

ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE February 8, 2008

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular meeting in the Coskrey Auditorium of Memorial Hall at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, February 8, 2008.

Members absent and excused were John Byrd, Marita Gootee, Terry Hanson, Carlen Henington, Randy Little, Jason Lueg, Tom Matney, Vince McGrath, Meghan Millea (sabbatical)*, Al Myles, Noel Polk, Julia Porter, Dan Reynolds, Juan Silva, Shu-hui Wu.

* Dr. Subhra Chakrabarty will serve as a proxy while Meghan is on sabbatical

No members were absent and unexcused.

The meeting was broadcast real-time over the World Wide Web. The file will be left active and can be reviewed by clicking on the Senate homepage at <http://www.facultysenate.msstate.edu>.

President Robert Wolverton called the meeting to order, noting the interim Secretary, Senator June Garner.

President Wolverton referred to the minutes of the January 11, 2008, Regular Meeting as distributed. Senator Chamblee moved, Senator Coyne seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve the minutes as corrected. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

GUESTS

President Wolverton introduced guests: Dr. Robert Foglesong, President; Dr. Peter Rabideau, Provost; Dr. Steve Turner, Faculty Athletic Representative; and Dr. Kirk Schulz, Vice President of Research and Economic Development.

PETER RABIDEAU, PROVOST

Provost Rabideau provided the following information:

- An IHL Planning Summit will be held on February 13 with close to 248 attendees (~30 from each campus). There will be a keynote speaker in the morning and, in the afternoon, the goal to increase quality and quantity of baccalaureate degrees will be discussed.
- He is pleased with the outcome of First Year Experience program. Related to this program there has been efforts in Course Redesign. A summit was held in Jackson six months ago, conducted with Carol Twig. From this summit, 19 proposals were funded (four of the five submitted by MSU).
- With regard to the Promotion and Tenure draft document, he is disappointed that he and the Senate did not have a dialogue. He stated his office has been

beneficial in work on various related topics. A question of the effectiveness of the guidelines for the Parental Leave policy. Rabideau stated many of the items in the new Parental Leave Policy before the Senate are already in the Provost version of the new document. He stated he is hesitant to make the policy official until IHL has approved the document, so much has been unofficially implemented. He stated there has not been a lot of feedback given on the policy to date.

- Questions posed to Rabideau:
 - With regard to the AOP for exit interviews, is sufficient information being obtained during these interviews. Rabideau responded that the Provost's Office does not collect information from exit interviews. The deans use the information and take action as needed. He noted that there is not a large number of faculty leaving compared to the national or IHL averages.
- Senator Ryan recognized the recent death of Dr. Joseph Chromiak and a moment of silence was held on his behalf.

Steve Turner, Faculty Athletic Representative

Dr. Turner provided the following information:

- Referring to a distributed handout, Turner reported information on athletes' grade point average and other information. The implementation of the new attendance policy seems to have gone well, as evidenced by an overall GPA of 2.94 for 279 athletes (143 had a 3.0 GPA or higher). Turner noted that most sports improved over last year. Four teams have lower GPA compared to last year. Team records and highlights for Jan-Dec, 2007 were also provided. Team seasons and coaches' awards noted.
- Questions/discussion:
 - There is currently no Thursday night football game planned for fall 2008 and there will be no increase in football tickets this next year.
 - The majors of students were requested to be included in future reports and concerns for sufficient academic advising for athletes was expressed. Turner responded that about a third of the majors are in the College of Education, about a third are in business. He noted that there is no one dominant major, and there are not a lot of athletes in some majors.
 - Discussion included the need to recognize strong scholar athletes. Turner responded they are recognized in various manner by the Athletic Department and the SEC. He noted that many athletes have made dean's list. The desire is to recruit successful student athletes.
 - There will be no increase in 2008 football tickets.

ROBERT FOGLESONG, PRESIDENT

President Foglesong provided the following information:

- With regard to the budget:
 - On the previous day, a hearing was held with the Appropriations Committee to determine thoughts about the higher education budget allocations. Governor Barbour has recommended a flat budget (e.g., which could be considered a declining budget due to inflation) and a potential loss in allocations/revenue. Last year's \$100M budget allocation also covered

- Medicare (~\$25M) and most of the increase went to merit raises; so MSU had to raise tuition. If last year's gains are lost, it is probable that we will need to raise tuition to cover last year's gains and lost due to inflation.
- Foglesong has received a request for 13 new faculty positions in Tier One and ~12 in Tier Two. It is unknown if funding will be provided for these positions. However, many things hinge on the Governor's allocation for higher education.
 - The application rate is higher again this year. This increase means we will need more sections of classes and, thus, more faculty. Restriction of enrollment within the system may be an option with insufficient facilities and faculty to handle additional students.
 - Questions posed to Foglesong:
 - In response to a question about the previously discussed inequity adjustment, Foglesong stated it was not discussed.
 - Are there plans for additional large classroom spaces? Foglesong responded that as renovations occur, an option would be to add more mid-sized classrooms. Foglesong noted there are no bonds available this year, so some projects will be delayed.
 - In inquiry was made about energy costs and plans such as co-generation in which electricity is produced by the University. Foglesong stated innovation will be necessary.
 - An inquiry was made about the campus Master Planning Committee to examine such issues as resource use. It was noted that this committee had become inactive. Foglesong stated he would look into reasons that the committee is no longer active and would see if it could be re-instituted.
 - Foglesong stated he was going to ceremony to honor two students who had saved a near drowning victim.

KIRK SCHULZ, VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Schulz provided the following information:

- The Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) has developed a strategic plan. As a part of this, the findings of benchmarking are available on the ORED website. The Center on Measuring University Performance (University of Arizona) provides data with rankings (e.g., research expenditures). The data is out of date, but illustrates trends.
 - Generally, MSU ranks in top 90% in overall research and economic development, but about 150th or 160th out of 200 in terms of doctoral granted degrees and faculty awards.
 - Each dean was asked to nominate 5-7 people (faculty and staff) to answer two questions: (a) What would it take to move our rankings up, and (b) What would it take to make your unit more involved in scholarly activity. Sessions were held to assist in creating a set of goals and objectives; and the plan and associated comments from the 17 groups are posted. Feedback from faculty about the goals and degree of buy-in of the plan are requested.
- Discussion/questions:
 - Concern was expressed regarding some areas of plan. It was noted that 60% of the faculty are tenure track. It was also noted that there is a strong

- concern regarding teaching and service loads, with insufficient time available for research activities. It was also noted that there seems to be very little effort to help most faculty to improve their research. Schulz responded that the intent of the planning process was not to indicate that research should be in the centers; however, the topic of teaching loads was not yet addressed. He stated he will look to incorporate the concern in the revision of the plan.
- It was asked if 60% of the faculty are connected to Agriculture. Schulz responded that he was unsure of the percentages. Differences in USDA and NIH budgets was noted and that plans were needed to address concerns for units with these differences with regard to awards for increases. Schulz responded that the objective is an increase in the percentage of faculty participating in funded research. He stated that some colleges do not have much in funded research.
 - Concern was expressed about which departments/colleges were benefiting from the research support and whether the support was sufficient for units that are more strongly teaching. Additional concern was expressed for the current model that reward SCH such that units with greater research but fewer students are not appropriately funded for growth in research. Schulz responded that he has similar concerns and wants to work with Provost on this issue.
 - It was noted that some centers have research associates/assistants rather than faculty, but are making effort to include faculty in their units. It would desirable to hire faculty who have a connection to a research center and would enhance recruitment of faculty. Schulz responded that centers often result from faculty work over time; new center proposals ensure that doctoral students are included in center and that interdisciplinary talent from across campus can be used in a center.
- Schulz closed by stated that it is important to let senior administration know opinions—what individuals like and also things not liked; input is valued.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Wolverton gave the following report:

- Wolverton referred to the packet in the agenda and noted the following items:
 - More time allotted to work on the Drug and Alcohol Policy. President Foglesong has stated he would like the policy to be done correctly.
 - The Resolution regarding the level of support and funding passed at the last Senate meeting has received much attention. It is hoped that it will have a positive impact.
 - There will be a bus to transport MSU attendees to the Summit meeting on undergraduate enrollment next Wednesday.
 - The section on the operations of the senate was highlighted. Wolverton stated that new senators should learn how the Senate operates.
- Questions/discussion:
 - It was asked if more faculty/staff would be appointed to the Drug and Alcohol Policy taskforce. Wolverton stated that President Foglesong has no

objection to the addition of individuals. Wolverton stated he will work with Ann Bell to appoint more people.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President David Nagel gave the following report:

- Nagel referred to his report in the Agenda and stated there has been another Deans' Council meeting since his report was submitted to the agenda packet.
 - Nagel reported that, with the emphasis on the number of doctoral graduates with regard to the University's ranking, many deans were not aware that departments with graduating PhD students were awarding those faculty whose graduation rates were high (e.g., those who are responsible for more than 8 current dissertations) were being awarded average (3) on their annual reviews.
- Questions/discussion:
 - With regard to parking policies, it was stated that too many service vehicle spaces has resulted in too few parking spaces in parking areas. In response to the issue, Senator D'Abramo, representative on the Traffic and Parking Committee, stated it has been mandated that all signs be removed from all lots. Parking services know how many spots are available in gated lots and over sell spaces (~15%) based on a formula to assure maximum usage of the parking spaces and to account for demand.
 - In follow up to the discussion, it was asked how often the codes to the gates were changed. It was noted that student workers have been observed to use codes to park illegally in the gated lots. D'Abramo stated that it appears that students may have been given the codes.
 - Also as a follow up, D'Abramo stated that thought had been given to gate the Dorman lot, but that is unlikely.

REPORT FROM FACULTY SENATE DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

Employees' Benefits Committee –

Senator Garner stated that Human Resources (HR) continues to investigate the possibility of offering 100% tuition waiver to students who have both parents working (or retired) at MSU.

- There is some difficulty two-parent students, as only one signature is required on the form. It is thought that around 300 student receive the 50% waiver presently. There is also consideration to offer a 100% waiver to students with one parent. It was noted by a senator that Old Miss provides a 100% tuition waiver to two parent students.
- HR has received responses to the RFP on the vision plan. They are compiling responses and will discuss these with University of Miss, Delta State, and Miss Valley State. It is hoped that a report will be ready before summer term.
- HR submitted the consolidated leave policy (HRM 201) to the Executive Committee earlier in the week and it was approved. There will be a two-week

period for comments, after which it will be submitted to President Foglesong for final approval. This policy combines all leave-related procedures mandated by changes in federal and state law. The policy will be posted to the web after it is approved.

- HR has been notified by Teresa Planche (from the Office of Insurance, DFA) of a potential 7% health insurance premium increase effective 7/1/08 affecting both employer and employee rates.
- HR will invite Bob Rhodes, Director of Retiree Employment with PERS, to meet with staff who process paperwork related to retiree re-employment of retirees and other independent contractors who are retirees.

Info-Technology Committee – No report

Faculty Research Advisory Committee – No report

Instructional Improvement –

Senator Deeds reported that information on the Grisham Master Teacher Award is available and requested that individuals be sure to nominate someone.

Calendar Committee – No report

Facilities Use Committee – No report

BUSINESS SENT TO COMMITTEES

None.

BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEES

None.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – No report

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Senator David Bridges, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, referred to this Committee's report on the **Promotion and Tenure Policy and Procedures**. He provided a brief review of the recommendations and indicated that the report will be discussed and during the current meeting and tabled with voting to occur at next month's meeting.

- Senator Bridges moved, Senator D'Abramo seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate consider the first recommendation in the report (Agenda, page 4).
- Discussion included:
 - The need for an automatic approval to stop to the Tenure clock upon a request.
 - Department heads vary in how the workload policy is implemented and there was a need for language stating that the departmental committee should review the stoppage request to avoid abuse of the procedure and as a good checks-

- and-balance. Concern was expressed about faculty having access to individual's person difficulties.
- A check-and-balance already exists in the system with the levels of review and departmental committees should not know of individual faculty's personal reason for stoppage, as a privacy issue.
 - It was noted that personal leave and stoppage should be granted for a variety of issues (e.g., military service). Clarification was asked if this was a right or a privilege and the need for language to address this issue.
 - Concerned was expressed that the Senate is being asked to adopt recommendations that were made by a group that is not connected to the Senate. It was asked if the University Promotion and Tenure Committee (UPTC) had gone beyond their mandate (i.e., were they asked to craft changes to policy or only to review the task force report). Senator Coyne, UPTC member, stated they were asked to review the task force report and make amendments not just review the document. Senator Bridges stated the UPTC drafted recommendations that were brought to the Academic Affairs Committee, who in turn chose to bring them forward in their recommendations for a Senate vote.
- Senator Bridges moved, Senator D'Abramo seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate consider the second recommendation (Agenda, page 5).
- Discussion included:
- Senator Nagle stated that at Deans' Council has offered a compromise to the recommendation and that the Deans are opposed to a chance to respond offered at every level. Their offer is that a response only be allowed at the dean's level and an appeal can be allowed at the Provost level. The response would only be allowed at the dean's level.
 - A pattern of criticisms was being ignored; that errors in interpretation of the applicant's accomplishments have been made at early stage and these errors were perpetuated. For example, a department head may make incorrect statements, and those statements are read and used in evaluations at each higher level. It was noted that in the current proposed document every time a recommendation is written based on the applicant's package, the applicant gets a chance to review the recommendation and provide a response so that incorrect statements could be addressed. Concern was expressed that multiple opportunities to respond would drastically slow down the process. Senator Nagel stated the Dean's Council had expressed a similar concerned; thus, their compromise. It was asked if it was known whether other universities have such a policy and whether it was appropriate to have a policy that governs only a few cases.
- Senator Bridges moved, Senator D'Abramo seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate consider the third recommendation (Agenda, page 5).
- Discussion included:
- In the appeals process, Senator Coyne stated the committee reviewed other universities. In most cases, the appeal does not go back to the Provost; rather, the appeal goes to the University President or an university promotion/tenure committee. No one reviews the application twice or their own decision. The role of the appeals committee was discussed: (a) to determine if the process was followed, versus (b) review the merits of the application.

- It was discussed that Promotion and Tenure is a traditional role for the Provost.
- Further discussion involved the role of the UPTC in the application process.

- Senator Bridges moved, Senator D'Abramo seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate consider the fourth recommendation (Agenda, page 6).
- Discussion included:
 - Senator Bridges stated the UPTC did not agree with the recommendation and the Academic Affairs Committee was split on this recommendation. It was decided that the recommendation should come forward to the Senate for a vote.
 - Concerns were expressed for time in rank and the ability for the University to attract/retain strong faculty on campus if they can go up early.
 - The current practice of a third year review is likely to address concerns for those who might go up for promotion and tenure too early.
 - A separate section is needed to address language in the offer letter.

The above recommendations will be tabled until the next Faculty Senate meeting.

- Senator Bridges moved, Senator Wood seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve the fifth recommendation (Agenda, page 6) regarding recognition of the UPTC work and endorse the recommendations for implementation of educational workshops and a best practices manual for promotion and tenure.
- Discussion included:
 - Does the UPTC agree with the Provost's best practices posted on the website. Concern was expressed that the Provost's "guidelines" circumvent the Faculty Senate's role in the process and is the governing of promotion and tenure issues.
 - The need to discuss the document with Provost Rabideau. Senator Bridges indicated he had asked the Provost to submit a list of concerns to the committee. This occurred and none of the recommendations changed in a response to his comments.

The motion to accept Recommendation #5 passed by unanimous voice vote.

ANCILLARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

No report.

CHARTER AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE

Senator Peter Wood, Chair of the Charter and Bylaws Committee, referred to this Committee's report on the request for a **Signature Line for Faculty Senate President**. Senator Wood moved, Senator D'Abramo seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate adopt this committee's recommendations on this issue.

Discussion included:

- The Senate President's signature indicates full support of the Senate on a policy.
- The Senate President would review the documents to determine that it is an issue

that does not significantly does not need to go before the Senate.

The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote of the Senate.

Senator Wood, Chair of the Charter and Bylaws Committee, referred to this Committee's report on the **Faculty Senate Role in College Elections**. Senator Wood moved, Senator D'Abramo seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate accept this committee's recommendations on this issue.

The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote of the Senate.

Senator Wood referred to this Committee's report on the **Nominations and Election Procedures for Faculty Senate Officers**. Senator Wood moved, Senator D'Abramo seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate accept the committee's recommendation on this issue.

Discussion included:

- The need to have informed/knowledgeable senators during voting; thus, voting should be held in March and the need for knowledge about those who run for election.
- The need to have the greatest number of senators' vote; but with a limitation of an absentee ballot to the first round of voting.

The motion passed on a majority voice vote of the Senate (with one no vote).

SUPPLEMENTAL **

It was move this issue up in the agenda. The floor was yielded. Senator Mark Goodman, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Confidence Survey, referred to this committee's report on the Faculty Senate Confidence Survey in Administrators. Senator D'Abramo moved, Senator Dibble seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate accept the recommendations of this committee, and that the survey be sent out expeditiously with IRB approval.

Discussion included:

- The method and procedures for presentation of comments.
- The two questions that were consolidated.

The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote of the Senate.

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Senator Michael Brashier, Chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee, referred to this Committee's report on AOP 13.13 – Leave Policies. Senator D'Abramo moved, Senator Goodman seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate accept the recommendations of this committee.

Senator Brashier presented an overview of the activities and recommendations of this

committee regarding this issue.

Discussion included:

- Concern was expressed that the policy links leave to accrued leave.
- Questions were asked regarding terminology (e.g., parental/medical leave policies). A request was made, based on input from women, to alter the name to University Approved Leave to cover all types of leave. Concern was expressed the name would be similar to another soon to be approved policy.
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At this time quorum was lost.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon the loss of quorum, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm.

Submitted for correction and approval with assistance from Senator June Garner.

Carlen Henington, Secretary

** This item was addressed out of sequence with the Agenda.