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Meeting Minutes

Faculty Senate

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5-4-2010

**May 4, 2010**

University of Mississippi. Faculty Senate

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Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, May 4, 2010  
Meeting held in Bryant 209

Senators in Attendance: Robert Albritton, Mark Bing, Allison Burkette, Pete Campbell, Joe Turner Cantu, Bill Chapel, Melissa Dennis, Jason Dewland, Robert Doerksen, Mark Dolan, Charles Eagles, Daneel Ferreira, John Garner, Carol Gohm, Angela Hornsby-Gutting, Amanda Johnston, Ivo Kamps, Jason Klodt, Przemot T. Kranz, Joel Kuszmaul, Laurel Lambert, John Lobur, Carmen Manning Miller, Stephanie Noble, Peter Reed, Brian Reithel, Philip Rhodes, Jason Ritchie, Paul Scovazzo, Zia Shariat-Madar, Steven Skultety, Debra Spurgeon, Don Summers, Joe Sumrall, Laura Vaughan, Alex Watson, Lorri C. Williamson, Alexander Yakovlev, Yi Yang, Ahmet Yukleyen

Senators absent with prior notification: Deborah Barker, Melissa Bass, Douglas Davis, Jeff Roux, Angela Rutherford, Chung Song, Mark Walker

Senators absent without notification: Donna Davis, Mark Dolan, Soumyajit Majumdar, Brice Noonan, Larry Pittman, Charles Ross, Durant Thompson, Karl Wang

- Senator Sufka opened the meeting at 7:00 pm
- First order of business: Approve April 13, 2010 Meeting Minutes
  - Motioned to approve and seconded
  - The Senate approved the minutes unanimously with no abstentions
- Second order of business: 2010-2011 Senate Election Updates
  - Senator Sufka distributed ballots to elect two candidates to a three year term on the Strategic Planning Council (SPC)
  - The Senate elected Dr. Jay Watson (English) and Dr. Bob Barnard (Philosophy) to the SPC
- Third order of business: SAAC Recommendations & UM Policy on Student-Athlete Absences
  - Senator Sufka reminded the Senate that it does not make policy, rather it communicates its recommendations to three entities—the Undergraduate Council, the Graduate Council, and the Council of Academic Administrators—that determine university policy
  - Senator Ritchie has worked with the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) in an effort to change the language of UM's attendance policy for athletes to align with other Division I schools and with the Coalition of Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA)
    - Senator Ritchie explained that the current attendance policy is causing problems for student athletes: it is applied inconsistently and results in a patchwork of policies across different departments and colleges
    - UM is member of COIA whose best practices encourage allowing students to make up missed work without penalty
    - The revisions to the excused absence policy would acknowledge that students have responsibilities that occasionally cause them to miss classes

- and would allow them to demonstrate their academic competency on missed assignments
  - Senator Ritchie explained that the drawbacks to the revised policy would be the issue of prior notification, the effect the policy could have on courses with multiple sections (such as LIBA), athletes' excused absences being treated differently than other absences, and a UM policy possibly trumping an individual professor's policy
  - Senator Albritton insisted that students must give faculty prior notification of athletics related absences, and asked if the responsibility rests with the student or the Athletics Department. Senator Albritton felt that the onus should rest with the student
    - Associate Athletic Director for Academic Support Karen Schiferl responded that the Athletics Department wants the responsibility to rest with students. However, there are some difficulties with prior notification: some travel must be arranged at the last minute, some sports have students that do not know how long they will be away from campus (for instance, if a student wins and advances to the next round of a tournament), some students do not know if they have qualified for an event until the last minute, and if an athlete becomes injured a substitute must be sent with short notice
    - Senator Albritton insisted that prior notification is always possible from the Athletics Department in the even it is not possible from the student
  - Senator Scovazzo moved to suspend the rules to consider the proposal, Senator Albritton seconded the motion
    - Senator Doerksen said that the purpose of the Senate rule was to give departments time to consider such proposals and for Senators to gather feedback. Senator Eagles supported Senator Doerksen's opinion
    - Senator Kamps remarked that there has been no discussion of the policy among English faculty
    - Senator Pittman recommended that the current Senate not consider the proposal, rather new senators should begin fresh with the proposal in the fall
    - Senator Reithel said that while he supported the resolution, it should not be rushed and the Senate needed the opportunity to gather input
    - Senator Albritton called the question
      - A  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote by the Senate (29 of 38 Senators in attendance) was needed to suspend the rules to consider the proposal
      - On a hand raise vote, the Senate voted not to suspend the rules
- Fourth order of business: Online Teaching Evaluations
  - Senator Sufka reported that IT has confirmed that the loophole through which students could prematurely access their grades had been closed
- Fifth order of business: Senator Feedback on Plus/Minus Grading Taskforce Recommendations
  - Senator Sufka will collate the concerns of the Senate and forward them to the Provost

- Associate Provost Eftink reported that the Graduate Council had approved the plus/minus grading recommendations, and ASB had met with UM administrators to express students' concerns and feedback on plus/minus grading
- Faculty will continue to have the flexibility to use any scale they wish
- Sixth order of business: Senator Feedback on Dead Period
  - Senator Sufka commented on dead period policies at other SUG institutions and reported on the ASB resolution that was distributed to the Senate via email
  - Students have argued that assignments due during the last week of classes are affecting their ability to prepare for final examinations
    - Senator Vaughn countered that dead days are not used effectively and that in some cases final projects could be considered as preparation for final exams
  - Senator Noble said that the Marketing faculty members were against instituting a dead period due to their use of semester-long projects that conclude during the final week of classes. Senator Noble reported that her department was adamant that a week long dead period was too long
  - Senator Skultety shared the opinions of a colleague in the Philosophy department who reminded Senators that many years ago the Senate voted against dead days due to an increase in vandalism and parties during such times
  - Senator Albritton remarked that since students were stressed during finals, could the ASB consider lengthening exam week to be able to distribute exams over more days
    - Senator Lobur asked if exams would then extend past graduation
    - Senator Albritton responded that exams could begin earlier (such as during the final week of classes) to spread exams over more than five days
  - Senator Eagles insisted that any dead period be a truly dead period, including a prohibition of extracurricular activities and athletic events
    - Associate Athletic Director for Academic Support Karen Schiferl added that while SEC bylaws prohibit athletic activities from taking place during final exam periods, the NCAA does not have such a prohibition
  - Senator Lobur reported that the Classics department is unanimously against implementing a dead period
  - ASB Senator Moss discussed students' proclivity for parties during dead periods, and thus the ASB and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Reardon would move to prohibit social events during dead periods, with sanctions imposed on fraternities and sororities that violated the policy
  - Senator Sufka presented a recommendation to the Senate
    - Motioned and seconded to present the recommendation to the Chancellor
    - Following two friendly amendments, the Senate approved the recommendation on a hand raise vote with 20 in favor, 15 opposed, and 3 abstentions
    - The text of the approved recommendation:

### **FACULTY SENATE RECOMMENDATION DEAD PERIOD POLICY**

The Faculty Senate, joining in the recent efforts of the Associated Student Body to enhance student learning during final examination period, recommends that the University of Mississippi

form a Task Force to 1) consider a dead period policy and 2) consider the potential costs and benefits that such a policy would have as it pertains to matters of academic freedom, course material mastery, the academic calendar and other related matters of the University.

- Seventh order of business: Senate Committee Reports
  - No reports were forthcoming
- Eighth order of business: Items from the floor
  - Senator Sufka summarized the Chancellor Jones's remarks during his inauguration address in which he stressed the need to recruit and retain quality faculty and the institution of a \$100 million fund to achieve parity with faculty salaries at other SEC schools
    - Motioned and seconded to suspend the rules and consider a resolution supporting the Chancellor. The Senate voted to suspend the rules with 36 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions
    - Senator Reithel moved to adopt the resolution, Senator Noble seconded the motion
    - After Senators added friendly amendments, the Senate approved the resolution on a unanimous voice vote
    - The text of the resolution:

## **RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY SENATE**

### **MAY 4, 2010**

WHEREAS, The University of Mississippi is committed to serving the needs of the State of Mississippi, our Nation and the World;

WHEREAS, The University of Mississippi's mission is to transform lives through the creation and dissemination of new knowledge through research and scholarship in all of its academic disciplines;

WHEREAS, The University of Mississippi, in its continued pursuit of excellence, is committed to providing its students an environment that offers extraordinary intellectual opportunities and experiences;

WHEREAS, The University of Mississippi, is committed to recruiting and retaining a talented and dedicated faculty that embraces teaching and learning, celebrates research and scholarship, and seeks the opportunity to share this spirit of intellectual discovery with students and faculty colleagues;

WHEREAS, Chancellor Jones has recognized that The University of Mississippi has experienced a growing gap in faculty compensation compared to peer universities that has adversely affected recruitment and retention of the best faculty scholars;

WHEREAS, Chancellor Jones understands that The University of Mississippi must achieve a more competitive faculty compensation so that its academic programs can continue to progress to even higher levels of excellence;

**LET IT BE RESOLVED**, that the Senate of the Faculty at The University of Mississippi applauds the recently announced Campaign for Faculty initiative intended to increase the faculty support endowment by \$100 million in order to help the University achieve its stated goal of compensation parity with its peer universities.

**RESOLVED**, this 4th day of May 2010.

THE SENATE OF THE FACULTY



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Kenneth J. Sufka  
Chair of Faculty Senate

- Senator Sufka reported that the Mascot Selection Committee sought Faculty Senate support for the student-led mascot initiative
  - Motioned and seconded to consider the recommendation
  - On a voice vote, the Senate supported the recommendation with Senator Reed voting no
  - The text of the recommendation:

**FACULTY SENATE RECOMMENDATION  
ON-FIELD MASCOT  
MAY 4, 2010**

The Faculty Senate supports the student-led initiative and the current efforts of the Mascot Selection Committee, working in conjunction with the Office of the Chancellor, the Alumni Association and the Ramey Agency, to develop and propose a new on-field mascot for the Ole Miss Rebels.

- Senator Albritton proposed a resolution honoring the work of Senator Sufka as the Chair of Faculty Senate
  - On a voice vote, the Senate approved the resolution unanimously and gave Senator Sufka a warm round of applause
  - The text of the resolution:

**RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY SENATE  
MAY 4, 2010**

WHEREAS, the University of Mississippi Faculty Senate and, indeed, the faculty of the University of Mississippi has benefited from the able and creative leadership of Senator Kenneth Sufka during the 2009-2010 academic year as the Chair of the Faculty Senate.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate expresses its appreciation and that a vote of thanks be put upon the minutes along with the best wishes for him during the coming year.

- The meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm