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University of Mississippi. Faculty Senate

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Faculty Senate
Tuesday, January 27, 2009
Meeting held in 209 Bryant

Senators in Attendance:

Robert Barnard, Mark Bing, Steve Brewer, Allison Burkette, Joe Turner Cantu, Bill Chappell, Yixin Chen, Ben Cooper, Donna Davis, Melissa Dennis, George Dor, Charles Eagles, Allison Ford-Wade, Judy Greenwood, Mary Hayes, Erin Holmes, Brad Jones, Jason Klodt, P.T. Krantz, Joel Kuszmaul, Elise Lake, Laurel Lambert, John Lobur, Jessica Minihan, Chris Mullen, John Neff, Tim Nordstrom, Cesar Rego, Jason Ritchie, Paul Scovazzo, Jesse Scott, Zia Shariat-Madar, Ken Sufka, Durant Thompson, Laura Vaughn, Doug Vorhies, Karl Wang, Jay Watson, Jordan Zjawiony

Senators absent with prior notification:

Angela Rutherford, Elliot Hutchcraft (represented by department substitute), Carmen Manning-Miller, Rickey Burkhead, Lucien Cremaldi, Debra Moore-Shannon (represented by department substitute)

Senators absent without notification:

Rebecca Lowe, Thea Williams-Black, Deborah Barker, Mark Walker, Jan Bounds, Tyrus McCarty, John Williamson, Soumyajit Majumdar

- Meeting opened by Chair Sufka at 7:00 p.m.
- First order of business: Approve December meeting minutes
 - Motioned & seconded; approved with no abstentions
- Second order of business: Faculty Athletic Representative Ron Rychlak addressed the Senate
 - Professor Rychlak manages the intersection between academics and athletics, ensuring that athletes excel academically
 - UM supported the NCAA ban on scouting high school students that athletic manufacturers (such as Nike) sponsored; the NCAA has encouraged such debates on commercialism and the exploitation of student athletes
 - The Faculty Athletic Representative oversees SEC eligibility safeguards, including higher requirements for transfer credits from junior colleges; student athletes may take no more than 2 online courses
 - The UM absence policy states that if student athletes miss class they will not be allowed playing time in athletics
 - Weekend travel time has been cut to limit the time that athletes are away from classes
 - Questions for Professor Rychlak
 - Senator Burkette asked if student athletes are limited to two online courses per semester
 - Professor Rychlak confirmed this limit

- Senator Eagles asked if the football stadium billboard could be powered down during nighttime hours
 - Professor Rychlak agreed that it should be
- Third order of business: Senator Nordstrom from the finance committee reported to the Senate
 - The committee's charge was to make recommendations as to how UM might handle projected budget cuts this year and next
 - In January, UM sustained a 3% (\$2.7 million) budget cut, in addition to a previous 2% cut
 - The first 2% was absorbed centrally
 - Of the \$2.7 million cut, \$262,000 passed to Academic Affairs
 - The Provost's office absorbed \$120,000 of the cut
 - \$142,000 in cuts passed to academic units
 - For the 2010 fiscal year, UM can anticipate another 5% cut (\$4 million), \$2 million of which is expected to pass to Academic Affairs
 - The finance committee is preparing a memo to recommend how deans may spread the spending cuts, ranked by priority:
 - First, absorb centrally as much as possible
 - Second, cut from monies not used for salaries, wages, and fringe (these monies are slim since salaries, wages, and fringe represent 86% of the budget)
 - Third, institute a hiring freeze
 - Fourth, institute cuts in Visiting Professor, Adjunct Professor, and Instructional Assistant Professor positions
 - Fifth, seek additional revenues
 - Senator Nordstrom asked senators to discuss these budget cuts and priorities with their departments and provide feedback to the finance committee
 - The Senate will consider this issue and vote on it at the March 2009 meeting
 - Senator Vorhies advocated ranking "seeking additional revenues" as the top priority
 - Increased enrollment or tuition increases may ameliorate the problem; if both happen, some of these cuts could be covered
 - Senator Kuszmaul asked how the budget cuts would be "centrally absorbed"
 - Senator Nordstrom responded that he had had no real discussions on how absorption would affect academics
 - Chair Sufka mentioned that, facing additional budget cuts and no incoming equity funding, the Senate needs to take a stand
 - Senator Davis asked if the budget could be put online to encourage transparency
 - Senator Nordstrom will advocate for it
 - Senator Thompson asked about the implementation of the rebalancing formula and why would it not help UM's budget

- Senator Nordstrom responded that there is opposition in the state legislature
 - Chair Sufka addressed the reporter from the “Daily Mississippian” and encouraged students to express their opinions to their parents and state legislators
- Fourth order of business: Discussion of the faculty membership selection process on the Strategic Planning Council (SPC)
 - Three faculty members are serving on the council and there is a recommendation that these three serving members continue on the SPC
 - Chair Sufka remarked that the question has been framed in terms of Expertise (those with knowledge of institutional planning) versus Representation (guaranteeing a faculty voice on the SPC)
 - Representatives to the SPC can be senators or appointed by the Senate
 - Senator Dor suggested that the Senate combine the ‘expertise or representation’ continuum by electing two representatives from the Senate and one representative from faculty at large
 - Senator Davis asked how many representatives would be voting members
 - Chair Sufka explained that the first 11 members are voting members
 - Senator Davis expressed concerns that sending faculty representatives could be interpreted as an endorsement of the structure of the Strategic Planning Council
 - Senator Barnard asked if there would there be a safeguard against “stacking” on the SPC (wherein all three representatives would come from the same college or unit)
 - Chair Sufka explained that the deans decided that they would have rotating turns, and that chairs and staff would decide their rotation; currently there is no provision preventing representation from being stacked in favor of one college or unit
 - Chair Sufka remarked that the governance committee could address the criteria for Faculty Senate representation
 - Senator Jenkins remarked there are faculty members that specialize in strategic planning and that the Senate could encourage them to serve on the SPC
 - Chair Sufka responded that such nominations could come from the Senate
 - Senator Eagles moved to table the discussion and send the issue to the Senate governance committee
 - The committee would report back with a method of selecting representatives and the Senate would vote on the proposal at the March 2009 meeting
 - Motioned & seconded; approved with no nay votes and one abstention
- Fifth order of business: Administrative searches
 - Chancellor search

- On February 17, 2009, the IHL board will meet at the boardroom of the Ole Miss Inn to get input from campus constituencies
 - The IHL is requesting nominations of faculty to serve on an advisory committee of 20 to 25 members
 - A consulting group will solicit nominations for Chancellor; the advisory committee (not the consulting group) will vet candidates and select five names for interviews
 - This procedure is new for IHL following the recent search debacle at MSU
 - The advisory committee will then narrow down the list to 2-3 names
 - Senator Davis asked if there are internal candidates for the Chancellor position
 - Chair Sufka responded that at this time it is not known
 - Provost search
 - There are 36 candidates, and 3-5 names will be forwarded for consideration
 - Journalism dean search
 - A committee is forming to conduct a national search and Carmen Manning Miller is representing the Senate on this committee
- Sixth order of business: Senator Mullen updated the Senate on the data disaster planning survey
 - Friday is the deadline to take advantage of grant opportunities for IT
 - Chair Sufka asked senators to encourage their departments to complete the survey
- Seventh order of business: Faculty Senate committee actions
 - Membership on the university's standing committees (Academic Freedom & Responsibility, External Academic Affairs, Graduate Council, Research Board, Sabbatical Leave Review, Tenure & Promotions Appeal, Tenure & Promotion Review, Undergraduate Council) is to be determined by the Committee on Elections
 - Kristen Hymel is identifying members of said committees that were appointed and not appropriately elected
 - Senator Davis asked for a consensus from the Senate to cut through onerous paperwork by immediately handling these appointees
 - Motion made to handle the appointments via email to expedite the election process, although there may be some compromised privacy; motion seconded
 - Senator Barnard expressed hesitancy to compromise secret ballots or undermine those representatives currently serving on the standing committees
 - Senator Davis explained that only faculty of a certain rank can serve and only those of a certain rank can vote; it is a cumbersome process and if the Senate does not fix the

appointments now, these unelected representatives will serve until 2011

- The motion was approved, with no nays and no abstentions
- Senator Ritchie explained the charge to the Academic Affairs committee on plus/minus grading
 - The committee is investigating its implications, what peer institutions are doing, and will present findings at the February 2009 Senate meeting
 - Senator Ritchie encouraged Senators to contribute their opinions and perspectives
- Eighth order of business: Upcoming conferences
 - Coalition On Intercollegiate Athletics meets in Tucson March 6-8, 2009
 - Upcoming Faculty Senate meetings will be held on February 10, March 10, April 14, and May 5
- Ninth order of business: Items from the floor
 - The Strategic Planning Council Overview will be on the agenda for the next Senate meeting
- Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.