



ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE

Uncorrected Minutes of October 9, 2020

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular monthly meeting in the Union Ballroom and via Webex at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, October 9, 2020.

Members absent and excused were: Jimmy Avery.

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

President Robichaux-Davis asked for any corrections to the minutes of the September 11, 2020 meeting. President Robichaux-Davis said one correction was submitted prior to the meeting to fix a 2,00 to 2,000 as intended. Hearing no additional corrections, President Robichaux-Davis accepted the minutes as amended.

GUESTS

Ms. Ra'Sheda Boddie-Forbes, Vice President for Access, Diversity, and Inclusion

Ms. Forbes began by thanking the Senate for the opportunity to address them. She said she has the great opportunity of serving as the Vice President for Access, Diversity, and Inclusion at Mississippi State University. She said she greatly appreciated Dr. Keenum's leadership, and the leadership of Dr. Shaw and others involved in creating this division at MSU. One of the things Ms. Forbes really appreciates about the charge given to her is that access, diversity, and inclusion are not to be seen as an add-on to what we do at MSU, but instead needs to be embedded in the core of what we do. The make-up of our student body consists of 40% from low income areas based on Pell eligibility, almost 40% first-generation college students, almost

26% identifies with an underrepresented racial or ethnic minority group. Ms. Forbes said we have a duty and responsibility to support our students including our most vulnerable student body. The work that has happened around student success has been centered around students being college ready. She said it is very important that the students are college ready, but this centers our work that as an institution we should be student ready. We have to ensure that student success, equity, diversity, and inclusion is embedded in the work that takes place.

Ms. Forbes said she would like to speak to how this work will be undertaken and how we can build on what has already been done. She said one thing that was important to moving forward was to combine the different entities for student success for our vulnerable populations and bring them together in the Division of Access, Diversity, and Inclusion. TRiO, Promise, Thrive, The Holmes Cultural Diversity Center, and the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion will be unified under the division. She said she plans to work across units as all units are essential to ensure our students are supported. Ms. Forbes said one thing she knows to be important is closing the gap between faculty diversity and student diversity. Some work has already been done around this. Pipeline Programs have been created with the Graduate School. One of these programs which began just a few years ago is the SREB Scholars Program which provides financial support, mentorship, and academic support for students in the first or final years of their terminal degree. Research has shown these two years to be the most challenging for underrepresented students. Work has also been done with the Graduate School to increase the number of McNair Scholars brought to the university.

Ms. Forbes said a partnership has been formed with Human Resources to work on the ways in which faculty are recruited, including how positions are advertised. A few weeks ago, we got institutional memberships with the Chronicle of Higher Education and HigherEdJobs.com which allows for more visibility of the faculty positions available at MSU. She said she would continue to work with deans, department heads, and hiring managers to ensure the pools for faculty and staff positions are diverse. Ms. Forbes said she cannot give details as the announcement has not been made yet, but MSU has applied to be a member of a cohort that will allow us to diversify our faculty in the STEM fields.

In 2012, IHL gave the charge to develop a diversity action plan. Part of this plan included a Diversity Leadership Council. One of the challenges faced in implementing this council was whose responsibility was it to do what. At the time we had the President's Commission on the Status of Minorities and the President's Commission on the Status of Women. She said it was not clear where someone who belonged to multiple identities should go. She said one thing she really appreciates about the new structure of the Diversity Leadership Council is that it allows us to think of diversity and inclusion in an intersectional way. She said she envisions the structure of the Diversity Leadership Council to include a committee within every college with

the chair of that committee serving on the university Diversity Leadership Council. In addition, representatives from other entities must be included such as Human Resources, Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Faculty Senate, Staff Council, Alumni, and others. Ms. Forbes said this council will report to her and enhance the work that is being done around diversity and inclusion. The charge to the Diversity Leadership Council will be: "To work on university-wide goals, activities, and metrics to support diversity, inclusion, equity, and access at Mississippi State University. Colleges and units will work to create and implement action plans to promote access, diversity, and inclusion within the framework of the university's mission and strategic plan. Assist the university in developing and maintaining strong relationships and pipeline programs with communities, community colleges, k-12 institutions as well as business, civic, and cultural organizations. Identify, plan, and support initiatives that will encourage, promote, and recognize diversity on campus. Direct our attention to issues regarding diversity, inclusion, equity, and access at MSU as well as in our community".

Ms. Forbes said she would like to learn from the senate how her division can support the work that is taking place, how senators see themselves working with the division, and to answer any questions the senators may have.

Senator Gregory said she was concerned with how the committees would be constructed to represent the intersectionality of diversity on campus. She asked if Ms. Forbes would be providing guidance with regard to the various committee formations. Ms. Forbes replied her plan is to provide the deans with a layout of the way the division suggests these committees be formed. She said the ultimate goal is for the unit committees to have graduate students, junior faculty, tenured faculty, support staff, department heads, etc. She said the goal is to create these councils to allow the work to take place. She said part of the charge of the committees is to develop a diversity action plan which cannot be done without hearing the voices of all the different groups in the college. Ms. Forbes added that the representatives from the other stakeholder units on the Diversity Leadership Council will not just consist of upper management although administrators must be included to address the sustainability and longevity of the work that takes place.

Senator Kelly said the President's Commission on the Status of Minorities and the President's Commission on the Status of Women recognized significant contributions to equity, diversity, and inclusion through their annual awards. She asked what the plan is to address this function moving forward. Ms. Forbes replied the awards will continue. She said not only does IHL have an award, MSU will have awards as well that are looked at from an intersectional standpoint. She said she believes we have to honor and celebrate the work being done.

Senator Kelly said there was a non-binding document circulated outlining the make-up of the Diversity Leadership Council. She said this document only had 3 guaranteed positions for

faculty. There was one position for faculty from each of Gender Studies, African American Studies, and the Faculty Senate. She said it may be the case that the chairs from the college committees may end up being faculty, but there is no guarantee. She said there are over 45 faculty between Gender Studies and African American Studies. She said these faculty specialize in the study of race/ethnicity or gender/sexuality and it seems like it may be a missed opportunity and it is concerning to her to see such little faculty representation. Ms. Forbes replied she believes it is important to point out that the Diversity Leadership Council is a guiding council. She said her recommendation to the deans is that the chairs of the committees be faculty members. She said the other important thing to understand is that there will be task forces developed. She said the Diversity Leadership Council will not be the only voices heard and the council is there to guide the work. She said she has had the opportunity to consult with other SEC institutions and MSU is one of the few that does not already have a council that looks like this. Through discussions with the institutions that do have this structure, she has noted that it allows them to come together in a way that allows the work to be done.

Senator Eakin asked what the timeline is for the development of the councils. She also asked who the point people to contact at the college level if faculty are interested in serving in this capacity. Ms. Forbes replied the goal is for the council to launch in January 2021. She said the dean for each college would be the point of contact unless they have assigned the task to someone else. She said some colleges already have diversity committees such as the College of Business. Information will be distributed as the details are sorted out.

Senator Gregory asked what the university policies are for indigenous peoples. She asked what initiatives are in place to recruit this group. Ms. Forbes replied a Native American Student Association was created in the spring semester. She said there has been discussion of specialized preview days much like we do for Latinx. She said she is also working with Extension Services on some recruitment opportunities.

Senator Tagert asked if there was a point of contact established to assist in the recruiting of students if grants are sought. Ms. Forbes replied Tyrel Jernigan is the Coordinator of Diversity Initiatives. She said he works with departments and units on campus to help with recruitment opportunities.

Dr. David Shaw, Provost and Executive Vice President

Dr. Shaw began by saying he hoped the senators get a sense of what he and Dr. Keenum have known for quite some time, that Ra'Sheda Boddie-Forbes is the exactly the right person we want in this role. He said, in reference to Senator Tagert's earlier question, there is discussion ongoing about how to set up the organizational chart for the new division. He said he does not want the organization to create another silo. The organizational structure will show the

linkages between the new division and the existing divisions. Dr. Shaw said when creating the promotion package for justification to Human Resources, the position description ran to 4 pages in length. He said this speaks to the expectations that we have for this institution as well as Ms. Forbes.

Dr. Shaw said the search process for the Vice President for Research and Economic Development was underway before Covid-19 struck. The search committee had already solicited applications for the position and begun the process of narrowing the slate of candidates. The committee has restarted the process and has approached the previous applicants to determine their interest in the position. They have also evaluated several others whose applications have arrived in the interim. The initial interviews will be conducted virtually and are slated to begin in the next few weeks. The hope is to have the finalists identified before the Thanksgiving break.

Dr. Shaw said the search committee for the Vice President for the Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine has been constituted and was set to hold the first meeting on March 26th. He said due to the pandemic, the process was halted. Dr. Shaw said, in consultation with Dr. Keenum, it was decided to reinstate the process. The position description has been finalized and posted. He said the first committee meeting was held last week and was a brainstorming session to determine the characteristics desired in the individual selected for this position. Dr. Shaw said the optimistic timeline is to begin evaluating applications on December 1st and to complete the initial selection of candidates by the holiday break. This would lead to scheduling the first round of interviews shortly after the new year begins and having the finalist interviews sometime around mid-February.

Dr. Shaw said the search for the Dean of Education has been advertised. He said he checked with the committee chair, Dean Bourgeoise, earlier in the week and she is very enthusiastic about the number and quality of applicants received so far. Dr. Shaw said he is anticipating on-campus interviews to be conducted for this position shortly after the start of the new year.

Dr. Shaw said the Dean of the University Libraries search has been initiated. He said recently elections were held to identify the faculty representation on the committee. The structure of the committee will be 9 elected faculty members with 6 of them being from University Libraries and 3 from the Faculty Senate. The remaining 8 positions will be appointed. He said Dr. Peter Ryan has agreed to chair the committee. The Student Association and the Graduate Student Association have been approached to provide a nominee. Three staff from the library will be appointed to the committee as well. The remaining spots are still being considered and include individuals external to the university. Dr. Shaw said he hopes to have the appointments finalized in the next couple of days. The hope is to have the position posted around the first of

November. Applications can begin to be screened in February and the hope is to conduct the on-campus interviews before the end of the spring semester.

Dr. Shaw said he has had some great conversations with the Faculty Senate leadership, deans, and associate vice presidents over the past few weeks about what the spring semester needs to look like compared to what we might remember as normal. He said he wants to collectively look at the experiences from the spring and fall semesters to do the best job we possibly can. Dr. Shaw said we have learned a great deal this semester. We have learned about things that did not work as well as we wished they would have, and positive experiences from things that were successful. He said this is a conversation the entire MSU community needs to have as we plan for the upcoming spring semester. Dr. Shaw said one of the goals moving forward is to move back toward AOP 12.09 with regard to class attendance. He said he has heard from so many faculty that we are not seeing class attendance and participation at the level we need for our students to be successful. Dr. Shaw said we are at the point where we are much more comfortable that we are providing a safe learning environment from a health standpoint on campus. Dr. Shaw said we need to offer more face-to-face classes. He said the limited classroom spaces limit the number of face-to-face classes which can be taught. Dr. Shaw said unless something changes dramatically between now and January, which he is not expecting, face coverings will be mandated for the spring semester and social distancing will be required. Dr. Shaw said this semester allowed us to determine how the alternative classroom spaces are working, and this allows us determine which spaces will be used for instruction moving forward. He said some spaces will not be used and some spaces previously identified but not used will be utilized. The target for the spring semester is to hold 70% of classes in a face-to-face format. This was the goal for the fall semester as well. We were able to come close to this goal in the fall but did not quite get there. The goal is to go to more face-to-face instruction, while realizing some classes fit better online than others and understanding there will need to be medical accommodations and individual needs that will need to be addressed. We need to hold our students to a higher standard from an attendance perspective to make sure they are the best prepared for their learning outcome. Dr. Shaw said his message to the deans and department heads is to work with the faculty and learn from the experiments we had in the spring and the experiments currently ongoing to do the best job utilizing technology where it makes sense while not overburdening the faculty. Dr. Shaw said he understands the burden that has been put on faculty. He said he has received considerable input from parents recently who want us to go back to face-to-face instruction. He said a lot of this has to do with the progress reports which were recently released.

Dr. Shaw said we are trying to make progress on the student evaluation of teaching. He said Jeff Dean had a number of conflicting situations and asked to step down as chair. Michael Seymour has agreed to assume the chair position of the task force. He said the task force is

really moving forward now and he is excited to hear the progress they are making and the conversations they are having. Dr. Shaw said he had hoped for a recommendation from the task force by the beginning of summer but due to Covid-19, this did not happen. He said, due to the pandemic, there is no way to safely handle the thousands of paper evaluations. Dr. Shaw said he and the task force ask for faculty forbearance for this semester as the electronic evaluation system will be used for all classes. Dr. Shaw said he wanted to reiterate that he is very excited about the conversations occurring within the task force particularly with regard to deemphasizing the role that student evaluations play and emphasizing some more appropriate tools.

Senator Zuckerman said her question deals with general flexibility as a result of the pandemic. She said she had to submit a grant proposal for her graduate program and realized she would be unable to meet the deadline and subsequently asked for a 1-2 hour extension from the Graduate School. This request was denied and after submitting the proposal the evening of the deadline, learned her submission would not be considered. She said they informed her that she was not alone and that other graduate coordinators were unable to submit their proposals on time. She said she realizes it would be incredibly difficult to write a policy regarding flexibility but asked that consideration be given to flexibility particularly when it relates to internal deadlines. Senator Zuckerman said this relates to work-life balance, faculty mental health, and retention of faculty. She asked that the university consider encouraging this flexibility. Dr. Shaw replied he is disappointed to hear of this situation. He asked Senator Zuckerman to provide him with details so he could look into it further. He said he can point all the way back to the faculty town hall discussion held in the summer where he and Dr. Keenum stressed the need for flexibility and compassion. He said he realizes the workloads are unsustainable and is looking forward to remedying this situation as best we can for the spring semester. Dr. Shaw said priorities need to be set and some things just may not be able to be completed. He said this year more than ever, faculty should take advantage of the other category on the review to discuss the impact of this year on productivity.

Senator Zuckerman said her department is hiring tenure-track faculty this year and after a meeting with Human Resources she learned there are no protocols in place to address hiring during the pandemic. She asked that additional guidance be developed with regard to hiring which addresses such things as travel, possibilities for or waiving on-campus visits, recording meetings, and so on. Dr. Shaw replied he would be more than happy to have conversations about the development of addition protocols in the hiring process. One thing he has discussed with Human Resources is allowing for the flexibility between departments in the hiring process. He said some departments have said on-campus interviews are critical to their area while others have stated it would not be acceptable or normal in their area to bring someone to campus during the pandemic. He said he doesn't want to give guidance that is too restrictive

and winds up creating a problem for some units. Dr. Shaw said he would address this with the task force.

Senator Gregory said she has been hearing faculty more concerned about student evaluations this semester than they were in the spring. She said this is largely due to attendance. She asked if there could be an official announcement or way that faculty can indicate they do not wish to have the spring and fall semester student evaluations counted in this year's annual review. She said the concern is that IHL has mandated that comments be shared and while department heads have been told to be compassionate, there is no guarantee of that. Dr. Shaw said he appreciates the comment and shares the concern. He said he has already had this conversation with the department heads and stressed this, but he would like to consult with the President and see what can be put in writing to reinforce this message.

Senator Williams said the student section at the football game did not appear to be following the distancing guidelines. Dr. Shaw replied there have been a lot of meetings this week to address this situation and determine the next steps to take. He said there was a compound set of problems that contributed to this. He said students were entering with general admission tickets and migrating to the student section. The seating arrangement must be altered for upcoming games. Dr. Shaw said even the number of student tickets distributed is being examined. He said he fully expects the plans made this week for the next game will make it look very different. He said we have to do a better job of policing and enforcement moving forward.

Senator Welch said it is his understanding that graduate students can use tuition waivers for the Winter Intersession, but they will not have the full tuition waivers for the spring semester. He asked if it was possible to see our way around this and allow graduate students to retain full tuition waivers for the spring if they attend the Winter Intersession. He said the graduate students are not able to collect research right now and it would be beneficial for them to get some more classroom instruction out of the way now so they can focus on the research when it becomes available. Senator Welch said we are doing a great job of functioning during the pandemic, but he worries that complacency will start to creep in. He asked if there are plans to launch a campaign to reinforce the guidelines and increase the willingness to comply. Dr. Shaw said there will absolutely be a push to reiterate the guidelines and reinforce compliance. He said we are doing very well and if we let up we will be back in the position of having to find an alternative to do what we do. Dr. Shaw said, in response to Senator Welch's first question, he is very sympathetic to the situation outlined, but the Winter Intersession has to pay for itself. He said this would represent a significant hit to our already tight budget. Dr. Shaw said administration explored and tried to provide as much flexibility as possible for being able to

take a class now and backing off of classes in the spring, but there is a cap in place for the tuition waivers.

Senator Spurlin said the Meridian Division of Business formulated course offerings for the Winter Intersession and were told that they would not be able to offer courses during this term. He asked Dr. Shaw to speak about the decision-making process for which divisions are allowed to offer Winter Intersession courses. Dr. Shaw replied that this is news to him. He said he was not aware of anyone being told they could not offer courses during the session. He said he would have to look into why that was communicated.

President Robichaux-Davis said there is a question in the chat portion of Webex asking about the off-campus parties of 100 students which were approved by the Task Force. Dr. Shaw said the Task Force has discussed how to keep things healthy and safe and have even exceeded the CDC and the Governor's guidance. He said the Task Force also realizes there are a number of things in our student's lives which have been put on hold. With this in mind, the Task Force has piloted some gatherings with specific guidelines in place to determine if they are effective moving forward. He said the gatherings being discussed are part of this pilot program. One of the guidelines was that random testing would be performed on the participants. If the participant was selected for testing and refused the test, they were excluded from the event. The Task Force is evaluating the results of these pilot gatherings and will come to a decision at some point in the future. Dr. Shaw said the Task Force also has a random testing program in place. Many of our peers have even larger random testing programs. He said through recent conversations he has learned that all of the SEC institutions and most of the IHL institutions have seen a decrease in the number of positive cases on their campuses recently. The 2 IHL institutions that have seen a slight uptick in cases are Alcorn State University and the University of Southern Mississippi who both recently allowed students back to campus.

Senator Sebba asked if a third party was employed to help find candidates for the College of Education Dean Search. Dr. Shaw replied, through consultation with the search committee chair, it has been determined that the pool of candidates already received is rather numerous and of high quality. Senator Sebba asked if there is any sense of if faculty will be able to be physically present for the on-campus interviews. Dr. Shaw replied that he anticipates there will be an opportunity for faculty to attend on-campus interviews in person or remotely if they so choose.

Senator Winer asked if any more details will be provided regarding the surveillance testing and asked if this testing will be part of the mitigation and prevention efforts moving forward. Dr. Shaw replied the plan to this point is to do the surveillance testing and the testing of those attending the gatherings to gather data to make informed decisions about the plan moving forward. He said he is not sure what the future plan will be for surveillance testing. Having the

testing completely in-house is a game changer. It allows for very short turnarounds of results. Dr. Shaw said the Task Force is also looking into how to have a more refined antigen testing capability. There is some difficulty with procuring supplies to support this initiative.

Senator Kelly asked if it may be worth dropping formal evaluations for faculty for 2020 given how unevenly certain burdens have fallen across the faculty, particularly female faculty. Those faculty who wish to be reviewed can arrange for an evaluation with their department head and forego a formal record. Dr. Shaw said it is an intriguing idea. He said he can think of several pros and cons right offhand. He said his concern is it could create some unintended consequences. He said he has made a note of the question and it needs to be thought about together.

President Robichaux-Davis asked if the Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Regina Hyatt, had any additional comments. Dr. Hyatt thanked the senators for all they have done and continue to do as we move forward through the fall semester. Dr. Hyatt reiterated Dr. Shaw's earlier comment that there is a balance that we are trying to strike between allowing students to have some semblance of normal student life and the student experience, and keeping everyone safe and healthy. She said the students understand the nuances that come from their ability to go to venues around town as regular citizens and engage in activities we would possibly be concerned about. Trying to create some structure around student life activities has been important. There have been several events over the last couple of weekends that went quite well. She said they were not all parties, but included team building events and retreats as well. Dr. Hyatt said we have been actively engaged in asymptomatic testing and have so far identified 2 residence halls. Student organizations have also been tested such as the band and ROTC. She said we want to continue to think through where we should employ asymptomatic testing.

Dr. Hyatt said she feels it is important to reemphasize that the work of access, diversity, and inclusion is everyone's work. She said she is very thankful for Ms. Forbes and her team and how they will be helping all of us to advance in this area. Dr. Hyatt said she is always available for individuals to reach out and communicate any questions or concerns they have.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

Since our last meeting, the College of Engineering elected a new senator, Dr. Lauren Priddy, to finish out the term of former Senator Ganesh Bora who has left MSU. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Priddy, who is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Biomedical Engineering, to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. We now have a full 50-member Senate.

A majority of the university standing committees on which I serve have met this past month, but weekly COVID-19 meetings, preparations for Spring 2021, and ongoing discussions concerning COVID-19 remain a priority. Having made it successfully through the first half of this semester, it is clear that what we are doing as an MSU community to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is working. We have learned some lessons thus far this semester that we will address for Spring 2021 as we work towards offering more face-to-face courses than were offered this semester. I'm very proud of the student body, staff, and faculty for how they continue to practice the Cowbell Well safety measures of wearing face coverings whenever social distancing is not possible, maintaining social distancing as much as possible, washing hands frequently, and using the sanitizing wipes provided to us to help keep our classroom spaces clean. I remain grateful to our administration for the priority that they give to making sure everyone remains employed during this time. While we are all dealing with many levels of stress, at least we have not had to worry about remaining employed.

The Fall 2020 General Faculty Meeting was held at the Hunter Henry Center on September 22nd. Although we had technical difficulties and were not able to live-stream the entire meeting, the entire meeting was recorded and has been posted to the RH Faculty Senate website. It was also broadcast multiple times on the MSU TV station. If you have not yet viewed this meeting, I hope you will consider doing so. As always, Dr. Keenum's address was thorough, informative, and affirming of all of the great things we have going on here at Mississippi State University.

By the end of the day on Friday, October 9th, you will receive a survey from me asking about various aspects of the Student Evaluation/Opinion of Teaching surveys. Please respond to this survey and reply by Wednesday, October 14th so that I can pass along the results to OIRE.

Once again this year, the RH Faculty Senate will host the nominations for the SEC Faculty Achievement Awards. Please watch for an email asking for nominations and please consider nominating colleagues who are Full Professors and have taught predominantly undergraduates. Details of the nomination requirements will be forthcoming via email.

In light of the shortened semester, I encourage you to take time to reflect on your own successes and lessons learned for this semester once classes have ended. I hope as you begin to think about the Spring 2021 semester, you will use these successes and lessons learned to enhance and strengthen your teaching, research and service.

Status of AOPs:

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

AOP	Title	Date
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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
13.12	Summer School Teaching	3/28/2016
31.02	Legal Resident Status	2/5/2013

Reports from Committees on which I Serve:

Athletic Council – This council met on September 9th. Brent Fountain is the new chair. Christine Jackson, the Executive Director of Athletic Academics, reported that this past year our athletes collectively earned the highest grade point average on record. Overall, 108 student athletes had a 4.0 grade point average and 122 student athletes graduated during the 2019-2020 academic year. For this football season, the football players’ helmets for all football programs across the state of Mississippi will include a sticker “Stronger Together”. “Stronger Together” will also be painted along the sidelines of our football field. In terms of football tickets, the bowl of the stadium will be at 25% capacity while the premium areas will be at 50% capacity. We will play 10 SEC football games this year with 2 open dates built into the schedule in the event that we have to postpone a game because of COVID-19. Other fall sports that will be played with limited fan attendance will be soccer and volleyball. We will compete in 8 soccer games, 4 of which will be at home with up to approximately 263 “seats” available for fans. The volleyball team will also compete in 8 games with two matches a week for 4 weeks. Approximately 500 fans will be allowed to attend each volleyball game. Social distancing and various facial covering requirements will be in place at all sporting events. All athletes who play a fall sport will receive an extra year of eligibility. Overall, it will be a very tight year financially for athletics due to the impact of COVID-19.

COVID-19 Future Planning Task Force – Since the last meeting of the RH Faculty Senate, our discussions have focused primarily on gradually allowing student groups to host events for up to 100 students at off campus outdoor venues with face covering and social distancing requirements in place along with random testing of those students attending such events, random testing of students living in on-campus housing, as well our plans for Spring 2021. A new Dashboard for COVID-19 information has been created and is now live. This new Dashboard presents COVID-19 testing and positive case data in a line graph format, including a 7-day rolling average of positive cases, so that trends can be followed. 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 September 23, 2020. Enrollment updates were given which indicated that overall, our enrollment remains higher than ever. We appear to be heading towards a record enrollment of over 23,000. Retention rates look good as well. The Honors College now has a podcast, “Honorable Mentions” that is available on iTunes, Spotify, Amazon Music, and other venues. The average ACT of our Honors College students is 31 and the average entering high school grade point average is 4.01. We currently have 2,330 honors students. Dr. Ryan reported that the Graduate School enrollment is 16% of the total MSU enrollment with the goal being 20%. He also noted that 28.5% of our graduate students receive some type of financial assistance. Regarding Undergraduate Recruitment and Admissions, our freshman applications are up 2% from a year ago. Additional information about our enrollment data can be found at <https://ir.msstate.edu/research/unofficial.php>.

Game Day and Special Events – This committee met on September 23rd and September 30th, primarily in preparation for the opening football game against the University of Arkansas held on Saturday, October 3rd. The Longest Student Health Center requested permission to set up a flu-shot tent by the student gate, but the committee agreed to table this request until after the Arkansas game. MSU Police Chief Rice noted that there had been no big issues concerning tailgating violations at other SEC schools hosting home games during the first weekend of SEC football. He did not anticipate that we would have any big issues either. The Famous Maroon Band will consist of 100 members for each game and will be seated in Section 15 and spread apart to maintain appropriate social distancing. Student guidelines and protocols for attending football games have been developed and will be shared via email and various social media outlets. Gates will open two hours and fifteen minutes prior to kick-off. All gameday information can be found at www.hailstate.com/gameday and www.hailstate.com/feature/COVID.

Information Technology Council – This council has not met since my last report.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee – This committee has not met since July 1st.

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

Sustainability Committee - This committee met on September 30th. Thus far in the fiscal year, our waste numbers have slightly increased and our recycling numbers have seen a minimal decrease, overall. One of our goals for this year is to see a decrease in contamination, facilitated through education and training. Projected Sustainability Event include Green Week, October 19-23, 2020; Dorm Wars, a student hosted sustainability event; and America Recycles Day, November 15th. Project Sustainability Projects include Website Improvements, a Cartridge/Toner Recycling Program, Mapping Recycle/Waste Bins, and the Retrofitting of Buildings to include Waste and Recycling options (i.e., McCool, McCain, Allen).

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE VICE PRESIDENT

Academic Deans Council –

Met September 17th

Committee on Campus Access –

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

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.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee –

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 12.01 Academic Add-Drop (Academic Affairs)
2. AOP 12.22 Undergraduate Student Courseload (Academic Affairs)
3. AOP 13.22 Guidelines for Adjunct Faculty Visiting Faculty Visiting Scholar and Visiting Executive Appointments (Faculty Affairs)
4. Letter of Request: Teaching Loads, Online Teaching: RE:AOP 13.23 Faculty Workload (Faculty Affairs)

Hearing no discussion, President Robichaux-Davis called for the vote to send the items to their indicated committees for further review. The motion from the Executive Committee to send the items to their indicated committees passed by unanimous electronic vote.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic Affairs

1. AOP 12.17 Undergraduate Academic Fresh-Start or Academic Amnesty

Secretary Follett, on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.17.

The motion from the Academic Affairs Committee to accept AOP 12.17 as presented passed by unanimous electronic vote.

2. AOP 13.03 Responsibilities in Instruction and Curriculum and Attendance at Class

Secretary Follett, on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 13.03.

Senator Pelaez said she is concerned about the requirement in item 12 that requires faculty to provide significant assessment within the first 30 days of class. She said having a significant assessment in the first 30 days of her Spanish class may hurt the students since they are still learning the language. Secretary Follett said while the language in item 12 is new to this policy, it has been pulled directly from AOP 12.01 Academic Add-Drop. This was done to make all of the items relative to responsibilities of the instructor accessible in one location.

The motion from the Academic Affairs Committee to accept AOP 13.03 as presented passed by unanimous electronic vote.

Ancillary Affairs **No Report**

Charter & Bylaws **No Report**

Faculty Affairs

1. AOP 13.09 Credentials for Teaching

Senator Sherman-Morris, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 13.09.

Senator Eakin said with regard to recommendation #4 d, it may be beneficial to say, “experience teaching online courses at Mississippi State University”. She said someone who has taught online at other institutions may not have taught with the best practices we ask of our online instructors. She asked that this be considered as a friendly amendment. Secretary Follett said he believes if an online instructor has taught online significantly elsewhere and did not do it appropriately, they would not pass the CTL evaluation. He said if they taught elsewhere and do pass the evaluation, why not let them teach. He said the CTL evaluation is required to be accredited to teach online. Senator Eakin withdrew her friendly amendment.

Senator Williams said he would like to discuss recommendation #2. He said his wife has a master’s degree in Public Policy and Administration. Part of her research is to look at how public administrators are portrayed in mass communication. She teaches Public Speaking for the Department of Communication since she has more than 18 hours of communications classes. He said recommendation #2 requires a doctorate or master’s degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. Senator Williams said this could prevent someone such as his wife from teaching Public Speaking since Public Policy and Administration is not a related discipline. Senator Williams made a friendly amendment to reword recommendation #2 to say “The instructor of record must possess a doctorate or master’s degree. Additionally, the instructor of record must possess a concentration in the teaching discipline or a related discipline of at least 18 graduate semester hours”. Senator King said she teaches students who want to teach at the Community College level and the wording she uses is “must have at least 18 graduate hours in the teaching field”. Senator Sherman-Morris asked Senator Williams if he would agree to the following language: “The instructor of record must possess a doctorate or master’s degree with at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline.” Senator Williams accepted Senator Sherman-Morris’ suggested edit.

The motion from the Faculty Affairs Committee to accept the committee report on AOP 13.09 as amended by the friendly amendment, passed by unanimous electronic vote.

Student Affairs

No Report

University Resources

1. AOP 11.01 Shackouls Honors College

Senator Marrett, on behalf of the University Resources Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 11.01.

The motion by the University Resources Committee to accept AOP 11.01 as presented passed by unanimous electronic vote.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

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

The motion to adjourn passed by unanimous electronic vote at 4:45 p.m.

Submitted for correction and approval.

Randy Follett, Secretary

Jason Cory, Administrative Assistant II