

ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE UNCORRECTED MINUTES OF MEETING ON JANUARY 18, 2002

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular meeting in Coskrey Auditorium of Memorial Hall at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, January 18, 2002.

Members absent and excused were Mike Goatley, David Huddleston, Patricia Lestrade, Pearson Liddell, Bill Maslin, Nancy McCarley, Vincent McGrath, Gary Myers, William Smyer, and Paul Thaxton.

The meeting was broadcast real-time over the World Wide Web. The file will be left active for a few weeks and can be reviewed by clicking on the Senate homepage at http://www.msstate.edu/Org/FS/faculty_senate.html.

Chair Dan Embree called the meeting to order.

Chair Embree referred to the minutes of the December 7, 2001, Regular Meeting as distributed. Senators made corrections from the floor. Senator Follett moved, Senator Crowell seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve the minutes of December 7, 2001, as corrected. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote of the Senate.

Chair Embree announced that Stanly Godbold has resigned from the Senate. There are two sabbatical replacements, David Foote and Michael Rice.

GUESTS

Chair Embree introduced guests: Dr. Charles Lee, Interim President, and Dr. George Verrell, Interim Provost.

CHARLES LEE, INTERIM PRESIDENT

Dr. Lee provided the following information:

- A general faculty meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2002, at 3:45pm in McComas Hall. At this time Interim President Lee will present his plans and discuss budget issues.
- Interim President Lee expressed his appreciation for the support by the faculty, board members, and others.
- At the present time, the Joint Legislative Budget Committee's recommendation is a \$13.5 million reduction for MSU's general university budget and a similar amount for the Agricultural Division. This figure includes a loss of some educational enhancement funds derived from sales tax revenues and elimination of Budget Contingency Funds which were provided last year.

- The Mississippi House of Representatives passed the Ayers Resolution with a vote of 100-20. The Senate is scheduled to take up this resolution today, and Lee expects it to pass.
- Chair Embree asked about the possibility of MSU employees having Spring Break off. Interim President Lee responded that he has asked Chief Administrative Officer, Gaddis Hunt, to look into this matter but that there may be a problem with one institution's unilaterally making such a decision.
- Senator McCann asked about the change in reading days and exam schedule. She stated that it was causing major problems for the School of Architecture. Interim President Lee responded that he would look into this matter and report back. Chair Embree stated that the Senate had received this problem as a piece of business and that it had been assigned to the Ancillary Affairs Committee which is not ready to report its findings.
- Senator McCann also asked if it was possible to obtain figures showing how much the budget has been cut over the past 10-15 years. Interim President Lee responded that he will show a graph at the general faculty meeting that addresses long-term cuts..
- Senator Montgomery asked if the possible upcoming 2% raise was scheduled for faculty only or for everyone. Interim President Lee responded that this raise, should it come to pass, would be for everyone including the Agricultural Division.
- Senator Wood asked if there were any plans for a tuition increase and, if so, how large. Interim President Lee responded that there has been no IHL Board discussion of a tuition raise. There was some discussion about reserves and to what extent fund reserves would be used to assist the university through these tight budget times. Interim President Lee expects that the IHL Board would want MSU to have exhausted all possibilities within the university before a tuition increase is announced.
- Senator Diehl asked if reserves were used, would the reserve category include designated unrestricted funds. Interim President Lee responded that that may depend on the university's ability to help the IHL Board understand the terms that are uniquely used in higher education to describe various revenue sources. MSU's fund balance contains a higher percentage of designated unrestricted funds than many of the other institutions.
- Senator Crowell commented that many campus beautification projects are going on in the midst of the current budget crises and that he was told that these projects were funded by donors. Would it be possible for Interim President Lee and others to encourage donors to specify their funds for scholarships or items directly related to academics? Interim President Lee responded that he would try to encourage the alumni to donate in this fashion, but donors tend to have their minds made up when it comes to how their dollars are spent.
- The IHL Board has named members to serve on the MSU Presidential Search Committee. Carl Nicholson, Jr. (chair), Amy Whitten, Betty Neely, Scott Ross, Bryce Griffis, and Roy Klumb. A campus advisory committee and the chair of that committee will be appointed at the next Board meeting.
- Senator Williams asked if it would be possible for the deans and other administrative officials to read the governance document and make a sincere effort to follow the

substance and spirit of the document. Interim President Lee responded that he would encourage everyone to do so.

GEORGE VERRELL, INTERIM PROVOST

Dr. Verrell provided the following information:

- Interim Provost Verrall took the opportunity to thank the members of the Faculty Senate for taking the time to serve on the Senate.
- Senator Williams commented that over the past few years, very few staff have received raises with the notable exception of the staff employed in the Provost's Office. He asked Interim Provost Verrall for fairness and equity and justice in the distribution of raises and the elimination of favoritism. Interim Provost Verrall agreed that this particular instance should not have happened and said that he is sensitive to this issue and that such instances will not happen during his term.
- Interim Provost Verrall discussed his agenda which comprises the following:
 - The budget and the future which includes the problem of teaching freshmen,
 - SACS accreditation issues,
 - Faculty salaries,
 - Meridian,
 - MSU Library,
 - Phi Beta Kappa,
 - Issues of evaluation, accountability, and program review,
 - Searches,
 - Promotion and tenure decisions,
 - Extra pay issue,
 - Data management, technology and equipment
- Senator Bridges asked if he would use the same advisory process for promotion and tenure decisions predecessor used. Interim Provost Verrall responded that he would rely on what the faculty say but will seek advice from others. How he will seek this advice has not yet been determined but will probably not be in the same manner as in the past.
- Chair Embree asked Interim Provost Verrall if he really needed additional advice after having received the recommendations of the departments and/or colleges. Interim Provost Verrall responded with the example of an instance where there is no faculty promotion and tenure committee, therefore no faculty recommendation and the department head recommends tenure, but the dean does not recommend tenure. This case would place the Interim Provost in the situation of having to make the call and, particularly in areas where he has little or no expertise, he feels that he could only make a decision after consulting with the appropriate persons.
- Chair Embree asked if Interim Provost Verrall would be willing to make his decision official or have it sanctioned once he has determined how he will seek additional advice. Interim Provost Verrall responded that he needs advice from individuals with the proper knowledge especially in disciplines where he, himself, is lacking.

- Senator Crowell commented that there was a “Memorandum of Understanding” between the previous president and the Meridian campus. This Faculty Senate reviewed the memorandum and stated that there were policies and procedures intertwined and sent it back to the Provost for revision. Would Dr. Verrall please check on the status of this document and report back to the Senate. Interim Provost Verrell responded that he would.
- Chair Embree asked if operations in Meridian or elsewhere off campus, in specific disciplines, will be consistent with and subordinate to, the department to which they belong on this campus. Interim Provost Verrell responded yes.

Senator Crowell moved, Senator Light seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate voice its appreciation to both Interim President Lee and Interim Provost Verrell for attending this meeting and speaking to its members. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote of the Senate.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Embree began his Chair's Report by sharing the following remarks:

- Chair Embree and Vice Chair Diehl attended yesterday's IHL Board meeting. The concept of “overhead” caused confusion among the board members and staff.
- The President of the IHL Board, Bill Crawford, announced the timetable for the search for the new MSU President stating that it would begin immediately with on campus interviews to be in early May. This plan fell apart due to the search at Southern and board members not wanting to conduct these two searches at the same time.
- Carl Nicholson, Chair of the MSU Presidential Search Committee, asked Chair Embree if he could come to the February Faculty Senate meeting and explain the process. Chair Embree agreed.
- Chair Embree will also invite Senator Gordon to the February meeting on the advice of Interim President Lee.
- An advisory committee comprising about forty people will participate in the middle phase of the selection process for the new MSU President. It will narrow the slate of candidates down to about twelve. At this point, interviews will be scheduled with the Search Committee and then on-campus interviews open to faculty, staff and students.
- Program duplication was also discussed at yesterday's Board meeting. MSU has the most unique programs.
- Chair Embree reminded Senators that everyone will receive an electronic packet for the February meeting but if someone wants a paper packet, to contact the Faculty Senate Office.

REPORT OF THE VICE CHAIR

Vice Chair Diehl announced the Spring Roundtable scheduled for February 23rd and reminded everyone that the topic for discussion will be the governance document. He also reminded

everyone that the participants will comprise eight faculty selected from the Faculty Senate, eight faculty selected at large and eight persons selected by the Interim President. If anyone is interested, or knows of someone who is interested, please contact Vice Chair Diehl.

Vice Chair Diehl referred to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate Vice Chairs Report as distributed. Senator Williams commented on the academic honesty issue and announced that the television program, 48 Hours, will have a future episode on this topic that focuses on MSU and asked if this was discussed at any of the Deans Council meetings. Vice Chair Diehl responded that this television program was not discussed but that the University plans to sponsor a forum this spring on academic honesty.

REPORT FROM FACULTY SENATE DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

University Research Council – Senator Cinnella reported that a list of requests for Congressional appropriations for FY 03 is being finalized. The Research Faculty/Staff title translation “project” is complete. The FY03 Legislative requests from the Division of Research were briefly discussed and two high-priority projects that could be funded using bonds are expansion of the ERC and renovation of the Student Union.

BUSINESS SENT TO COMMITTEES

Letter from Dr. Rent, re: AOP 12.37 -- Chair Embree assigned this issue to the Student Affairs Committee.

BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEES

Letter from Dr. Chambers, re: Handbook Change -- Senator Crowell moved, Senator Hood seconded, to refer this issue to committee. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote of the Senate. Chair Embree assigned this issue to the Ancillary Affairs Committee.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

No report.

ANCILLARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

No report.

CHARTER AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE

Senator Pote moved, Senator Crowell seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate accept the report from the Charter and Bylaws Committee. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote of the Senate.

Senator Pote, Chair of the Charter and Bylaws Committee, referred to this Committee's report pertaining to a letter received from Dr. Clyde Williams requesting that the Senate ascertain if the University Governance document was violated when prerequisite modifications were made to eight mathematics courses with approval of the provost but without the approval of the College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee and the University Committee on Courses and Curriculum. The Committee found that there were no mitigating circumstances which warranted the circumvention of the established process the University has in place to accommodate curriculum changes. It is the opinion of this Committee that there are very few reasons to justify the intervention of a single administrator into this entire process. The committee contacted Dr. George Verrall, Interim Provost, to obtain his comments about this report. He stated that, "No single department can know all of the ramifications of a proposed curriculum change. The reason we have college and university committees is so that no single department can make changes that could potentially hurt other departments. Due to the change in administration and an apparent understanding and appreciation of this matter by the interim provost, this Committee finds no action by the Senate is required.

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

No report.

STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

No report.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

No report.

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Crowell moved, Senator Hodge seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote of the Senate.

Submitted for correction and approval.

LaDonne Delgado, Secretary