



## **ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE**

### **Uncorrected Minutes of April 17, 2020**

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular monthly meeting at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, April 17, 2020. This meeting was held online through Cisco Webex due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Members absent and excused were::

The meeting was called to order by Senate President Randy Follett.

President Follett asked for any corrections to the minutes of the March 27, 2020 meeting. Hearing no corrections, President Follett accepted the minutes as presented.

### **GUESTS**

#### **Dr. Mark Keenum, University President**

President Keenum began by saying that Governor Reeves extended the stay at home order this morning with some slight modifications for small businesses. He said the University posted a response to this action which continues the operating procedures we are currently employing.

President Keenum said he shared at the last Faculty Senate meeting that the state was in good shape financially. He said fiscal year 19 ended with just over \$300 million more than estimates. Through March of this year, the state revenues have exceeded estimates by over \$217.7 million. The month of March saw \$29.3 million in revenues over the estimate. President Keenum said the remainder of the fiscal year does not look as good as what we have experienced, and the expectation is that revenues will fall short of estimates. President Keenum said, according to Lt. Governor Hosemann, the Legislature will wait until May revenue numbers are available before setting the budget for next fiscal year. They want to have as

much information as possible before the new budget is constructed. Lt. Governor Hosemann also said the legislature will be as conservative with the budget as they can be for the next fiscal year.

President Keenum said the federal government passed the \$2 trillion CARES Act. Higher Education will receive \$14.2 billion and MSU's portion of that is \$17.8 million. The bill stipulates that 50% of these funds must be paid to students in the form of student grants. There is a national webinar currently in progress to provide guidance as to how the grant funds are to be disbursed. There is also no clear direction on how the other 50% of the funds may be spent. The Federal Department of Education will provide guidance with regard to the allocation of the non-grant funds in the coming weeks. President Keenum said he has been in touch with members of our congressional delegation asking for their assistance in getting as much discretion on how the funds are spent as possible. He said there are many costs being incurred and many unknowns such as enrollment and the impact on appropriations. The CARES Act includes a maintenance of effort requirement which requires states to fund K-12 and Higher Education at the same level as the average of the last 3 fiscal years. For IHL, the average for the last 3 fiscal years would allow the state to cut funding by up to 1.9% and still be in compliance. President Keenum said the University is developing multiple budgets for the coming year which capture many what-if circumstances. Another potential source of funds is the Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund. This is part of the CARES Act and allocates \$3 billion nationally for governors to disburse at their discretion in education. Mississippi will receive \$34.6 million. MSU has begun preliminary conversations with the governor's staff. Dr. Keenum said he has not had the opportunity to discuss this with Governor Reeves yet.

Dr. Keenum said it was announced on April 6<sup>th</sup> that the University would implement a pass/fail grading system. Many other schools in the IHL system announced pass/fail grading much earlier. It was decided, with input from faculty and student leadership, the announcement of pass/fail grading at MSU would be closer to the end of the semester to keep students engaged. Dr. Keenum said if students decided to accept their pass/fail grade and coast through the end of the semester, it could have implications for their continuation on their path to graduation. Once the decision was made to go completely online, the deans were told to be as understanding and compassionate as possible. Dr. Keenum said he is very pleased with how the option for pass/fail grading turned out.

The IHL Board of Trustees directed all universities to provide prorated refunds to students for housing, meals, and parking effective from March 16<sup>th</sup>. These refunds are being processed currently. The announcement of refunds happened much earlier for many schools around the country. The Board of Trustees delayed this announcement until the State Attorney General had reviewed all applicable laws and contracts.

Dr. Keenum said a new commercial for Student Advantage has just been released. This is to encourage participation in summer school. The summer classes will be offered solely online. Dr. Shaw, working with the deans and various departments across campus, has been able to increase the course offerings this summer. This includes upper-level courses which would normally not be available. Dr. Keenum said the feedback he has received has been

tremendous. It is believed that having a strong summer enrollment will have a positive impact on fall enrollment. Summer school will be very affordably priced and will give students the opportunity to continue their progress on their education.

Dr. Keenum said the commencement ceremony for spring graduates will be held virtually on May 1<sup>st</sup> at 2:00 p.m. He said this is not what he wants to do, but due to the circumstances it is what can be done for now. The hope is to be able to do an in-person ceremony at some point in the summer or fall. If this is not possible and we are able to hold a December graduation ceremony, the spring 2020 graduates would be invited to participate.

Dr. Keenum said the disruptions this pandemic is causing include disruption to tenure-track faculty's ability to stay on track to earn their tenure. He said he has spoken to Commissioner Rankins about this on several occasions. This past Wednesday, all of the University Presidents/Chancellor met with Commissioner Rankins and discussed tenure clock extension. Commissioner Rankins brought this to the board yesterday and they were in agreement that tenure clocks should be extended. Dr. Keenum said he believed, at a minimum, we would be able to offer one additional year for those faculty who wish to extend their clock. This will be an item voted on at the May meeting of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Keenum recommended that tenure-track faculty discuss this option with their department heads. He said, just as with students, he would like faculty to be treated with compassion and understanding.

Dr. Keenum thanked President Follett for his outstanding leadership as president of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. He thanked Vice President Jones for her leadership in the role of Faculty Senate Vice President. Dr. Keenum presented two cowbells for Dr. Follett and Ms. Jones.

Senator Freeman asked when faculty would be notified about the tenure-clock extension possibility. He said the deadline for applying for the tenure review in his department was May 15<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Keenum replied that this question was discussed in the meeting of the university presidents and it was decided that these deadlines would be pushed back to allow faculty more time to make an informed decision.

Senator Sebba thanked Dr. Keemun and Dr. Shaw for their leadership during this difficult time. She said it has been difficult for everyone, but she could not imagine how it has been for administrators. Dr. Keenum thanked Senator Sebba for her comment and said it has been tough, but our University is blessed to have such great people working so hard. He said we are helping not only ourselves, but all universities in the IHL system. He said Commissioner Rankins is looking to us for guidance for the system. Dr. Keenum said seeing Senator Sebba reminded him that we just issued the construction contract to build the new music building. He said this project has been funded by the legislature and the funds have been in place to move forward. The exact construction schedule is not known due to Covid-19.

President Follett read a submitted question. The question was, will the master class schedule be changed to reflect all online courses for the summer semester. Dr. Shaw replied this was

overlooked in the transition and will be updated. He asked if anyone sees any other errors like this to please report them to him so we can present the most accurate information possible.

Senator Williams asked if it has been considered to change the pay schedule for faculty during the summer session to bi-weekly instead of monthly. He said there are likely spouses of faculty which have been adversely affected by the pandemic and receiving more frequent payments may be beneficial. Dr. Shaw replied he will visit with Don Zant and the financial team to determine if it is possible. If there is any way it can reasonably be done, the University will do it. President Follett said he asked this question several years ago and was told that the payroll list is not final until several days into the term and that does not allow for enough time to be processed through the payroll system. Dr. Shaw said he will see if it is now possible to do this.

Senator Freeman said there is discussion in his department about developing graduate degree options online. He said it usually takes a couple of years to get these degree programs through IHL. He asked if there has been discussion about facilitating the transition of these programs to online. Dr. Shaw replied in December and January there was discussion of how long the process takes. He said he had some very engaged discussions with Dr. Casey Prestwood at IHL about the process. She asked that Dr. Shaw and Dr. Ryan provide some suggestions on how the process could be improved. An approval timeline was shared with Dr. Prestwood and she was stunned and appalled at the amount of time it took. She immediately began working with the Chief Academic Officers of all 8 institutions to better understand the process and the impediments. She is in the process of making a number of changes at the IHL level to improve the process. Dr. Shaw said he believes the process can be cut from 2 years to under a year. Dr. Shaw said internal streamlining of the process is being pursued on campus through UCCC.

Senator Ridner said the news recently has been discussing, particularly with regard to private schools, furloughing of employees and across-the-board pay cuts in higher education. She asked if there was any anticipation of furloughs or faculty cuts at MSU. Dr. Keenum said he does not know what the future holds and he has been through a lot of what-if budgeting. He said this is his 12<sup>th</sup> year at MSU and we have gone through some tough times during that period. He said in particular over a decade ago during the recession there was a task force instituted and chaired by Dr. Hart Bailey, the Faculty Senate President at the time. Their charge was to figure out how to save money in the operation of the campus. Dr. Keenum said his one directive was to not terminate any personnel. Dr. Keenum said this sentiment has not changed and he hopes and prays it will not come to having to terminate anyone as we go through this budget cycle. He said terminations would be the absolute last resort. He added that the University is in the best financial shape it has been in a very long time. He said the Commissioner has told him we are in better financial shape than any other school in the system. Dr. Keenum said we still have a lot to deal with moving forward, but he hopes this gives an idea of his mindset going into this. Senator Ridner said she had a question from one of her constituents who asked if there were any protections being discussed for contingent faculty such as lecturers and instructors. Dr. Shaw replied this was the impetus for the creation of the task force chaired by Vice President Jones. He said she has given him regular updates and they have been having some very good conversations. He said there are no formal mechanisms in

place but he and Dr. Keenum are not planning to let up with regard to recruiting and retention. Dr. Shaw said the only way contingency faculty would be released is if there was a significant decline in enrollment.

Senator Zuckerman said the College of Arts & Sciences faculty received an email from Dr. Travis discussing flexibility and anticipating potential issues with the final examination period. One of the recommendations was to leave the final exam window open for 72 hours. She said she discussed this with several faculty including one who does completely online education. This is apparently standard practice for online courses but the way to combat academic misconduct was to have a large bank of questions each test is drawn from. She asked if recommendations can be provided on the 72 hour exam period very soon since faculty will need time to prepare their test bank or alternatively prepare students for a shorter exam period. Dr. Shaw said he would need to see the email to be able to speak to the specifics, but the guidance that was provided to the deans was to provide students the latitude to perform their best on the final exams. He said the 72 hour recommendation was one of a long list of best practices provided by Susan Seal. His message to the deans was to provide all of those recommendations to the faculty. Everyone is going to be in a different situation. He said the students may be competing with siblings for bandwidth or could experience accessibility issues during a narrow testing window. The 72 hour window is not a mandate but is one of the strongly encouraged best practices. Senator Zuckerman said that it did not come from Dr. Travis as a mandate but a recommendation. Faculty not experienced in distance learning may not be aware of the impact of having an exam open for an extended period of time could have with regard to academic misconduct. She said she feels it would be helpful to inform faculty if they plan on utilizing the 72 hour period, there are things that may need to be started now to prevent academic misconduct. Dr. Shaw said he appreciates Senator Zuckerman bringing this to his attention and the directive will be sent out next week. Senator Eakin said she believed that not all of the recommended online instruction techniques work with the students who started the semester face to face since they have already established relationships with their peers in the class. She said it is helpful to have a large question bank, but she also performs a Google search of the questions, changes the wording of the questions accordingly, and randomizes the questions.

Senator Bora thanked Dr. Shaw for taking care of the students with the institution of pass/fail grading. He asked if there is any planning being done to allow international students who may not be able to arrive on time due to Covid-19 to be allowed to come in at a later date. Dr. Shaw replied this topic has been discussed frequently this week. He said the consulates are saying it will be at least mid-July before the will begin processing Visa applications. He believes there will be major challenges getting international students to our campus if they are not already in the states regardless of where they are from. Discussions have begun on how to allow international students to enroll in online classes but not have to be distance education students. He said it is also being discussed how we can handle those students with assistantships while conforming to federal, state, and IHL regulations to allow those students to be engaged. Dr. Shaw said we are seeing a dramatic increase in applications from both undergraduate and graduate international students. He said he wants to capitalize on this and not lose students due to the paperwork process.

### **Dr. Julie Jordan, Interim Vice President for Research**

Dr. Jordan said for this fiscal year it looks like we are on track to have another record-breaking year in research expenditures. We ended FY19 with record numbers and so far this year we are tracking ahead of last year in awards and direct cost recoveries. Dr. Jordan said, even with the pandemic, the submissions are holding up and submissions are being made at a normal pace. She gave kudos to all the people working hard to stay on top of solicitations and submitting proposals.

Dr. Jordan said, throughout this semester, her office has tried to invest in the research tools that are needed by faculty and to make them available campus wide. Campus wide licenses have been purchased for Qualtrics and Stata. The ORED seminars that are able to be performed virtually are going forward. A host of webinars related to how to conduct research during the Covid-19 crisis are being created. The Intensive Grant Writing Workshop is continuing virtually.

There is a third-party organization doing an economic impact study of our research enterprise and MSU as-a-whole. This is similar to a study Ole Miss recently did. The results of this study should be available in the next couple of months.

Dr. Jordan said another effort her office has made this year is to increase the invitations to corporate and federal agency leaders. She said many who come to campus say they would not have thought that was happening in Mississippi. Since the first of the year, the FBI, Fed-Ex, NOAA, Boeing, and a variety of other hi-tech companies came to campus. She said they look forward to getting back on schedule with these visits. It gives us a great opportunity to show off what we are doing and is resulting in partnerships which should yield funding down the road.

Locally, ORED has continued to work with local community leaders and the Greater Starkville Development Partnership to make sure we are staying in sync with our activities as they relate to economic development and what is going on in the region. Dr. Jordan said the research park is basically full. Our corporate partners have been very successful, and we are trying to figure out ways to create new opportunities at the research park.

Dr. Jordan said all of the offices are open and she is very proud of the way her offices have been able to keep working during the crisis. She asked the senators to report if they get the sense that anything has slowed down or things are not getting through as fast. She said the offices are trying to be more responsive during this time. Dr. Jordan gave kudos to Dr. Devon Brenner for being key in keeping the website up to date with the help of James Carskadon in the Office of Public Affairs as well as the ITS team. There are great resources on the site including guidance from all the federal agencies and sponsors as well as ideas about what to do from a research perspective when you are working from home. There are weekly town hall sessions

being held on Wednesdays at 3:00. These will continue as long as people keep participating. There have been 60 to 70 participants for the first two.

Dr. Jordan said a task force has been formed to focus specifically on Covid-19 proposal responses. They are looking for research opportunities related to Covid-19. This committee will help match these proposals with funding opportunities. It is believed that the next CARES Act will contain infrastructure opportunities. We already have a list of 30 or 40 potential projects. There is a push for the next bill to include \$26 billion specifically for research. This could include funds to cover the cost of shuttering and reopening labs and extending grants among other things. The delay of research has a ripple effect down the road on our competitiveness in science and technology.

**Dr. Steve Turner, Faculty Athletic Representative**

**Dr. Brent Fountain, Faculty Athletic Representative Elect**

**Mr. John Cohen, Athletic Director**

Dr. Turner said he would defer to Mr. Cohen in the interest of time.

Mr. Cohen said listening to the discussion over the last hour and 23 minutes of what is going on in the university puts everything in perspective and definitely puts athletics in perspective. He said his father was a faculty senator for the University of Alabama for several years. He said he remembers his father telling him on many occasions that there is too much emphasis on athletics. He said it is ironic that his career has been in college athletics. Mr. Cohen thanked the senators for their leadership and what they are doing as well as Dr. Keenum and Dr. Shaw for their leadership.

Mr. Cohen said one of the things that he is most proud of is the resiliency of our kids. He gets so many reports from around the country about what our kids are doing in their respective communities to help. One example of this is Darryl Williams. He is working for a food pantry in his hometown of Bessemer, Alabama. He said these kids realize at an early age that being part of a team and being part of a community are extremely important.

Mr. Cohen said the student athletes have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for the last five consecutive semesters. Tyre Phillips was named to the NFF Hampshire Honor Society for maintaining a 3.2 or higher GPA during his college career. We have 7 football players entering the draft this year. Cameron Dantzler, Tyre Phillips, Darryl Williams, Willie Gay Jr., Brian Cole II, Chauncey Rivers, and Stephen Guidry have all attended the NFL combine and been listed on the NFL draft board predictions.

Mr. Cohen said Fletcher Cox was named to the NFL 2010's All-Decade Team. He said he is very proud of him and said he is a great representative of Mississippi State and his hometown in Mississippi.

Mr. Cohen said some of the best defensive linemen in the NFL came from Mississippi State University. Currently, Preston Smith, Chris Jones, Fletcher Cox, Jeffery Simmons, Pernell

McPhee, Denico Autry, Montez Sweat, and Kyle Love are active players considered to be high level defensive linemen in the NFL. Mr. Cohen said Darius Slay just became the highest paid cornerback in NFL history.

Coach Vic Schaefer notified Mr. Cohen that he would be leaving the university. Mr. Cohen said several candidates for his position were identified and Nikki McCray-Penson became one of those people that could not be walked away from. Mr. Cohen said he is not sure anyone has come to coach at MSU with a resume as a player and a coach in any sport as good as Nikki's. He said she has an amazing attention to detail and is a special person. He added that Rickea Jackson won the Gillom Award making this the sixth consecutive time an MSU player has won the award. She was also second team All-SEC along with Jessika Carter. Many people believe we will have a top 5 ranked team going into the preseason. The women's basketball team finished in the top 10 for the fourth straight year and won 131 games during the last 4 years which ties us for the second most in NCAA Division I history. Mr. Cohen said there is no telling how many more wins we would have added to that total had the season not been cut short.

Reggie Perry was co-SEC Player of the year and has entered the NBA draft. Mr. Cohen said he wishes him the best. The men's basketball team has had 3 consecutive twenty plus win seasons. Reggie Perry won our 3<sup>rd</sup> straight Howell Trophy. Mr. Cohen said at some point Humphrey Coliseum will be renovated, but due to the current circumstances this has fallen on the priority list.

Mr. Cohen said softball got off to a great start and was ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in the country in one poll. Fa Leilua was going to be a finalist for SEC Player of the Year. The team had 2 of the top 100 players in the country in Mia Davidson and Fa Leilua.

MSU baseball has finished the season in the top 10 for the third straight season. The season ended with a 2-game sweep of Texas Tech who was ranked #2 in the country. Most of our players will be returning next season. There will be an MLB draft this year and we are being told that it will be shortened to 5 rounds instead of the traditional 40. Every Saturday game played this season had 10,000+ fans in attendance.

Men's tennis was ranked in the top 6 in the country a year ago. They lost arguably the best tennis player in the history of our program at MSU. The women's tennis team was making some vast improvements and went to the NCAA tournament 5 of the last 6 years.

The women's golf team was off to an amazing start. They had 1 team win and were ranked 21<sup>st</sup> in the country when their season was cut short. Mr. Cohen said Ginger has done a remarkable job getting the program back to where it should be at MSU.

Mr. Cohen said Ben Rodriguez heads the Student-Athlete Development Program. The four pillars of the program are personal development, professional development, leadership development, and community engagement.

Student-athletes participated in Networking Night which included 60+ businesses. Mr. Cohen said all of our student-athletes want to be professional athletes, but the statistics show that they will not all be professional athletes. This helps them prepare for life outside of athletics.

Some of the service projects undertaken by athletics include the T.K. Martin Center, Bulldogs in the Delta, and outreach to nursing homes in the area. There is also an Athletic Identity Night where the student-athletes are asked “Who are you outside of your sport?”. Additionally, professional workshops are offered to help with resume building, personal branding, job searching, and professional dress to name a few.

Mr. Cohen said right now state and federal governments are grappling with NIL or Name, Image, and Likeness. The federal government is trying to prevent individual states from creating their own rules regarding NIL. This can create a recruiting disadvantage.

Due to Covid-19, the one-time transfer rule has been brought into question. Since students will be given an additional year of eligibility, some rosters will be overloaded for the spring sports. The one-time transfer rule is only applicable in 5 sports and requires a transfer to sit out a year before becoming eligible to play again.

Players are currently allowed to practice in a virtual manner with the strength and conditioning coaches. No practices virtual or otherwise are allowed the week before and the week of final examinations.

Spring sport athletes will be granted an extra year of eligibility due to the crisis. Mr. Cohen said this creates some unintended consequences which we will have to deal with.

Mr. Cohen said the most common question he gets is when will fall sports start and how will they start. These questions cannot be answered at this time. Mr. Cohen said the SEC is doing a remarkable job of providing options based on the information they have.

Mr. Cohen thanked the senators for their time and said if anyone feels there is anything Athletics can do to help any department or anyone to please let him know.

## **REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT**

As a first item of business, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank each of the senators who are “rolling off” of senate at the mid-point of today’s meeting. Each of these senators has served a regular term (or two) as a senator for their indicated college:

Matthew Brown	Arts & Sciences
Dipangkar Dutta	Arts & Sciences
Stacy Haynes	Arts & Sciences
David Wipf	Arts & Sciences
Gregory Martin	CAAD

Guihong Bi	CALS-MAFES
Jamie Larson	CALS-MAFES
Raja Reddy	CALS-MAFES
Barry Stewart	CALS-MAFES
Kathleen Alley	Education
James Sobaskie	Education
Marina Denny	Extension
Mary Ann Jones	Library

In addition to these senators, Shrinidhi Ambinakudige, of Arts and Sciences has completed his temporary term as a replacement senator.

There were four senators who were re-elected to serve a 2nd term:

Deborah Eakin	Arts & Sciences
Sol Pelaez	Arts & Sciences
Molly Zuckerman	Arts & Sciences
Chinling Wang	Vet Med

Finally, we have thirteen newly-elected senators:

Rachel Allison	Arts & Sciences
Alicia Hall	Arts & Sciences
Kimberly Kelly	Arts & Sciences
Todd Mlsna	Arts & Sciences
Kevin Williams	Arts & Sciences
Alexis Gregory	CAAD
Erdogan Memili	CALS-MAFES
Sorina Popescu	CALS-MAFES
Ted Wallace	CALS-MAFES
Missy Hopper	Education
Stephanie King	Education
Amanda Stone	Extension
Derek Marshall	Library

For those senators who will not be returning next year, I offer you my profound thanks for your willingness to serve your college and the university by serving as a senator. For those of you who were re-elected, congratulations, and I look forward to continuing to work with each of you. Finally, to each of you who are newly elected, whether it is your first time as a senator or if you have been off for a while and are returning, I do look forward to working with you on the senate, and thank you for your willingness to serve.

Over the last few weeks since our March meeting of the senate, things seem to have settled down quite a bit in terms of the overall situation here at MSU. As you all hopefully are aware, quite a few decisions had to be made in a very compressed time period, many times subject to either delays or forced decisions based on rulings from the Board of Trustees of the IHL. While this didn't lend itself to debate and following the normal process associated with the

shared governance document in place at MSU, I do really believe that the spirit of that document was certainly observed with respect to those decisions. Many items were discussed only during a fairly brief time period, but did involve a broad base of representation from the various parts of the university. The basis for my participation in these meetings was, as much as possible, based on all of the interactions that I've had over the years with faculty senate in particular, and being a faculty member at MSU in general. As a result, if there are any specific issues that have been problematic from your perspective, I am in hopes that you are going to convey those to senate leadership. Crisis situations don't always work out perfectly, but debriefing of the people involved in the "after action" part of the process is always informative.

My personal take on all of the actions taken by MSU has been very positive, and I am optimistic that of all of the state IHLs, we will come out of this in at least as good a shape as our sister universities, if not better. Several specific items to note involve the recent announcements last week concerning partial refunds available to students, and the upcoming May 1 online commencement ceremony that is being planned. Dr. Keenum has additionally indicated that if it is possible, MSU would obviously like to be able to honor all of our May graduates in person, but depending on timing of the various restrictions currently in place, that might or might not be possible before the December commencement ceremony. Student input on the timing of such an event would be very important, obviously, but faculty and staff would also play a vital role in the decisions surrounding such an event.

As we move forward on Faculty Senate operations in this physically distant new world, I am presiding over the last scheduled meeting with me as president today. As I have repeatedly told the senate, this has been a great job to have, and I have been honored to be able to represent you over the last few years as vice president and president. You are likely aware that I would run for president again if it weren't specifically prohibited in our bylaws. I do have two years left in my current term as a senator, and I look forward to whatever roles I end up playing during that remaining time. Whoever is elected as our next president today will obviously be taking office during a very different time than they would ordinarily experience. I offer any assistance that I can provide in support of the new president and vice president coming to office amidst all of these changes. (It is a difficult enough task in the best of times, but now made more difficult by the radical changes occurring at global, national, state, community and institutional levels.)

In terms of the specific goals that I had when I ran for the president's position two years ago and again last year, I am glad to be able to say that some are complete, and some are in progress. We do have a current, valid AOP on evaluation of teaching, which was one of the longest running issues (with regard to timeframe) that I have seen while on senate. While we're not finished on that item yet, there is a task force that will hopefully be reporting back to us "soon" on that topic, with suggestions for change and improvement. It is significant to note that in the current, valid AOP, the choice of paper versus electronic administration of the surveys is still listed as being up to the individual instructor. Similarly, the annual faculty evaluation AOP is under debate on a separate task force, with progress being made there, too. A separate issue that I've also been strongly advocating for is the decision about an appropriate naming convention for the class of faculty known as Clinical Faculty (meaning the ones who are called that, but aren't "clinical" in any real sense). If at all possible, we need to get this

resolved, in order to be able to move forward on suitable promotion processes by colleges and departments, which aren't currently in existence in many places in the university.

In summary, I am optimistic about MSU's progress and future, despite the incredible changes that have occurred in the last month. I also look forward to continuing as a senator for the next two years, and seeing specifically how we end up surviving all of this.

#### 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
11.01	Shackouls Honors College	2/11/2016
12.01	Academic Add-Drop	7/23/2015
12.04	Final Examination	7/23/2015
12.22	Undergraduate Student Courseload	8/25/2015
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 – has not met since my last report

Diversity Council – has not met since my last report

Executive Council – has not met since my last report

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

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

Information Technology Council – (met via Webex on April 7)

In this meeting, we were able to receive updates on several initiatives that have been ongoing with ITS.

We recently completed our required 3-year cyber security evaluation, which was conducted by HorneCyber. The findings were sent to MDITS in Jackson, and we are officially compliant now. There were 99 findings that were given to us, and ITS is working through remediation on those issues. (Most were based on still having the default credentials in place on devices.)

CSpire has been working with MSU to change the way the on-hold recordings work, so that you don't always start at the beginning of the loop. It turns out that we have up to 30,000 calls/month placed on hold, so this is actually a non-trivial issue.

As has been true of everyone else, all of the physical training events have been postponed, based on the Covid-19 crisis.

Fortinet was recently chosen as the supplier for our firewall replacement process. Their Enterprise agreement gives threat analysis to anyone at the university that procures Fortinet hardware, with no added charge for that. Note that their solution provides hardware decryption as opposed to the competitor's approach, which is a software decryption. Based on that and the volume of traffic expected, Fortinet's solution was far superior.

The previously announced, but delayed classroom technology upgrades have now been completed, since nobody is using those classrooms. (Harned 105 – Level 2, Dorman 134 and 152 – Level 2, and Allen 14 – Level 1)

A brief discussion about how ITS has been involved over the previous three weeks in terms of the ramp-up for online instruction and virtual meetings was also provided. It should be noted that we did request additional hardware support from Instructure (the company that owns Canvas) in anticipation of the increased load that was expected. Extra laptops (50 of them) have been ordered to help support working from home, but Dell has delayed shipments to focus on delivery to first responders. Extension has provided about 120 laptops that are being processed and will be available for use by faculty/staff/students as needed. CSpire provided 27 Hotspots initially, with Emergency line use for approximately 60 days of use at no cost. Specific white-listed websites were approved for usage on the no-charge operation of the devices, but personal use will be billed to the individual. 25 more were delivered last week, and we're working on getting additional hotspots, but the supply is scarce.

As hopefully everyone has seen, there have been procedures published about how to take equipment home to be able to handle your job remotely. One note is that any computers taken home need to have the drive encrypted, for security. Also, if there is significant software in place on a desktop computer that is required for you to accomplish your work, an alternative to taking the computer home is to use remote desktop software to access the computer from home. This sometimes works better than trying to take the desktop home, especially when there are server access issues that might get much worse when trying to operate at home. You should be sure to sign any required hand receipts, of course, when taking equipment off-site. In addition, some amazing Webex statistics were provided for the period from March 4 through April 2. There were 69,386 total participants in a total of 14,027 meetings (6,902 of those were video meetings) for a total of 615,765, which had a total of 2,313 unique hosts. (I would anticipate that the numbers for this month will be considerably higher, of course, given some of the security issues that have appeared with other platforms, and the site license we have for Webex.) It was noted that the conference call function in Microsoft Teams (using video or just voice) seems to work best for relatively small groups, but the built-in support for SharePoint and OneDrive make it an incredibly useful tool, as well.

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

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

Sustainability Committee – (has not met since my last report, but we did receive an update on March 27 via e-mail)

It was noted that the Coronavirus has disrupted many events and projects, but others are continuing despite the issues we are experiencing. A new MSU Energy & Sustainability Coordinator, Mr. Joseph Paige, was welcomed to the committee. He has an M.S. in Civil Engineering with an Environmental Engineering Emphasis from Jackson State University, and comes to us from the Mississippi Dept. of Environmental Quality, where he had several years of experience on sustainability initiatives.

The following updates and list of ongoing initiatives was provided:

1. All spring events, including Earth Week events will not occur this semester.
2. Recycling has decreased significantly due to a large decrease in the number of people on campus. Renewed emphasis will be placed on these after a return to normal operations.
3. Buildings across campus are being identified that can go into an energy conservation mode, based on nobody being in them most of the time. Temperature setbacks, when properly applied, can potentially save hundreds of thousands of dollars during this time.
4. Most building projects are on schedule still, including:
  - a. Rula Engineering Building
  - b. Poultry Science Building
  - c. Indoor Tennis Facility
  - d. Music Building (bidding)
  - e. Transit Building
  - f. Kinesiology Building
  - g. Humphrey Coliseum Renovation
  - h. Butler Hall Mechanical Renovation

Note that a, b, c, and d above each exceed the Energy Code by more than 30% and have qualified for a TVA Efficient Construction rebate. Item e exceeds the ASHRAE 90.1 Energy Code by 30% or more and the application for the TVA rebate is in progress. The last three items haven't yet entered the stage where energy modeling has begun, but the intent is to exceed the code again, and to apply for the TVA rebate for each of these.

5. Infrastructure projects are underway that will improve both system reliability and enhance energy efficiency. Some of these are listed here:
  - a. Central Plant Chiller #1 replacement – old, inefficient chiller being replaced with a 1,400 ton high efficiency centrifugal chiller
  - b. Wastewater Lift Station upgrades – 35 year old pumping stations are being upgraded with new, efficient pumps and variable speed controls
  - c. West Electrical Feeder Underground project – new underground electrical feeder will reduce line losses on the system, with electrical capacitors to provide significant energy cost savings for the university
  - d. Horse Park Heater upgrades – converting from electrical to natural gas heaters will reduce energy consumption

- e. Thompson Hall Envelope repair – exterior sections will be temporarily removed so that a new air and vapor barrier can be applied
- f. Bost Boiler replacement – new high-efficiency boilers will be installed
- 6. Solar Project – A preliminary report will be received from Entegrity Energy Partners by the end of April, including potential solar installation locations, a scope of the proposed solar PV systems, lifecycle cost analysis, potential energy savings and emission reductions. The plan is for a utility-scale solar opportunity for MSU, meaning an installation of greater than a Megawatt of capability at MSU properties across the state.
- 7. The ongoing lighting retrofit for the university was recently audited by Entegrity Energy Partners, covering more than 3.5 million square feet of MSU facilities. The objective was to identify areas that were not retrofitted to LED lighting in the 2014/2015 timeframe. A preliminary report, also due by the end of this month, will include costs and savings associated with the upgrades. Initial estimates indicate that the retrofit could save MSU between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 per year on energy and maintenance costs, along with helping us achieve our efficiency and carbon neutrality goals.

## **REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE VICE PRESIDENT**

### **Academic Deans Council – April 6, 2020**

The ADC met for the regularly scheduled monthly meeting via WebEx. Dr. Shaw started the meeting by thanking everyone for their input and questions while the administration worked through the many issues involved with the COVID-19 pandemic response. He stated how proud he is of the faculty and how they have handled the sudden transition; he offered his appreciation and asked the Deans to convey his sincere regards to the faculty. A question was raised about student refunds and Dr. Shaw stated that the administration was still waiting for a response from IHL and that IHL was waiting for a response from the MS Attorney General. (This question has since been answered and publicly announced.) Someone from the floor stated that their questions had already been addressed in the latest public update from the university, others agreed.

#### **Approval of AOPs:**

- AOP 10.14: The Adoption and sale of Textbooks and other Instructional Materials passed with one addition to section 5.
- AOP 12.07: Undergraduate Academic Fresh-Start or Academic Amnesty passed without changes.

Both AOPs will now go forward to Associate Deans Council and Faculty Senate.

Dr. Shaw thanked everyone for their patience while using WebEx for a large meeting and the meeting was adjourned.

**Committee on Campus Access –**

Has not met since my last report

**Community Engagement Committee – February 5, 2020**

Has not met since last report

**President's Committee on Planning –**

Has not met since last report

**Textbook Committee –**

Has not met since last report

**Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery Committee –**

Has not met since last report

As this is my last meeting as a Senator and as Vice President, I want to offer a few words of appreciation. It has been my pleasure to serve on the Robert Holland Faculty Senate and as your Vice President. I have truly enjoyed this time of service to Mississippi State University and will greatly miss the opportunities conferred upon me in this role. I have learned more about the university in the past two years than in all my 13 years prior to my VP service. I have served on committees that I didn't even know existed until my appointment to them as VP. I have been included in decision making that is unprecedented and extraordinary in the history of MSU and have done my best to offer sound council to university administration regarding matters pertinent to the role of faculty in our community. The work that is being done behind the scenes on this campus is astonishing and admirable. The gears that must move simultaneously to accomplish our mission of teaching, research, and service are complicated and fragile. Understanding the few pieces to which I have been included and allowed to play a role in during the past two years has given me a greater appreciation of this university and the administration who keep it successfully functioning and growing to meet the needs of not only Mississippi, but the world.

I want to congratulate those newly elected Senators and encourage you to be active in your role as a Senator. Get involved, volunteer for a university committee assignment, ask for ways to be included, run for office, lead a Senate committee. These are the roles from which you will have a greater perspective of your university and the role you can play to advance our mission.

Use this opportunity, which is bestowed upon only a few, to make a difference in the life of our MSU community.

To the Senators who are continuing, thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Vice President. It has been an honor and I hope you see my service as being faithful to the responsibility you gave me when you elected me. I encourage you to be involved and offer your voice and council to the 2020-21 Executive Committee. It is only when you make your voice heard that your voice can be represented by the Senate leadership.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve our community. It has been an honor that I will never forget. The six years I have served on Senate and my two years as Vice President will help guide me through the remainder of my career, and for that I will be forever grateful. Hail State!

Sincerely,  
Mary Ann Jones  
2019-20 Faculty Senate Vice President

## FACULTY DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

### BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEES

#### STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Academic Affairs                          No Report**

**Ancillary Affairs                          No Report**

**Charter & Bylaws                          No Report**

**Faculty Affairs                                  No Report**

**Student Affairs**

#### **1. AOP 12.07 Student Honor Code**

Senator Haynes, on behalf of the Student Affairs Committee, presented the report on AOP 12.07.

The motion to adopt the committee recommendation on AOP 12.07 Student Honor Code passed by unanimous electronic vote.

## **2. AOP 12.23 Cooperative Education Program**

Senator Haynes, on behalf of the Student Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.23 Cooperative Education Program.

The motion to adopt the committee recommendation on AOP 12.23 Cooperative Education Program passed by unanimous electronic vote.

## **University Resources**

### **1. AOP 10.16 Distance Education**

Senator Maret, on behalf of the University Resources Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 10.16.

The motion to adopt the committee recommendation on AOP 10.16 Distance Education passed by unanimous electronic vote.

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

## **PENDING BUSINESS**

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

- 1. Faculty Senate President**
  - a. Charles Freeman
  - b. Rebecca Robichaux-Davis
- 2. Faculty Senate Vice President**
  - a. Jason Barrett
- 3. Faculty Senate Secretary**
  - a. Randy Follett

Vice President Jones, as the Elections Officer, said each candidate for President was allowed a five-minute presentation to the Senate if they wished. Senator Freeman and Senator Robichaux-Davis gave a brief address to the Senate. Vice President Jones called for the vote for Faculty Senate President.

Vice President Jones announced the voting results as: Rebecca Robichaux-Davis received 27 votes, Charles Freeman received 13 votes. Vice President Jones congratulated President-Elect Robichaux-Davis.

Vice President Jones said since there is only one candidate for the position of Vice President, nominations may be accepted from the floor. Hearing no nominations, President Follett moved to elect by acclamation. Senator Bora seconded the motion. Vice President Jones announced the motion to elect by acclamation passed by unanimous electronic vote.

Vice President Jones said since there is only one candidate for the position of Secretary, nominations may be accepted from the floor. Hearing no nominations from the floor, Vice President Jones asked for the vote. Vice President Jones announced President Follett was unanimously elected as the Secretary.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Senator Carskadon made a motion to accept the statement: "The Robert Holland Faculty Senate expresses its deepest appreciation and support to President Mark Keenum and his entire leadership team for outstanding and effective leadership and communication with Faculty Senate and the entire Mississippi State University community during a time of ongoing crisis that is without precedent in the last 100 years." Senator Bora seconded the motion. The motion to accept the statement provided by Senator Carskadon passed by unanimous electronic vote.

President Follett said there have been many strong presidents of the Faculty Senate over the years. He said his experience with Faculty Senate Presidents pre-dates when they were called presidents. The position used to be chair of the council which was then changed to president of the senate. He said he was first elected to the Faculty Senate in May of 1999 and he is currently in his 6<sup>th</sup> term. He said it has been a great pleasure to be on Senate and participate in the decisions and various goings on over these terms served. He said that he knows that editing AOPs is not always fun, but it forms the basis for policy at the University and is at the heart of what the Senate does. This process requires strong input from senators as well as others throughout the University. He said if, as a senator, you feel you are not being heard, or if other faculty feel the same, please bring that to the attention of the current officers and/or the Executive Committee to let them know where there is a need. President Follett said he feels we have a good system that works well depending on how amenable administration is to the discussion. He said, as others have previously commented, he feels we currently have as good of a president as he has ever worked under in his time at MSU dating back to 1984. President Follett said he would like to thank all of the Senate presidents he has served under which include Robert Cooper, Dan Embree, Walter Diehl, Mark Goodman, Hart Bailey, Meghan

Millea, Gerald Emison, Cody Coyne, and Brent Fountain. He said he has learned a lot from each of them as well as the senators in general.

President Follett explained he uses the “big” gavel to enter and leave office on Senate. He explained this gavel was donated to the Robert Belton Holland Faculty Council by Tom Wade, Chairman of the Council from 1983 to 1984. The significance of that is that Tom Wade was in his department when he was a student and was the last Electrical Engineer to be elected to the Chair position prior to himself.

President Follett, in honor of Chairman Tom Wade, closed the meeting at 4:32 p.m.

Submitted for correction and approval.

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Rebecca Robichaux-Davis, Secretary

Jason Cory, Administrative Assistant II