solid waste, water, and some work in air. He gave a PowerPoint presentation which can be found at: https://www.facultysenate.msstate.edu/sites/www.facultysenate.msstate.edu/files/2021-04/Faculty%20Senate%20Paige%20Presentation%203-12-2021_0.pptx (if the link does not work, please copy and paste the address in your browser)

Senator Gregory asked how he is working with Sasaki Associates on the new master plan. She asked how Mr. Paige is working with them to move parking to the perimeter of campus and encouraging people to walk or use public transportation. She also asked if there will be an increase in public transportation including the addition of hydrogen busses or something similar. She asked how Mr. Paige is working with industry partners. She said there are faculty who work with sustainability and industrial partners who would be interested in partnering

with the University. Mr. Paige said there are many ways to improve transportation on campus. He said he welcomes ideas that faculty have on this subject. He would like to talk with Senator Gregory further to address the issues she raises. Senator Gregory asked if Mr. Paige has been invited to participate in the creation of the Master Plan. Mr. Paige replied he is involved in the planning process by providing usage information and goals. Senator Gregory asked if glass recycling will be brought back. Mr. Paige replied the event held each year was affected by the pandemic, but it will be brought back in the future.

Senator Tagert asked if Mr. Paige has been communicating with Facilities Management and Custodial Services about which buildings have the blue bags and which ones do not. She said her building they had blue bags but recently they have been replaced with clear bags. She asked if something had changed in the recycling program. Mr. Paige replied he meets with the custodial staff weekly. He said he will bring up Senator Tagert's concerns. He said the policy is to use the blue bags.

Dr. John Dickerson, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment and University Registrar

Dr. Dickerson said it is a pleasure being able to visit with the senators. He said Dr. Shaw asked him to address the academic calendar, commencement, and the strategic enrollment process.

Mr. Dickerson provided a PowerPoint presentation which can be found at:

https://www.facultysenate.msstate.edu/sites/www.facultysenate.msstate.edu/files/2021-04/FacultySenate%20Dickerson%20Presentation%203_12_21.pptx (if the link does not work, please copy and paste the address in your browser)

Senator Gregory asked when the schedule for the spring and maymester 2022 will be released. Dr. Dickerson replied the schedule will be released as soon as it is approved. It will be sent to the Calendar Committee for approval next week.

Senator Williams asked what the class length will be for the 10-day maymester. Dr. Dickerson said he believes the class length would be 3 hours and 45 minutes. He said it would be a 4 hour time block with breaks.

Senator King asked if doctoral students will be hooded during the ceremony. Dr. Dickerson said they would not be hooded during commencement. He said there is ongoing discussion if the individual colleges or the Graduate School should host a hooding ceremony.

Dr. David Shaw, Provost and Executive Vice President

Dr. Shaw said there were three task forces which examined new academic program development. The focus of these committees were data science, health science, and autonomous systems. All three committees have provided their reports and have formed

working groups to facilitate implementation. He said he is excited to see ideas coming forward to construct new certificate programs and create interdisciplinary, cross-college programs.

Dr. Shaw said the Evaluation of Teaching Task Force report has been posted. One of the recommendations was to create a subcommittee to develop a new evaluation instrument. Dr. Eric Moyen has agreed to chair this committee.

The Faculty Performance Evaluation Task Force should present their final report in the next couple of weeks.

The Non-Traditional Course Offerings Task Force was asked to look at winter intersession. We had a very successful winter intersession this year. There is currently conversation around minimesters or half-semester courses. These could help with student success. They would allow students the flexibility to withdraw from a course without violating scholarship requirements.

The Online Teaching Task Force report is complete and posted. One of the recommendations was to create a task force to examine the financial model. Dr. Shaw said he is starting to form this committee. He said many of the recommendations of the committee have already been implemented as a result of Covid-19.

Dr. Shaw said Ruffalo Noel Levitz has been hired to consult on recruiting at the request of the Recruiting Task Force. He said this is a great resource to provide us structure and advice on how to move forward.

Dr. Shaw said Thomas Bourgeois has hit the ground running in his new role of Interim Associate Vice President for Student Success. He said he is already seeing benefits in the way that Academic Affairs and Student Affairs are working together with Dr. Bourgeois serving as the liaison. Dr. Shaw said Dr. Bourgeois has held discussions with a number of faculty on student success.

He asked the senators to reach out to himself or the chairs of the task forces if they have any feedback on any of the topics.

Senator Gregory asked if there has been discussion about allowing faculty to determine when the student evaluations are released. She said she is asking because within her college a certain portion of the semester is set aside for final presentation of the design projects. The online system tends to release the evaluations during the presentation week when students are stressed out and not completely focused. She said participation rates have not been good since the paper evaluations which could be handed out in class are not available. Dr. Shaw replied there has not been any discussion about this as it has not been raised before. He asked Senator

Gregory to contact him with a synopsis of her request. He said he would like to provide any latitude available within our constraints.

Senator Eakin asked if the funding model for the winter intersession will be the same next year as it was this year. Dr. Shaw replied the winter intersession did not count against faculty's ability to teach classes in the summer. He said the intention is to continue to use the same process moving forward but we have to make sure to work through all of the legal and HR issues. He said he is confident that we will be able to continue this policy in the future.

Secretary Follett asked if the standing committee which would ordinarily review the student evaluation of teaching survey is involved with the subcommittee created under the Evaluation of Teaching Task Force. Dr. Shaw replied the subcommittee is separate from the standing committee, but the standing committee does have representation on the subcommittee. He said the recommendation of the task force was to have a mix of faculty and department heads to create the instrument. Dr. Moyer was identified for his role as chair due to his expertise in this area. He is familiar with the research material on the merits and the challenges of student evaluations.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

President Robichaux-Davis thanked the senators and all faculty for their tremendous dedication to Mississippi State University, which they continue to show. Earlier this week Faculty Senate hosted four listening sessions concerning the student success initiative and it was apparent how aware faculty are of the needs of our students. They also showed faculty's desire to help our students succeed. She said faculty have told her they are tired, but they continue to participate in these types of extra things. She thanked the faculty for participating.

President Robichaux-Davis announced that Senator Marett has been named as the Elections Officer for the April Faculty Senate Officer elections.

March Greetings, Senators! I hope you are continuing to have a productive and rewarding spring 2021 semester. Kudos to the entire MSU community as we have successfully made it past the "mid-point" of the semester! The end of the Spring 2021 semester is in sight and hopefully, this summer you will be able to truly take a break.

Most of the university standing committees on which I serve met this past month, including the COVID-19 Task Force. Despite the changes in the governor's executive orders concerning COVID-19 guidelines for the state of Mississippi, our campus will continue to follow the guidelines that have shown to be successful for the remainder of this semester. Thus, face coverings must still be worn inside campus buildings and outside when social distancing cannot

be maintained. The COVID-19 Task Force will consider any changes to these guidelines for the summer sessions and fall semester at the end of the current semester.

On Friday, February 26th, many of you joined me for the Town Hall concerning the Interstate Passport. We had a very informative discussion about an important topic. Following this the presentations that Drs. Franz and Baham presented to us were emailed to all of the senators so that those presentations could be shared with all of those who you represent. We will consider a resolution in support of the Interstate Passport general education initiative as part of New Business at the March meeting.

To celebrate Mississippi State's 143rd birthday, we launched our Twitter account on February 28, 2021. If you are on Twitter, please follow us and join our current 28 followers. Our Twitter handle is @msstateRHFacSen and our tweets go out at either 8:00 am or at noon, Monday through Friday. Senator Kent Marett was the featured Senator on Friday, March 5th. Upcoming Fridays in March will feature Senators Sherman-Morris, Lathan and Musser.

We hosted two Listening Sessions regarding Student Success on Monday, March 8th, one for faculty in DAFVM and one for faculty in Arts & Sciences. Both resulted in good discussions about what student success means and what encompasses academic advising. I hope you will join us for your colleges Listening Session on Wednesday, March 10th or during a subsequent Listening Session during the week of March 22nd. During that week, we will also co-host a Listening Session for University Staff who work directly with students.

With regards to committees on which I am serving beyond standing university committees, the Student Course Evaluation Survey Committee is making good progress on the creation of a new survey instrument. We are currently in the process of editing and finalizing items within the domains of "Course Instruction," "Inclusive Pedagogy," "Student Learning," and "Student Engagement". We plan to also include a couple of open response items that focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the course. The Online Task Force submitted its final report to Dr. Shaw at the end of February. It is available at [https://www.provost.msstate.edu/pdf/Online Education Task Force%20final report 2 19 21 .pdf](https://www.provost.msstate.edu/pdf/Online_Education_Task_Force%20final_report_2_19_21.pdf)

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 February 10th. Thomas Callans, Assistant Athletic Director and Head Athletic Trainer gave us a report about what our athletic trainers do which includes treating and rehabilitating injuries, diagnosing injuries, and providing immediate and emergency care. He said the sports medicine services are 24 hours, 7 days a week. Christine Jackson shared that every Wednesday there are “Career Information Sessions” across the SEC with each school hosting one of these virtual sessions. These sessions allow student athletes to meet other student athletes who have similar career interests. Bracky Brett from the Office of Compliance shared that we are in a “dead period” in terms of recruiting until the middle of April.

COVID-19 Future Planning Task Force – At the request of Dr. Dobbs, MSU Leadership has provided him with our requested number of vaccines in terms of the number of employees who are 50 years of age or older and in terms of the overall total number of MSU employees. This includes all Graduate Assistant, Graduate Research Assistants, Graduate Teaching Assistants, and all Extension employees across the state. Dr. Keenum is going to speak to the governor about including all higher education employees in the group with K-12 educators so that we are all able to get vaccinated as quickly as possible. 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 – The committee has not met since my last report.

Executive Enrollment Management Committee – The committee has not met since my last report.

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

Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council – This council met on Thursday, February 18th. This council seeks to orient its work around identities. The charge of the council is to (1) develop institutional diversity, inclusion and equity initiatives centered on measurable goals; (2) work with colleges and unit to create and implement action plans to promote diversity and inclusion within the framework of the university’s mission and strategic plan; (3) assist the university in developing and maintaining strong relationships and pipeline programs with communities,

community colleges, K-12 institutions, business, civic and cultural organizations; (4) convene and create a sense of community across various university-wide groups; (5) identify, plan, and support initiatives that will encourage, promote, and recognize diversity on campus; and (6) direct attention to issues regarding diversity on campus and in the surrounding communities. Each council member introduced themselves and shared what their desires for the council are. Commitment to the work of this council requires evaluating practices, protocols, policies, and programs. At the next meeting, we will set goals aligned with what we hope to accomplish.

Information Technology Council – This council met on March 2nd. Jason Tiffin has been hired as the new Director of Enterprise Information Systems. He will move into this position on March 16th. ITS offered several training sessions for faculty on how to transfer grades from Canvas to Banner; 186 faculty participated in these sessions. ITS created a knowledge base article about the Canvas to Banner grade transfer which is available to faculty. Engagement with Jabian is ongoing. Jabian is reviewing all aspects of ITS to learn how we currently do business and how we can do business better. An ITS Strategic Planning Survey will be sent out to everyone on campus within the week. Concerning the Network Refresh, the administrative and athletic buildings are being included within the scheduling of the academic buildings. The academic buildings that will be upgraded during March are the Franklin Furniture Center, all Franklin Laboratories, Lloyd-Ricks-Watson Building, the Academic Computer Laboratory, Thompson Hall and Thompson Hall Annex, Music Buildings A, B, and C and Montgomery Hall. The MSU Inventoried Computer Log-on Notice will be pushed out to all ITS-supported machines on March 9th.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee – This committee met on February 11th. I was not able to attend, but Vice-President Barrett attended so he will provide an update from this committee.

Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee – This committee met on February 25th. We approved of installing a 4-way stop at the intersection of Magruder and State streets. We also discussed a resolution that was received from the Student Association concerning problems of speeding, accidents and reckless driving on sorority row. Additional monitoring of this area of campus will be put in place.

Sustainability Committee – This committee has not met since my last report, but the dates for the 2021 meetings have been set. The first meeting of 2021 will be held on March 24th.

Senator Gregory asked for an update on the Diversity Council. President Robichaux-Davis replied the Diversity Council has been renamed the Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council and her report on this committee is in the President's Report.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE VICE PRESIDENT

Academic Deans Council –

February 2021 meeting is scheduled for February 17th.

- Canceled due to lack of agenda items.

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 –

March 1 meeting was canceled to give the office time to compile a list of potential projects.

- Mr. Ramsey's group is working on a list of priorities for the committee to review.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee –

February meeting was held on the 11th at 9:00am for the 'Visioning Presentation'.

Next scheduled meeting is March 11, 2021.

Textbook Committee –

There was no meeting held in February.

Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery Committee –

There was no meeting held in February.

FACULTY DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

Senator Hopper provided an update on the Academic Review Board. She said the committee has successfully dealt with several grade appeals and is looking at how the grade appeal system can be made more understandable to students.

Senator Hopper said the Dean of University Libraries Search Committee is in the process of inviting two candidates to campus. President Robichaux-Davis asked if the Faculty Senate will have the opportunity to meet with the candidates. Senator Hopper replied the agenda is not final, but Faculty Senate will most likely have an opportunity to meet with the candidates.

BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic Affairs **No Report**

Ancillary Affairs **No Report**

Charter & Bylaws **No Report**

Faculty Affairs

1. AOP 13.09 Credentials for Teaching

Senator Sherman-Morris, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, provided the committee report on AOP 13.09 Credentials for Teaching.

Senator Gregory asked if this policy will require program coordinators. Senator Sherman-Morris replied the policy requires that one or more faculty members be in charge of program coordination. She said this policy just requires that program coordination is the job of the faculty and these items are part of the responsibility. The release associated with these efforts should be discussed between the faculty, department heads, and deans. Senator Gregory asked if this is something new and if so, would it be disbursed to and facilitated by administration. Senator Sherman-Morris replied it is relatively new that this is in policy. It was determined that our policy did not have items in it which are required by SACSCOC. We were operating in accordance with the requirements, but we did not have it specifically in policy. She said after Faculty Senate approves the policy it will go through Associate Deans Council and Deans Council for approval. Senator Gregory asked if there are funding resources such as stipends that go along with this since it talks about course release time. Senator Sherman-Morris replied that to her knowledge this will be a departmental decision. She said in many cases this is already going on and no changes will be necessary.

The motion to accept AOP 13.09 Credentials for Teaching, as presented, passed by unanimous electronic vote.

2. Instructional Faculty: Survey Update

Senator Sherman-Morris, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, provided an update on the results of the survey on instructional faculty.

Senator Sherman-Morris said she expects to have a final report prepared for the April meeting.

Senator Yu asked for the return rate of the survey. President Robichaux-Davis said there are roughly 1,200 faculty at MSU. Senator Yu said she worries that this survey is not indicative of

the sentiment of the faculty. Senator Sherman-Morris replied there is a high likelihood that the same individuals who completed the survey would also participate in the actual vote.

Student Affairs **No Report**

University Resources **No Report**

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

President Robichaux-Davis said a resolution to support the adoption of Interstate Passport has been included in the agenda.

Secretary Follett made a motion to approve the resolution. Senator Williams seconded the motion.

The motion to approve the resolution to support the adoption of Interstate Passport passed by majority electronic vote.

Secretary Follett made a motion to adjourn. Senator Banik seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn passed by unanimous electronic vote at 4:37 p.m.

Submitted for correction and approval.

Randy Follett, Secretary

Jason Cory, Administrative Assistant II