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Meeting Minutes

Faculty Senate

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**March 20, 2012**

University of Mississippi. Faculty Senate

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## Agenda

- Senator Albritton opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- First order of business: Approve minutes of last meeting
  - Moved
    - Seconded
    - Approved unanimously
- Second order of business: Report on Plus/Minus Grading by Dr. Eftink
  - Plus/minus grading was approved in 2004
    - Tabled ca. 2006
    - Revived ca. 2009
    - Task force created implementation which was then acted upon
  - Results
    - A's, A-'s, B+'s, B's, B-'s slightly decreased
    - C+'s, C's, C-'s, D's, F's slightly increased
    - Greater tendency to assign + grades, but more – grades are available
    - Percentages over 5 years vary quite a bit; above changes not statistically significant
    - Number of students on probation increased by 17-18%
    - 5-year data for these is not available
    - Number of students with 4.0's decreased by 20-25%
    - 5-year data for these is not available
    - C-'s counting as C's for prerequisites are cause for some concern
    - Same for standards for repeating grades
  - Questions
  - Question: was the large number of at-risk freshman flooding the school taken into account?
    - Dr. Eftink: ACT scores and retention rates were comparable to 2010; there are concerns but data has not borne concerns out
    - Question: Wouldn't a 8% increase in students result in a "natural" increase in lower grades?
      - Dr. Eftink: Yes, that is a possibility
    - Question: what about D's? With no D+ or D- have they stayed the same?
      - Dr. Eftink: They have been more or less similar, but since D's and F's are forgivable and repeatable many of them are results of students ending class participation altogether
    - Dr. Stocks: C-'s are repeatable but not forgivable; D's and F's are repeatable and forgivable
    - Comment: many numbers are not statistically significant; be careful with data
    - Dr. Eftink: That has been taken into account

- Comment: Placement in programs with GPA requirements might also be tracked
    - Dr. Eftink: is difficult to do so.
- Third order of business: Senate Committee Reports
  - Exec. Cmte.
    - None
  - Acad. Affairs
    - None
  - Acad. Support
    - None
  - Finance
    - None
  - Univ. Services
    - None
  - Gov'ce
    - None
- Fourth order of business: Old Business – Tobacco-Free Campus Policy
  - Tabled during last meeting; move to untable and discuss
    - Moved
    - Seconded
    - Approved
  - Question: Can both smoke-free and tobacco-free pass?
    - Smoke-free would be overridden by tobacco-free
  - Comment: seems rather draconian
  - Comment: Why can't existing rules be enforced?
  - Comment: negates many people's ways of coping/easing off of their addictions
  - Sen. Barnett: Concerns from last discussion reiterated
    - Will impact recruitment
      - 27% of Mississippi adults smoke
      - E-cigarette ban is particular concern
  - Sen. Solinger: May affect staff more so than faculty
    - Staff does not have luxury and flexible schedule to get off-campus to smoke
    - Sen. Barnett: Anecdotally, facilities staff have expressed concerned
  - Comment: Smoke-free campus would be positive recruitment tool
  - Question: What would university do to help affected people? Perhaps a set of guidelines would assist.
  - Sen. Albritton: Language of resolution pledges support for such efforts, if vaguely, through the health system
  - Comment: there is a program through student health currently in existence; medications are no longer free, though faculty/staff/community members are all eligible
  - Sen. Albritton: Sponsor has solicited feedback and suggestions
  - Sen. Lobur: "Uncompromising nature" of proposal is a concern; perhaps a more gradual implementation is called for

- Comment: Concern over small part that covers cessation program; program may be underfunded, understaffed, or unprepared for consequences
- Sen. Albritton: May be unknowable
- Comment: Do we drive smoking back underground? Smokers doing it in a more unsafe manner or in unapproved areas?
- Comment: perhaps more enforcement is called for
- Sen. Solinger: Campus is big and contained and hemmed-in by traffic; it's difficult to walk off campus; has an effort even been made to enforce the existing policy?
- Comment: university hasn't provided reasonable places for smoking; people have to go 150 yards outside to smoke, for instance
- Comment: we seem to be sensitive to smokers, but what about nonsmokers? Those who are smoking are inflicting their health issues on others—is it radical to be healthy?
- ASB Representative: To clarify, ASB was concerned with second-hand smoke; 38 smoking areas exist, and has been a problem for students, and enforcement is difficult
- Sen. Watson: wouldn't new policy have the same problems?
- ASB rep: Makes reporting of incidents much easier, with no "gray areas"
- Comment: Is public health issue; 15-20% of students smoke and stopping that in college would be a positive public health move
- Comment: Ticketing could be effective, but is not easy issue especially for staff people; reasonable balance should be struck between public health and addiction
- Sen. Albritton: two suggestions:
  - Move to a vote on issue tonight
  - Have Leslie appear before us in April to explain initiative and speak to questions raised
- Sen. Lobur: Is it possible to draw tobacco away from smoking again?
- Move to vote on issue
  - Seconded
  - Passed; debate is closed
  - Yea on resolution: 18
  - Nay on resolution: 21
  - Abstentions: 1
  - Motion is defeated
- Fifth order of business: New business – ASB communication concerning a Green Fund
  - Motion to receive report on Green Fund
    - Moved
    - Seconded
    - Approved
- Sixth order of business: New business - Disaster-resistant university program
  - Initiated through a FEMA project in 2005
    - Would like to invite member of faculty senate to participate in program
    - Point of program is mitigation of future natural hazards such as earthquakes, tornadoes, flooding, ice, etc.
    - Mitigation examples include:

- Earthquake preparedness (e.g. free-flowing natural gas and seismic gas shutoff valves in 27 buildings)
  - Emergency generators for electrical outages
  - Mitigation does not include response; that is handled by a different arm of the university
  - #1 hazard is tornadoes; a tornado in central campus could do \$130 million of damage
  - an earthquake could cause \$115 million of damage
  - Includes things like data backup
- Seventh order of business: New business – Dr. Solinger presents on concealed weapons on campus
  - Legislation passed recently as rider on fisheries
    - Rolls back previous exception to concealed weapons legislation
    - Previous exceptions were for courtrooms, schools, and athletic events
    - Previous exceptions have been removed; concealed weapons are now permitted in those locations (pursuant to existing laws for training and licensing)
    - Will take effect in 2013; conflicts with IHL firearms policy
  - IHL attorneys agree that new legislation is not a good idea
    - Statement in support of previous policy is forthcoming
    - Question: Who is authorized under current rules?
    - Campus police, military personnel
    - Question: Isn't this state law and not changeable?
    - Could be
  - Sen. Reithel: Move to refer to committee
    - Question: What could that accomplish?
    - Sen. Albritton: it would help answer question
    - Seconded
    - Question: was the university administration aware of this?
    - Sen. Solinger: given how the legislation was packaged, may have been overlooked
    - Comment: SOAR meeting has covered issue
    - Sen. Albritton: Refer to committee on academic affairs
  - Dr. Stocks: IHL does not have authority to set law, but can establish policy
    - State has removed criminality of act, but punishment can be rendered at the university level
- Eighth order of business: New business – Communication Sciences and Disorders proposal on cheating and academic dishonesty
  - CSD is small but growing program
    - Larger classes scattered around campus
    - Student complaints in undergraduate classes have been mounting
    - Anecdotal or anonymous complaints
    - Students using information on Blackboard via cell phone during class
    - Students writing information on desks and walls
    - CSD faculty is asking for help/guidance on the issue

- Sen. Albritton: inclination is to refer it to Academic Affairs committee
  - Moved
  - Seconded
  - Passed
- Ninth order of business: New business – elections for faculty senate upcoming
  - Approach chairs for an election in the next two months
- Senator Albritton closed the meeting at 9:00 p.m.