



## **ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE**

### **Uncorrected Minutes of November 13, 2020**

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular monthly meeting in the Parker Ballroom of the Hunter Henry Center and via Webex at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, November 13, 2020.

Members absent and excused were: Jenny Du, Allison Eddy, Charles Freeman, Rebecca Long, and Rosangela Sebba.

Members absent were: Gnaneswar Gude

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

President Robichaux-Davis asked for any corrections to the minutes of the October 9, 2020 meeting. Hearing no corrections, President Robichaux-Davis accepted the minutes as presented.

### **GUESTS**

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

Dr. Keenum said Mississippi ended FY21 with a \$48 million surplus. He said he is optimistic as we enter the new calendar year and begin the second half of the fiscal year. We do not know what the future holds in term of the response to the ongoing pandemic and the economic situation moving forward, but we are in a good spot right now financially. We have to plan for a positive outlook moving forward while maintaining the flexibility to adapt as needed as we have proven we are able to.

Dr. Keenum said the new legislative session will begin in January. He said his number one priority will be to obtain an increase in funding from the legislature. If our revenues continue to

stay positive as they have in the first four months of the fiscal year, this is a possibility. Dr. Keenum said he has met with many members of the state legislature including the Governor, Lt. Governor, Speaker, and key committee chairs. They have recognized that this is a time where making a good investment in higher education is needed. Dr. Keenum said any increase in funding received will be prioritized for faculty and staff compensation.

Dr. Keenum said we have had great success with securing bond funding over the last few years. This year, we will be seeking bond funding of \$15 million for phase I for a new Architecture, Art and Design facility. We received funding from the last session for planning and design work for the new facility. This year's request also includes a request for funding to begin renovations of Dorman Hall. These two projects are the main focus of the bond request being submitted to the legislature.

Dr. Keenum said the enrollment numbers for this semester were recently released. Only two institutions in the IHL system experienced an increase in enrollment, Mississippi State University and the University of Southern Mississippi. The other IHL institutions experienced reductions in their enrollment. Mississippi State University had the highest enrollment growth in the system. Dr. Keenum said this is a testament to the faculty and their outstanding quality of instruction. Our students want to be here, and they are looking to us for the opportunity to continue their education. Dr. Keenum said it makes him proud to see what we have been able to accomplish despite the challenges we have faced. We still face tremendous challenges going into the spring semester. Dr. Keenum said we need to continue to grow. Distance education and our Bachelor of Applied Science programs are two areas with a high growth potential. The Master of Physicians Assistant Studies program will begin instruction in January. We are the only institution in the state offering this program.

Dr. Keenum said we have done extremely well this fall. We were given a directive by IHL to offer as many in-person classes with a face-to-face component as we possibly could. He said he is extremely proud of the efforts and leadership of the faculty which allowed us to offer the most courses with a face-to-face component of any IHL institution. Dr. Keenum said technology was installed in all of our classrooms and the students, after 2 or 3 weeks, figured out that they did not have to attend their face-to-face courses in person and could join via the technology instead. Dr. Keenum said he hopes by working with faculty going into the spring semester we can change this dynamic. He said he has been working with the Provost and college deans to reengage and require our students to go to class. We are entering uncharted waters in the spring and do not know what to expect so we have provided the greatest flexibility we can think of for our students and faculty. Dr. Keenum said we have had some complaints and issues with instruction but they pale in comparison to other institutions including other institutions in this state. The IHL board has asked for even more in-person courses to be taught in the spring. As a

result, Dr. Keenum said he has asked Provost Shaw to work with faculty and faculty leadership to offer more face-to-face classes than we did this semester. He said teaching in-person benefits the students and the faculty, but it must be done in a safe manner. Dr. Keenum said he is encouraged by the fact that only a handful of faculty have contracted the virus and that student infections have held steady despite the uptick in case numbers across the country. The success that we have seen is attributable to the plans put in place which were developed by Dr. Clifton Story, Dr. David Shaw, Dr. Regina Hyatt, their teams, and all of us. Dr. Keenum said he wants to continue this going into the spring. If we continue to work together, we will be able to accommodate teaching our students, performing research, and servicing our state during the spring semester. Mississippi State University is essential to the state. We must continue to perform our duties to Mississippi.

Dr. Keenum said the main message he wants to convey today is how appreciative he is for all that the faculty does for this university. Faculty have rolled up their sleeves and shown a can-do attitude. People have taken notice of this university and how we stand out as a leader and are surpassing anyone's expectations. Dr. Keenum said none of this would be possible without faculty. Dr. Keenum said he wants to thank faculty from the bottom of his heart for what they have done to help him personally and what they have done to help the leadership team at MSU.

### **Dr. Dana Franz, Chair, University Committee on Courses and Curriculum**

Dr. Franz began by thanking the Senate for allowing her to address them. She said there is a new mandate that requires all campus 1 courses being offered as distance courses to be approved as campus 5 courses. In October we were notified by SACS-COC that a federal mandate requires that we return to normal operating procedures in the spring semester and follow all curriculum approval processes in place. For MSU, this means all courses must receive approval through the UCCC. This means any campus 1 only course with an online component must start the approval system by December 15<sup>th</sup>. The approval process will occur during the spring semester.

Dr. Franz said college and departmental chairs have been contacted to make the process flow as smoothly as possible. The departments and colleges will be allowed to have one letter for approval and may break up the approval process. The UCCC will meet more frequently to accommodate the increased number of courses for approval to meet the May 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

Senator Pelaez asked what other universities are doing. She said faculty are extremely busy right now and she asked if MSU is being stricter than other institutions. Dr. Franz replied every institution is under the same federal mandate. She said each institution must adhere to their

curriculum approval system. Dr. Franz said she knows faculty are busy at the end of the semester and that is why it was decided to just require that the process be started by December 15<sup>th</sup>. She said if faculty are already teaching in an online format in the fall, they already have a syllabus for an online environment. She said the multiple steps in the approval process allow for edits which can allow faculty to improve the syllabus as it goes through the process in the spring. Senator Pelaez asked what the penalty for non-compliance is. Dr. Franz said she was not sure what the repercussions are for not adhering to the mandate.

Senator Gregory asked if there could be changes to this mandate under the new federal administration in January. Dr. Franz replied she does not know what the new administration will do, but our semester begins on January 6<sup>th</sup> and we must have the process started by then.

**Dr. Clifton Story, Executive Director, University Health Services**

Dr. Story thanked the senators for allowing him to address them. He said he is thrilled with how the semester has progressed. He said he had concerns about what might happen and how we would have to respond. Dr. Story said he feels the reason we have been able to accomplish this is because of community. The students have bought in to mask wearing and the faculty have played a huge roll in getting us through the semester. All of us have played our small role in getting us through the semester. Dr. Story said the two rules which have the greatest impact on our success are: wear your mask and stay 6 feet apart. He said if you do that you will markedly decrease the chances of contracting the virus. Following these rules will also keep you from being identified through contact tracing and being forced into quarantining.

Dr. Story said we are almost there, but let's finish strong and push ahead. We must continue to adhere to these rules and encourage those around us to do so as well. We also have to encourage those who are sick to get tested or at the minimum not come to class and possibly infect others. Dr. Story said we are holding our own, but he is concerned about the numbers across the state and across the country. We have recently seen roughly 5-7 cases per day which is much better than the 30-40 cases per day we were seeing earlier in the semester.

Dr. Story said he is also concerned about the students going home and coming in contact with others in their non-MSU community. We are providing the students with the opportunity to get tested before they return home for the break. He asked the senators to encourage their students to get tested before leaving campus. He said he would like to test as many students as possible to avoid spreading the virus to their families and home communities.

Senator Gregory asked if there would be any changes in testing protocol for the spring semester. She said the concern is students are not getting tested so they do not have to quarantine. Batch or random testing has been suggested. Dr. Story replied the Student Health

Center currently has ample testing supplies including over 9,000 antigen tests, roughly 19,000 PCR tests, and a rapid PCR test on hand. There are discussions of additional testing measures which may need to be implemented. He said the testing protocol will change based on the current conditions of the pandemic. Dr. Story said he wished he had a way of conducting mass testing which had good buy-in and did not raise concerns of violating individual liberties or appearing punitive in nature.

Senator Pelaez asked if the seven positive students a day are identified through random testing or voluntary testing. Dr. Story replied the results are gathered through a combination of testing symptomatic patients, identified close contacts, random testing, and the various testing initiatives undertaken. He said the majority of the cases identified are through patients entering the clinic because of either symptoms or identification of potential exposure.

Senator Pelaez asked where students can be tested before returning home. Dr. Story replied there will be drive-through testing offered in the days prior to the student's departure.

Senator Pelaez asked if there is any scenario in which MSU would close campus next semester. Dr. Story replied there is no set thresholds and all of the current circumstances at the time will be considered by the task force, the Provost, and the President to make decisions at that time.

Senator Mlsna asked if plans are in place to vaccinate faculty, staff, and students if a vaccine becomes available. Dr. Story replied there are plans to distribute vaccinations if or when they become available. He said it is difficult to identify a definitive plan due to the uncertainty of the quantity of vaccine made available to us, but there is currently a plan to handle mass vaccination.

Dr. Story said he welcomes feedback and questions. Any questions or comments can be emailed directly to him. He said if we all remember the two rules of wearing your mask and staying six feet apart, we should be in pretty good shape.

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

Dr. Fountain said he is glad to be back in front of the senate again. He thanked Dr. Keenum for selecting him to serve the university in this role. He said he was appointed in December of last year so he would have six months to shadow the outgoing Faculty Athletic Representative, Dr. Steve Turner. When the pandemic hit in March, everything either went virtual or was cancelled. Dr. Fountain said he found going virtual beneficial due to the fact that the group of SEC Faculty Athletic Representatives used to only meet around certain events, now they meet bi-weekly to discuss matters. This has allowed him much greater exposure to people, and he has been able to get to know them as a result.

Dr. Fountain presented his written report, which can be found at the end of these minutes. He explained that the threshold number for action to be taken for the multiyear rate in the first column of the provided table is 930 or below. This number represents a 50% graduation rate. The two figures incorporated in this calculation are retention and progress.

Dr. Fountain said on March 12<sup>th</sup>, at the SEC Men's Basketball Tournament, the Faculty Athletic Representatives were meeting. The Athletic Directors, Compliance Directors, and University Presidents were also meeting at the tournament. The decision to cancel the tournament was made that day. On March 13<sup>th</sup>, the decision was made to suspend all athletic activities, competitions, practices, and organized gatherings. Dr. Fountain said the primary concern of the NCAA, SEC, and MSU was, and will always be, the safety of the student athletes and the others participating. Shortly after the suspension of sports, the SEC created a Return to Activity Medical Guidance Task Force to monitor Covid-19. This group began to study what it would take for a safe return to competition. Dr. Clifton Story serves as MSU's representative on this committee. Dr. Fountain said he applauds the efforts of Mary McLendon and the Sports Medicine staff for the incredible job they have done to provide education and mitigate risk factors. Dr. Fountain said both Dr. Story and Dr. Loony have been instrumental in providing guidance at both an institutional and conference level. He said measures put in place on day 1 are still in effect today. The SEC partnered with an experienced and well qualified third-party provider for testing. PAE is housed on campus as it is at other SEC institutions to conduct PCR testing for all athletic teams. The frequency of testing is guided by three risk categories based on interaction. The high-risk category includes sports such as football and basketball and is tested 3 times a week. The intermediate risk category includes sports like baseball and track and is tested 2 times per week. The low risk sports such as tennis and golf are tested weekly. All of the sports are tested within 3 days of any competition. The associated personnel are also involved in this process. Dr. Fountain said he is glad to see that we are able to safely hold competitions as our student athletes want to be able to participate in these events.

Dr. Fountain said several NCAA Division I policies have been affected by the pandemic. In May, Institutions were granted the authority to self-apply a season of competition waiver for spring sports. This permission was extended to include fall sports in August and winter sports in October. Recruiting dead periods have been extended multiple times and currently are set to expire on January 1, 2021. Since March 13<sup>th</sup> there have been 7 extensions to this policy and as a result there has been no in-person recruiting activity allowed. There are also no in-person camps for prospective student athletes allowed. The NCAA has issued a 2-year suspension of the academic progress reporting penalties. The NCAA also approved emergency legislation specifying that no institution shall require a student to waive their legal rights with regard to Covid-19 as a condition of athletic participation. This means students can opt out of competition without facing any consequences

Dr. Fountain said one of the proudest moments the Faculty Athletic Representative gets to participate in are the nomination of student athletes for post-graduate scholarships. There are two at the SEC level, the Boyd McWhorter and the Brad Davis Community Service. The nominees from the Boyd McWhorter Award in the spring were MaKayla Waldner, a Mechanical Engineering student from soccer, and Mitchell Storm, a Business Administration student from basketball. The Brad Davis Community Service nominees were Kody Schexnayder, a Human Sciences student from football, and Athena Yang, a Kinesiology student from women's golf.

The SEC Council on Racial Equity and Social Justice was created by Commissioner Sankey in June, 2020. This council was charged with identifying resources and strategies to assist with ongoing education and professional development for athletics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, to identify resources and strategies to provide support in a range of areas to underrepresented minority staff and student athletes, to identify opportunities and strategies for ongoing athletic programs including diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives including hiring, and to identify opportunities and strategies through its academic relations program to support university-wide diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. Dr. Angel Brutus, Assistant Director of Athletics/Counseling and Sports Psychology, and Chris Woods, Head Coach for Men's and Women's Track and Field, are representing MSU on this council.

Dr. Fountain said a voting initiative by the NCAA disallowed any team activities on November 3<sup>rd</sup> to allow the students an opportunity to vote. There is an NCAA Division I Working Group on Transfers which is planning to make their report at the Board of Governor's meeting in January 2021. Currently it is being discussed to guarantee student athletes one transfer during their eligibility without penalty, but they must remain academically eligible and maintain academic progress. There is also a requirement for a notification period.

Dr. Fountain said Christine Jackson, Executive Director of Athletics Academics, has assumed the additional role of Student Athlete Development. Ann Carr previously held this position but has become the Chief Diversity Officer for Athletics. Dr. Fountain said the Templeton Center is normally jam-packed with people, but now everything is being done virtually. He said Christine and her team are doing a tremendous job and should be commended.

Dr. Fountain said name, image and likeness are currently being discussed. The expectation is that there will be federal legislation which addresses this.

Dr. Fountain said he is always available to faculty if he can help in any way. He encouraged faculty to contact him with issues, questions or recommendations.

**Dr. David Shaw, Provost and Executive Vice President**

Dr. Shaw began by saying the main message that Dr. Keenum was conveying during his address, for the senators who could not hear due to the audio issues, was to say thanks. He said it has been a tough semester for everyone at the university. It is understood that this has been a taxing semester. He said Dr. Keenum also spoke about the fact that state revenues have been consistently above estimates since the beginning of the fiscal year. This bodes well as we move into the next legislative session in January. Dr. Shaw said there are a lot of unknowns still. Dr. Keenum also spoke about fully recognizing that this has been a challenging semester from the standpoint of trying to adjust to the world we are now living in and in particular the effect it has had on attendance. He said information will be sent from Public Affairs to reinforce the message to go to class. We will be moving back to a stronger enforcement of our attendance policies while recognizing that there are students who will have to miss. He said we do not want them to come to class if they are experiencing symptoms, test positive, or been required to quarantine. Dr. Shaw asked the senators to take a close look at the message that will be sent out and to address any questions or suggestions directly to him or through the senate leadership. He said the intent is to strengthen the faculty's hand in terms of trying to make sure the students fully participate in classes next semester. Dr. Shaw said that this is not to impact the health and safety practices put in place this fall. All current practices including the sanitizing practices and extended time between classes will be maintained. Dr. Shaw said he believes we are moving into a more knowledgeable situation next semester due to the positive and negative experiences of this semester. He said he believes our classrooms are one of the safest places in the state.

Dr. Shaw said there are four active searches ongoing. The first candidate for the Vice President of Research and Economic Development was interviewed this week. There will be two more candidates interviewed next week. Dr. Shaw said he is chairing the search committee for the Vice President for the Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine. Applications for this position are currently being received. The first meeting to review applications will be held in mid-December. The goal is to hold on-campus interviews in late January or early February. The search for the next Dean of the College of Education is progressing nicely. Dr. Angi Bourgeois is chairing the committee and said she and the committee are very pleased with the quantity and quality of the candidates. Dr. Shaw said Dr. Jim Dunne will begin serving as the interim Dean of the College of Education effective January 1, 2021. The search committee to identify the next Dean of University Libraries is being chaired by Dr. Peter Ryan. They held their first meeting and have been given their charge. The committee had a great conversation about the qualifications and the goals for characteristics of candidates. As a result, they have finalized the position description and it should be posted shortly. Dr. Shaw said all four of these positions are vitally important for the health and future of this institution.

Dr. Shaw said the Student Success Task Force hopes to present their final report within the next couple of weeks. Dr. Shaw said he applauds the hard work this committee has done. The Instructional and Clinical Faculty Task Force is continuing their discussions. There are far-reaching ramifications for this topic that require a lot of consideration on a number of different aspects. The report of this committee will be considered by Faculty Senate, Associate Deans Council, and Deans Council for vetting. Dr. Shaw said he understands this will not be a short conversation given the substantial edits to the Faculty Handbook. The Online Education Task Force, chaired by Dr. Brent Fountain, is currently in discussion and is also facing difficult conversations. He said he knew when he created this committee that the way we have built the financial model to incentivize the creation of new courses and content was going to be a touchy subject. This committee's report will be further considered by other entities on campus. Dr. Shaw said he has told the college deans that nothing would be implemented within the next year to make sure the proposed changes do not have unintended consequences. The Student Evaluation of Teaching Task Force is discussing what has been a hot topic on this campus for a long time. There is a lot of diversity of thought as to what constitutes effective student evaluation of teaching and what role it plays. The task force is considering what weight evaluations should hold, what other mechanisms we can use to evaluate excellence in classroom teaching, and what are the questions and what approach do we need to take to attain our goal. Dr. Shaw said the committee is not close to a final report because they are grappling with the really hard questions. He said we need a well-considered report which encapsulates a very diverse perspective that we can all be proud of in the end. Dr. Shaw said the results of some of the task forces may spawn additional task forces, and that is fine.

Senator Popescu said a survey was conducted of the students in her college and possibly other colleges which asked about their impressions so far with regard to teaching, classrooms, and the like. She asked if the results of this survey are publicly available. Dr. Shaw replied he is not aware of who conducted the survey. He said he will check into it and report back.

Senator Gregory asked if Dr. Shaw had an update regarding her question from the previous meeting about excluding teaching evaluations for the prior spring semester and the current fall semester due to concerns over the impact of Covid-19. She also asked how it is being communicated that students need to wear their masks all of the time now that we are moving into more face-to-face teaching. She said she is hearing complaints from certain units who are not making their students wear masks. She also asked about social events on campus. She said these have become a concern for faculty. Senator Gregory said the release of a picture of an un-masked homecoming court makes faculty worry we are sending a mixed message. Dr. Shaw replied the university is working really hard to find the right balance with regard to extracurricular activities. We tried to create situations in which it is carefully monitored and we were doing what we believed was the right thing to do from a health and safety standpoint. He

said he is not familiar with the picture Senator Gregory is mentioning but he will check with Student Affairs to try to find out more information. Dr. Shaw said the challenge is to create opportunities for students to be provided with sanctioned social events during which we can monitor and enforce our protocols. He said the worry is if these sanctioned events are not offered, we would have unsanctioned events with no monitoring or observance of the health and safety considerations. Dr. Shaw said one measure adopted is the required testing of students prior to attending an event. He said this measure was very successful. A few students were identified to have the virus through this process. A few students also learned that they previously had the virus through this process. Dr. Shaw said the university has been trying very hard to not allow violations of the regulations in place. Dr. Shaw said he will reinforce the message that mask wearing and social distancing are required several times before the beginning of the spring semester. He asked that anyone aware of any problem areas on campus report them to him so he can address them. Dr. Shaw said with regard to Senator Gregory's first question, we have to adhere to IHL guidelines. He said he has communicated to the deans and department heads that the results of evaluations during the spring and fall semesters should be taken with a compassionate approach which considers the oddities associated with the semester. Dr. Shaw said he will personally be reviewing all of the P&T packets and will be making sure that the results of the student evaluations are not used in a punitive way.

President Robichaux-Davis asked Dr. Shaw to speak to the question of what happens if we do not adhere to the guidelines of the new federal mandate during Dr. Franz's presentation. Dr. Shaw replied the letter from our accrediting body was a surprise. There was no advanced notice of the change in the requirements. Dr. Shaw said the requirements must be addressed as risking our accreditation has dramatic consequences. The easiest and best approach to bring us into compliance was chosen. The Registrar's Office, college deans, and department heads are working to best utilize the space on campus to accommodate as many faculty who want to return to face-to-face instruction next semester. Dr. Shaw said the timing of the receipt of the letter was unfortunate since we had begun to release the spring schedule for pre-registration. He said we do not have a choice but to take this mandate very seriously.

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

It is hard to believe this is our last meeting of 2020! It seems like yesterday we were beginning the semester and focusing on "can we just make it to Labor Day"! Now, here we are with only ten days left until the end of this one-of-a-kind semester. As I have said before, thank you for all you have done to make this semester a success. Without the dedication of you and all of our faculty and staff, this would not have been possible. As we end this semester and

throughout next semester, we must continue to follow the protocols established months ago in order to remain healthy, but I am confident that we will do so.

Many of the university standing committees on which I serve have met this past month, but weekly COVID-19 meetings and preparations for Spring 2021 have remained a priority. We continue to discuss ways to ensure that our students and everyone in the MSU community remain healthy and continue to adhere to the mitigation strategies currently in place. Using some of the lessons learned this semester, we are in discussion about attendance policies for Spring 2021 as well as safely returning to more in-person meetings. The COVID-19 Website will soon be updated to remove documents that are now updated and to update documents that should remain. We will continue to employ the safety measures of wearing face coverings, maintaining social distancing, washing hands frequently, and using the sanitizing wipes provided to us to help keep our workspaces and classrooms clean. As I learn of colleagues across the country with programs that are being shut down due to circumstances related to COVID-19, I remain filled with gratitude for our administration who has made it a priority that everyone remains employed during this time. While we are all dealing with many levels of stress, I am so thankful that our employment is not a cause of worry.

This past week was Homecoming and while it was certainly a different homecoming, evidence of this was certainly seen around campus and through the “Stay Homecoming” social media campaign. The MSU Alumni Association used “#StayHomecoming” to share with alumni various videos and homecoming week challenges. It was nice to see such festivities and spirit during a time when the usual festivities could not take place.

We are currently hosting the nominations for the SEC Faculty Achievement Awards. Please consider nominating colleagues who are Full Professors and have taught predominantly undergraduates. Details of the nomination requirements are on the Faculty Senate website.

As this semester comes to an end, I wish each of you a Happy Thanksgiving! I encourage you to spend some time to reflect on your own successes and lessons learned for this semester and build in some “down time”. I hope after taking some time to slow down a bit, that you are energized and then ready to plan for the Spring 2021 semester using the successes and lessons learned from Fall 2020 to strengthen your teaching, research and service. To those of you teaching in the Winter Intersession, thank you and I hope it is a huge success. Based on the number of course offerings and the number of students taking advantage of this opportunity, it looks to be a huge success already.

**Status of AOPs:**

The following AOPs are not under review to the best of my knowledge, but are past the four-year review cycle:

<b>AOP</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
10.05	Nepotism	12/5/2012
10.08	Classroom Regulations	4/26/2016
13.06	Sabbatical Leave for Faculty Members of State IHL	6/9/2014
31.02	Legal Resident Status	2/5/2013

### **Reports from Committees on which I Serve:**

*Athletic Council* – This council met on October 14<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Angel Brutus from the Athletics Department’s Counseling and Sports Psychology Program was a guest speaker. She shared with us how the student athletes are supported from a counseling perspective. They use a three-tiered approach: Education, Prevention, and Intervention. Christine Jackson, the Executive Director of Athletic Academics, gave us a report on advising for Fall 2020 which included a breakdown by college of the majors of all student athletes. The College of Education has the most student athletes, then the College of Arts and Sciences, and the College of Business. John Cohen also spoke to us, reporting how successful the first football game was, as well as the soccer and volleyball games.

*COVID-19 Future Planning Task Force* – We will be offering drive-through COVID testing for students near the end of the semester to prevent them from potentially being positive when they return home. We will also be suggesting that they self-quarantine before returning back to campus in January. Additional information from our meetings continues to be provided by the Provost through emailed updates, as well as other email correspondence from the Division of Student Affairs. If you have any feedback and/or thoughts regarding our current COVID-19 situation or plans for next semester, please send them my way or communicate them directly to Drs. Hyatt and Shaw. We continue to discuss each and every concern at our meetings.

*Diversity Council* – This council has not met yet.

*Executive Council* – The committee has not met since my last report.

*Executive Enrollment Management Committee* – This committee met on October 20, 2020. Enrollment updates were given which indicated that overall, our enrollment remains higher than ever. Retention rates look good. The addition of 10 more Navigators and an additional graduate assistant in the Office of Student Success seems to have helped. Reporting of progress grades is up across all campuses. We are seeing more problematic upperclassmen than in the past. They are feeling overworked and are being impacted by isolation anxiety. Our undergraduate admissions for Spring 2021 are slightly up; transfer applications are slightly up,

as well. Applications for Fall 2021 are down, overall. Our recruiters are making as many school visits as they can, hosting many virtual events, as well as some campus events. The “Preview Day” type events have been scaled down, but these “Fall Fridays” events have been successful.

*Game Day and Special Events* – This committee met on October 14<sup>th</sup> and November 4<sup>th</sup> primarily to discuss football game day operations. The first game day was nearly flawless. We learned a lot, but it went as smooth as possible. Mask wearing inside the stadium is still a concern, but overall, everyone is adhering to the required policies. There were no parking issues or traffic issues. None of the first aid stations were used. Cashless transactions worked great and we received lots of great feedback concerning the concession offerings. The Famous Maroon Band was moved for the next home game so that a reconfiguration of student tickets was possible. Students will be required to sit in pairs or groups of four, at most. This worked well for the game against Texas A & M. The new Mississippi state flag was flown at the Homecoming Game against Vanderbilt. Student tickets were scanned at only one gate for homecoming. Like previous half-time performances this season, the homecoming presentation will be via video. Gates will open two hours and fifteen minutes prior to kick-off. All gameday information can be found at [www.hailstate.com/gameday](http://www.hailstate.com/gameday) and [www.hailstate.com/feature/COVID](http://www.hailstate.com/feature/COVID). We are now starting to work on plans for basketball games. There will be a buffer section between the court/teams and the fans.

*Information Technology Council* –This council met on October 6<sup>th</sup> and November 3<sup>rd</sup>. ITS is working on putting the P& T document online and hosting a Promotion and Tenure Repository System. The College of Engineering has been piloting this system and it has been demo-ed for all the deans. It uses an Extender Banner document center to house promotion and tenure documents. It required t-factor authentication. The October update of WebEx included a “Hard Mute” function. Since March, there have been over 6.4 million minutes of WebEx meetings! We will be having a Network Refresh for both wired and wireless networks. Forty additional classroom upgrades because of a \$1 million upgrade approval. We will be developing a new Firewall Operating Policy and a new Mobile Operation Policy. Steve Parrot has agreed to be one of our guests for the January Senate Meeting to give us an update on all things pertaining to ITS.

*Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee* – This committee has not met since July 1<sup>st</sup>.

*Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee* – This committee has not met since my last report.

*Sustainability Committee* – This committee has not met since my last report.

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

**Academic Deans Council –**

October 2020 Meeting

- Held on October 20<sup>th</sup>  
November meeting has been moved to November 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Community Engagement Committee –**

Email received on September 1 stated that we will have ‘No meetings in the Fall 2020 semester’. I do not anticipate having a report for this committee for the remainder of the Fall 2020 semester.

**Committee on Campus Access –**

Has not met since I have been assigned to the committee. (updated 10/8/2020)

**Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee –**

There were no agenda items for a November meeting, so no meeting was held. Has not met since I have been assigned to the committee.

**Textbook Committee –**

Has not met since I have been assigned to the committee.

**Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery Committee –**

Has not met since I have been assigned to the committee.

**FACULTY DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES**

**BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEE**

1. AOP 12.04 Final Examination Policy (Academic Affairs)
2. AOP 12.09 Class Attendance and Reporting Absences (Academic Affairs)
3. AOP 13.01 Emeritus Appointments (Faculty Affairs)

President Robichaux-Davis presented the slate of business to be sent to committee. The motion to send the business to the indicated committees passed by unanimous electronic vote.

## STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Academic Affairs

#### 1. AOP 12.01 Academic Add-Drop

Secretary Follett, on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.01.

The motion to accept the policy as presented passed by unanimous electronic vote.

#### 2. AOP 12.22 Undergraduate Student Courseload

Secretary Follett, on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.22.

The motion to accept the policy as presented passed by unanimous electronic vote.

**Ancillary Affairs**                      **No Report**

**Charter & Bylaws**                      **No Report**

### Faculty Affairs

#### 1. AOP 12.08 Requirements for Degrees, Academic Minors, Certificate Programs, and Consortial/Contractual Agreements

Senator Sherman-Morris, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.08.

Senator Pelaez said she knows that some coordinators deal with scheduling and advising. She asked if it was the department's prerogative to assign this task to coordinators. Senator Sherman-Morris said the introductory portion of the policy states these are minimum requirements and additional responsibilities may be assigned by the department head or dean. Senator Pelaez asked if making sure coordinators are not over tasked could be addressed in the policy. Senator Sherman-Morris replied her committee removed some items from the list which they felt were an additional burden to make the list reflect the required minimum. She said there is a compensation component of the policy language. Senator Sherman-Morris said her committee feels the language is open enough to allow for the range of possibilities departments might experience.

The motion by the Faculty Affairs Committee to approve AOP 12.08 Requirements for Degrees, Academic Minors, Certificate Programs, and Consortial/Contractual Agreements as presented passed by unanimous electronic vote.

## **2. AOP 13.22 Guidelines for Adjunct Faculty, Visiting Faculty, Visiting Scholar, and Visiting Executive Appointments**

Senator Sherman-Morris, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.08.

Senator Pelaez asked why the committee chose to replace “professionals” with “people”. She said “people” does not reflect qualifications. Senator Sherman-Morris replied the committee was trying to be more precise and felt the specific requirements of individuals is discussed in the sections below this term. Senator Pelaez asked if the Faculty Affairs Committee would accept a friendly amendment to replace “people” with “qualified individuals”. Senator Popescu said she believes the language in the original document is acceptable. She asked if there was a group identified which did not fit into the existing list of scholars, professionals and executives. Senator Sherman-Morris said the committee chose to use “people” so the list of groups did not continue to grow. She said “professionals” was proposed to be added before the policy came to Senate. Senator Mlsna said he felt it was important to not limit the possibilities. He asked what if we wanted a scientist or coach or someone else who does not fit in these three categories. Senator Mlsna said the second sentence says, “Access to highly qualified people”. He said an alternative possibility would be to use just the word “professionals”. Senator Pelaez said it is important to have scholars included. Senator Mlsna asked if there are scholars who are not professionals. Senator Sherman-Morris said she feels the discussion between scholars and professionals is evidence that “people” should be used. She said each category has specific qualifications written in. She said broadening the term in the introductory paragraph does not diminish the qualifications required.

Senator Musser said a policy approved by Senate earlier changed the Vice Provost signature line to “Executive Vice Provost”. He said the last paragraph of the policy also states, “Executive Vice Provost”. He asked that the signature line be changed accordingly. Senator Sherman-Morris accepted Senator Musser’s request as a friendly amendment.

Senator Pelaez asked if her friendly amendment was accepted. Senator Sherman-Morris accepted Senator Pelaez’s friendly amendment to add “qualified” before “people” in the first paragraph of the Policy/Procedure section.

The motion of the Faculty Affairs Committee to accept AOP 13.22 Guidelines for Adjunct Faculty, Visiting Faculty, Visiting Scholar, and Visiting Executive Appointments as amended passed by unanimous electronic vote.

### **3. Update: Clinical/Instructional Task Force**

Senator Sherman-Morris, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, presented an update to the status of the consideration of the Clinical/Instructional Task Force report.

Senator Musser asked that the committee address the fact that lecturers are not considered faculty in the handbook but are considered faculty by Human Resources. Senator Sherman-Morris replied the committee would discuss the matter. She said as of now they are not in either category because they are temporary employees. Senator Musser said he understands they are temporary, but there are lecturers who have worked at MSU for 15-20 years which does not seem temporary. Senator Pelaez said lecturers do not have the ability to vote. She said some lecturers in her department are the only employees which deal with a particular language. While these proposals may help with compensation, they do not provide stability for our long-term lecturers.

Senator Savage asked if the clinical position would have the opportunity for tenure. Senator Sherman-Morris replied the clinical positions and Instructional positions will not be tenure-track.

Senator Musser said tenure is used to protect teachers from speech and slander accusations. He said having a non-tenure teacher seems to be contrary to the intent of tenure.

Senator Pelaez asked if the chart would be the only item which would have to change as a result of these proposals in the Faculty Handbook. Senator Sherman-Morris replied she would have to look through the Faculty Handbook to determine if there are any additional references. She said she did check the promotion and tenure portion of the document and it would not be changed since it only addresses tenure-track faculty. Senator Pelaez asked if there would have to be an addition to the handbook which addresses promotion of these categories since they are not tenure-track. Senator Sherman-Morris replied OP 56.06 addresses the promotion of non-tenure track employees. She said one of her committee's recommendations last year regarding promotion of lecturers and instructors was to create a new operating policy or modify OP 56.06 to address promotions of these faculty. She said promotion regarding those discussed in this proposal would be addressed through policy and not the Faculty Handbook.

Vice President Barrett asked, in the interest of time and considering this is an informational report, if further questions could be forwarded to the Faculty Affairs Committee. President Robichaux-Davis agreed any further questions can be submitted to the committee.

## **Student Affairs**

### **1. AOP 10.14 The Adoption and Sale of Textbooks and Other Instructional Material**

Senator Eakin, on behalf of the Student Affairs Committee presented the report on AOP 10.14.

The motion of the Student Affairs Committee to approve AOP 10.14 as presented passed by unanimous electronic vote.

### **2. AOP 12.10 Recognition of Undergraduate Achievement**

Senator Eakin, on behalf of the Student Affairs Committee presented the report on AOP 12.10.

The motion of the Student Affairs Committee to approve AOP 12.10 as presented passed by majority electronic vote.

**University Resources**

**No Report**

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **PENDING BUSINESS**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Senator Carskadon made a motion to adopt a resolution stating: “The Faculty Senate extends its deep and sincere gratitude and appreciation to President Keenum, Provost Shaw, Vice President for Student Affairs Hyatt, Executive Director of University Health Services Story and the entire leadership team for their exemplary transparency and cooperation, their tenacity and flexibility, and their courage and grace in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic so as to minimize medical danger and consequences for faculty, staff, and students alike, and to successfully continue the educational, research, and service missions of the University during this unprecedented crisis. Senate likewise expresses its deep and sincere gratitude and appreciation to all MSU staff for their resolute and unfailing service during this time. Finally, the Faculty Senate recognizes and thanks all MSU students for their patience, sacrifice, and adaptability in pursuing their studies under highly unusual and trying circumstances, and we applaud all faculty for their extraordinary efforts and dedication to this end.”

Secretary Follett seconded the motion.

The motion to adopt the resolution passed by unanimous electronic vote.

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

The motion to adjourn passed by unanimous electronic vote at 5:13 p.m.

Submitted for correction and approval.

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Randy Follett, Secretary

Jason Cory, Administrative Assistant II

# NCAA Division I 2018 - 2019 Academic Progress Rate Institutional Report

Institution: Mississippi State University

Date of Report: 11/ 11/2020

This report is based on NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR) data submitted by the institution for the 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 academic years. Institutions are encouraged to forward this report to appropriate institutional personnel on campus.

[Note: All information contained in this report is for four academic years. Some squads may still have small sample sizes within certain sport groups. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act's (FERPA's) interpretation of federal privacy regulations, institutions should not disclose statistical data contained in this report for cells made up of three or fewer students without student consent.]

Sport	APR			Eligibility /Graduation		Retention	
	Multiyear Rate (N)	Multiyear Rate Upper Confidence Boundary	2018 - 2019 (N)	Multiyear Rate	2018- 2019	Multiyear Rate	2018 - 2019
Baseball	969 (115)	NIA	98 1 (29)	995	1,000	941	962
Men's Basketball	975 (52)	NIA	1,000 (13)	1,000	1,000	948	1,000
Men's Cross Country	977 (12)	996	NIA	1,000 <sup>•</sup>	NIA	955*	NIA
Football	984 (366)	NIA	1,000 (90)	991	1,000	970	987
Men's Golf	980 (51)	NIA	1,000 (12)	970	1,000	979	1,000
Men's Tennis	974 (34)	N/A	1,000 (7)	983	1,000	964	1,000
Men's Track	963 (171)	NIA	963 (45)	951	939	966	987
Women's Basketball	978 (62)	NIA	964 (15)	975	964	982	963
Women's Cross Country	979 (61)	NIA	980 (13)	983	962	975	1,000
Women's Golf	986 (37)	NIA	1,000 (10)	1,000	1,000	973	1,000

• Denotes data representing three or fewer student-athletes. In accordance with FERPA's interpretation of federal privacy regulations, institutions should not disclose statistical data contained in this report in cells made up of three or fewer students without student consent.

NIA - No APR or not applicable.

N = Number of student-athletes represented.

<sup>1</sup> Denotes APR that does not subject the team to ineligibility for postseason competition based on institutional, athletics and student resources and the team's Graduation Success Rate.

<sup>2</sup> Denotes APR that does not subject the team to ineligibility for postseason competition due to the team's demonstrated academic improvement.

<sup>3</sup> Denotes APR that does not subject the team to ineligibility for postseason competition due to the squad-size adjustment. The "upper confidence boundary" of a team's APR must be below 930 for that team to be subject to ineligibility for postseason competition. Squad-size adjustment does not apply to teams with four years of APR data and a multiyear cohort of 30 or more student-athletes.

<sup>4</sup> Denotes APR that does not subject the team to penalties due to the team's demonstrated academic improvement.

<sup>5</sup> Denotes APR that does not subject the team to penalties due to the squad-size adjustment. The "upper confidence boundary" of a team's APR must be below 930 for that team to be subject to penalties. The squad-size adjustment does not apply to teams with four years of APR data and a multiyear cohort of 30 or more student-athletes.

<sup>6</sup> Denotes APR based on a one year cohort, not subject to ineligibility for postseason competition and/or any penalties.

<sup>7</sup> Denotes APR based on a two year cohort, not subject to ineligibility for postseason competition and/or any penalties.

<sup>8</sup> Denotes that team is not subject to ineligibility for postseason competition and/or penalties based on institutional resources.

<sup>9</sup> Denotes APR that requires an APP Improvement Plan be created for this sport.

# NCAA Division I 2018 - 2019 Academic Progress Rate Institutional Report

Institution: Mississippi State University

Date of Report: 11/11/2020

Sport	APR			Eligibility /Graduation		Retention	
	Multiyear Rate (N)	Multiyear Rate Upper Confidence Boundary	2018 - 2019 (N)	Multiyear Rate	2018- 2019	Multiyear Rate	2018 - 2019
Women's Softball	995 (102)	<i>NIA</i>	991 (29)	1,000	1,000	989	980
Women's Soccer	985 (139)	<i>NIA</i>	982 (36)	992	984	977	981
Women's Beach Volleyball	()	<i>NIA</i>	<i>NIA</i>	<i>NIA</i>	<i>NIA</i>	<i>NIA</i>	<i>NIA</i>
Women 's Tennis	1,000 (32)	<i>NIA</i>	1,000 (10)	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Women's Track	986 (144)	<i>NIA</i>	994 (42)	975	988	986	1,000
Women's Volleyball	995 (56)	<i>NIA</i>	964 (15)	980	964	989	964

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