

**ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE  
UNCORRECTED MINUTES OF MEETING ON NOVEMBER 14, 2003**

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular meeting in the Library Auditorium at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, November 14, 2003.

Members absent and excused were Alan Blaine, Tim Chamblee, Benny Eshee (Sabbatical), Allen Greenwood, Randy Little, Vincent McGrath, and PC McLaurin.

Members absent and unexcused were Greg Dunaway.

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.facultysenate.msstate.edu>.

President Walter Diehl called the meeting to order.

President Diehl referred to the minutes of the September 12, 2003, Regular Meeting as distributed. Senator Wolverton moved, Senator Henington seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve the minutes of September 12, 2003, as amended. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

President Diehl referred to the minutes of the October 10, 2003, Regular Meeting as distributed. Senator Deeds moved, Senator Wolverton seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve the minutes of November 10, 2003, as amended. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**GUESTS**

President Diehl introduced guests: Dr. Peter Rabideau, Provost; and Dr. Charles Rivenburgh, Director Intellectual Property.

**PETER RABIDEAU, PROVOST**

Provost Rabideau provided the following information:

- Rabideau has an interest in exploring learning communities at MSU. Retention rates are high for students in learning communities. President Lee has invited Rabideau to submit a proposal for funding toward learning communities at MSU. Rabideau's proposal will focus on obtaining funding for release time for faculty to develop learning communities. These communities will be primarily aimed at freshmen.
- A joint task force between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs has been created.
- Senator Goodman asked what motivated the creation of the OPs on Use of Computing and Network Resources, University Provided Wireless Phones and Plans, and Misuse of University Assets. Rabideau responded that he did not know. MSU seems to be very formal and very structured about policies and this is new to him.

- Senator Morse asked what Rabideau's plans were for hooding PhD candidates during the upcoming graduation ceremony. Rabideau does not feel strongly about who does the hooding – the major professor or the Provost. Morse stated her strong desire to hood her PhD candidates and Rabideau responded that this would be so.
- Senator Henington requested if it would be possible to have a ramp or step for major professors to stand on when hooding candidates. Rabideau responded that he would approve of providing such a device and would encourage professors to make the decision on whether to use it or not before getting on the stage.
- Senator Wood asked about the seemingly new emphasis on full year (two semester) sabbaticals as opposed to one semester sabbaticals. Rabideau responded that this new emphasis did not come from him, but that he suspects it has to do with the cost effectiveness of each type of sabbatical. A one semester is more expensive than a two semester sabbatical because professors taking a one semester sabbatical are paid full salary and those taking a two semester sabbatical are paid one-half salary for the year. This allows for the department to recoup funds to pay for temporary employees.
- Senator Wolverton stated he had heard that someone, possibly at Mississippi's Institute of Higher Learning Board, was pushing to reduce the number of credit hours to 120 for degrees and could Rabideau elaborate on this. Rabideau responded that he had also heard this. Some years ago, the University of Florida, in an effort to get students in and out of college in a more cost efficient manner, legislatively reduced the number of credit hours toward graduation to 120 hours. This is called the Florida Model and is nationally known, therefore Mississippi legislatures are aware of its existence. Rabideau also mentioned that he seems to remember the statistic that most students change their major 2.8 times before graduating and this causes them to stay in school longer.
- Senator Dohoney asked the status of the Dean's search in the College of Education. Rabideau responded that the search is going very well and there are good candidates in the pool of applicants.
- Senator Nagel asked the status of the Vice President for Agriculture search. Rabideau responded that this search was in the hands of President Lee and he was not involved with it.
- Rabideau stated that he is chairing the search for the Vice President for Research and in about one week, the committee will be holding 'airport interviews' with preliminary candidates. The committee's desire is to quickly shorten the list of candidates and hold on-campus interviews. Senator Diehl requested that the committee avoid splitting the interviews by having some candidates interview before the holidays and others interview after the holidays. Rabideau stated that all interviews would be held either before or after the holidays and not split.
- Senator Embree asked about the new OP on computer use. He stated that this document was written without faculty consultation, but intimately involves the faculty and, as a result of this, the Faculty Senate Committee found major problems in this document. Embree's main point is that the MSU Administration should consult with the faculty about issues that affect the faculty and should do so at the earliest possible stages of an issue, not so that the faculty will be placated, but because there are faculty at this institution who could be of assistance. This would alleviate the possibility of the Administration having to consult with faculty in as adversaries or in a destructive way afterwards. Rabideau responded that he doesn't remember the specifics of this particular OP, but agrees that the document is wrong and needs to be fixed if it allows for unauthorized personnel to enter a person's office and manipulate information on

his/her computer. Embree states that his comments are more about the process than the document and, in this case, the document is just another example of how the process is not working.

- Senator Diehl asked for Rabideau's comments on why the Vice President of the Faculty Senate should or should not be allowed to meet with the Dean's Council. Rabideau responded that the Vice President of the Faculty does and will continue to meet with the Dean's Council, but in addition to these regularly-scheduled meetings, Rabideau wants to start periodically meeting with the dean (just the deans and no one else) to discuss general issues, not business, not specific documents, but what is the future of MSU, what are the priorities, etc.
- Senator Embree stated that he also disagrees with these separate meetings and referred to Rabideau's example of discussing the future of MSU. This type of discussion should have faculty present.
- Senator Pote commented that during her tenure as Vice President of the Faculty Senate, she was invited to the Dean's Council Retreat and appreciated the opportunity to participate.

### **CHARLES RIVENBURGH, DIRECTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Dr. Rivenburgh referred to his handout and gave an update on the Technology Licensing Program at MSU. The University has a generous royalty sharing policy, has increased its metrics and continues to strive toward its benchmarks in research. Rivenburgh credits the faculty for this success.

### **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

President Diehl's report included the following remarks:

- Diehl is in the process of summarizing the Roundtable held on November 1<sup>st</sup> and will make it available to the general faculty soon.
- Due to 9-11, the situation with foreign faculty acquiring eligibility for permanent employment has become more difficult. The rules for permanent employment have changed recently and Diehl encourages all new faculty who fall into this category to start their application process immediately. Ann Bell will be conducting or making available workshops pertaining to this topic and Diehl will forward the particulars about these sessions as soon as Bell gives them to him.
- The MSU General Faculty voted 255 to 23 to allow Meridian to become independently represented on the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. An election for this representative is to take place immediately and the representative may start attending Faculty Senate meetings as of January 2004.
- A fourth new OP dealing with harassment is given on pages 66-72 of the Agenda. The Faculty Senate will not be addressing this OP today.
- There is a new MSU employment system which will go into effect in December. All applications for any MSU employment will be submitted electronically. No paper applications will be accepted in the future. Senator Cathcart commented that this is another example of an administrative decision being made that effects faculty without faculty input.

- Senator Cathcart then stated that it is apparent that the Administration is not hearing the faculty when we say we need input so what can we do to change the situation? Diehl responded that he didn't have an answer.

### **REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

Vice President Reichert referred to the Senate Vice President's report as distributed and added the following remarks:

- Reichert reported that Diehl has recently been elected as the Chair of the University Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi.
- Senator D'Abramo referred to the September 15, 2003, Deans Council minutes reading the statement "This semester, the President's Office has received no complaints concerning inability to get in school or classes this year" and stated that he had heard many student complaints to this effect and why were these complaints not getting to the President? Diehl commented that the students need to make their complaints known to the appropriate personnel and not just to friends and family.
- Senator Embree commented that it is destructive to the education of undergraduates for the Administration to always honor student demands to open more sections without hiring more professors to teach them. When there are not enough PhD professors to teach classes, they are taught by Instructors or Lecturers who may or may not be qualified to teach a particular course. This leads to the "dumbing down of MSU."
- Senator D'Abramo added that MSU faculty are being asked to teach more sections without additional compensation and with negative effects toward their promotion and tenure.
- Senator Embree also asked how the University could expect to apply for Phi Beta Kappa status when it is cutting its faculty in the humanities.
- Senator Diehl contributed that if the message that the MSU Administration is getting is that there are no complaints from students about getting into classes, then the first thing everyone needs to do is send a different message; send the REAL message from the appropriate sources to the appropriate sources.
- Senator Embree concluded that the correct, real message definitely needs to go to the President and that MSU has a President that responds particularly well to word that comes from outside the University. These facts that we know to be true ought to make their way into the newspapers and the public media so that the parents of this state may know that we are "dumbing down the education of their children." The President will respond in due course to that faster than he will to the faculty's pleas.

### **REPORT FROM FACULTY SENATE DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES**

**Research Council** – Senator Cinnella referred to the Council's report as included in the agenda packet with no additional comments.

**Campus Planning Committee** – Senator Deeds provided the following remarks:

- The Master Plan phase is about to begin which involves the elimination of Five-Points as we know it.

- Plans are to build a new Visitor's Center with an additional parking area.
- Senator Henington asked if there was a schematic available for public view and President Diehl responded that it was on the Internet.
  - <http://msuinfo.ur.msstate.edu/campusplan/>
- Senator Henington if anyone knew what the red flags and the painting on the lawn between McCool and Allen Hall were for. The response was no.

### **BUSINESS SENT TO COMMITTEES**

Senator D'Abramo moved, Senator Wolverton seconded, that the Senate suspend the rules to allow President Diehl to send OPs to committee and to consider the reports today. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**OP XX.XX – Use of Computing and Network Resources** – President Diehl assigned this issue to the Executive Committee.

**OP XX.XX – University Provided Wireless Phones and Plans** – President Diehl assigned this issue to the Executive Committee.

**OP XX.XX – Misuse of University Assets** – President Diehl assigned this issue to the Executive Committee.

### **BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEES**

Senator Wolverton moved, Senator Henington seconded, that the Senate suspend the rules to allow Mr. Richard Heard to speak before the Senate. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**Letter from Student Association, re: Academic Forgiveness** – Senator Wolverton moved, Senator Berk seconded, to refer this issue to committee. The motion passed on a majority voice vote. President Diehl assigned this issue to the Academic Affairs Committee.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

President Diehl referred to the Executive Committee's report on OP 01.12 Policy and Procedure for Use of Computing and Network Resources at Mississippi State University. Senator Diehl moved, Senator Reichert seconded, that the Senate endorse OP 01.12 with the following modifications:

1. Under the heading of Academic Freedom, add "confidentiality" to the first sentence to read "Free expression of ideas and confidentiality is central to the academic process."
2. Add a new section entitled Unauthorized Monitoring following the

section on Academic Freedom with the following text. "Computer use will not be monitored without authorization based on reasonable cause of violation of this policy. Non-emergency computer and local software maintenance will not occur without notification and consent of the faculty member."

The motion passed on a Senate vote of 41-0-0.

President Diehl referred to the Executive Committee's second report on OP 01.15 University-Provided Wireless Phones and Plans at Mississippi State University. Senator Diehl moved, Senator Wolverton seconded, that the Senate endorse OP 01.15.

The motion passed on a Senate vote of 42-1-0.

President Diehl referred to the Executive Committee's third report on OP 01.XX Misuse of University Assets. Senator Diehl moved, Senator Wolverton seconded, that the Senate endorse this OP 01.XX.

The motion passed on a Senate vote of 40-1-0.

#### **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Senator Morse, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, referred to this Committee's report initiated by a letter from Dr. Matthew R. Lee regarding the use of cell phones in classrooms. Senator Morse moved, Senator Reichert seconded, that the Senate endorse the following recommendations:

1. That faculty and teaching assistants be made aware of the increasing number of instances of cheating facilitated by technological devices such as cell phones. Faculty could be made aware of this problem through e-mail communications from the Provost's office each semester so that they can set individual course policy regarding technological devices in the classroom.
2. That appropriate units should conduct short awareness and education workshops to inform faculty and staff.

The motion passed on a Senate vote of 42-0-0.

#### **ANCILLARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

No report.

#### **CHARTER AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE**

No report.

## **FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

No report.

## **STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Senator Hodge, Chair of the Student Affairs Committee, referred to this Committee's report initiated by a letter from Dr. John Harkness requesting that the Senate discuss the status of gay faculty and staff on campus and advocate the inclusion of sexual preference nondiscrimination language in official documents of Mississippi State University. Senator Hodge moved, Senator D'Abramo seconded, that the Senate accept this report.

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

## **UNIVERSITY RESOURCES**

No report.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**AOP 13.14 – Grade Appeal and Academic Review Board** – President Diehl reassigned this matter to the Academic Affairs Committee.

**Centers and Institutes Policy** – President Diehl reassigned this matter to the Ancillary Affairs Committee.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Submitted for correction and approval.

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LaDonne Delgado, Secretary