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Meeting Minutes

Faculty Senate

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3-8-2016

**March 8, 2016**

University of Mississippi. Faculty Senate

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#### **Recommended Citation**

University of Mississippi. Faculty Senate, "March 8, 2016" (2016). *Meeting Minutes*. 156.  
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## **Faculty Senate Minutes**

**March 8, 2016**

Meeting convened Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at 7:00pm by Michael Barnett, Chair of the Faculty Senate.

**Senators in attendance:** Rachna Prakash, Charles Ross, Kris Belden-Adams, Patrick Curtis, Brice Noonan, Robert Doerksen, Ahmed Al-Ostaz, Brad Cook, Feng Wang, Tom Garrett, Richard Gordon, Jay Watson, Andrew O-Reilly, Yang-Chieh Fu, Oliver Dinius, Darren Grem, Noell Wilson, Jim Lumpp, Antonia Eliason, Stacey Lantagne, Dennis Bunch, Lorri Williamson, Ashley Dees, Savannah Kelly, Kristin Rogers, Dwight Frink, Milam Aiken, Lifeng Yang, Sasha Kocic, Tejas Pandya, Heather Allen, Amy Fang-Yen Hsieh, Adam Estes, Michael Gardiner, Mary Roseman, Meagan Rosenthal, Travis King, James Bos, Ben Jones, Danielle Maack, Jody Holland, Amy Fisher, Allan Bellman, Joe Sumrall, Michael Barnett

**Senators excused:** Ann Fisher Worth, Mary Hayes

**Senators absent:** Sasan Nouranian Greg Tschumper, Tossi Ikuta, Robert Magee, Michael Repka, Breese Quinn, Marcos Mendoza, Minjoo Oh, Mark Ortwein

### **Approval of February 9, 2016 Minutes**

Minutes of February 9, 2016 meeting were approved by the Faculty Senate as a whole without comment.

### **Presentation by Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter concerning new position of Vice Chancellor of University Relations being filled**

Dr. Alice Clark is filling this interim position. There have been two questions: why was the position not discussed or vetted, and should we be creating a new position?

I regret that I did not have the opportunity to bring this up earlier after a discussion with the Chancellor's Transition Advisory Committee. To help the dialogue going forward, my motivation is about engagement and having the opportunity to work closely with all areas on campus. When I was at KU, I used to work closely with the leaders of all the different senates. I have been meeting with the Executive Committee of the Ole Miss Faculty Senate regularly along with Staff Council, and last week, I met with the ASB president. A month ago, I talked about the notion of the University Senate. It brings all the representatives from all of the different senates together to discuss issues within the University. I know you all are grappling with the issue that there is no representation in any senate for professional faculty/non tenure track members.

Let me give some background on the position. Tom Epps was the Chief Communications Officer and will not be continuing his contract after it expires in June. We had to figure out the most effective way to fill the Chief Communication Officer position. Instead of filling the Chief Communication Officer position, we're leaving that vacant and resurrecting the existing but unfilled position of Vice Chancellor of University Relations. Gloria Kellum was the last person to have the position. For clarification, it's not a new position; it already existed. We're not hiring a CCO; instead we're giving broader responsibilities to this existing role. It's important to do this at this point because it contributes to continuing the

momentum that I have spoken about in the past. In order to function at the flagship level, we must ensure that ability, opportunity, and relationships are seen to when departments work together. It's particularly important to integrate communication, government relations, development/fundraising and events and, they all have to work together. Communications are at the center of everything we're doing. We do not need to step on each other's toes. For instance, when Oxford has just recently reached out to potential donors, it turns out Athletics was just there a few days earlier also asking for support. There are simplistic reasons why that shouldn't happen.

Another reason behind this move is because we really want to fill the Vice Chancellor for Research position. Alice Clark's been ably serving as Transition Committee Chair for me. We need someone full time in the research role. We are planning to launch a search for that person. Josh Gladden will be filling this interim position. We sought a lot of input when it came to this issue of Communications. I especially worked with the folks who are directly connected because it's really an administrative realignment. A common question is, "Why can't we take all the money that is given to athletics and redirect half of that to academics?" Donors give where they want to give. Athletics is the front door. It's not to the University's advantage to reallocate their donations. Ross Bjork, who is Athletics director, brought to my attention that there is no coordination. In the advancement arena, if we are to start a capital campaign, we need to think through and strategize to make the pie bigger by being more effective.

The other logistical point is that we wanted to bring the staffs of these units in and let them know about this, but we didn't want anyone to hear about it from anyone other than us so we didn't want to make it public. It would have been a valuable thing, in hindsight, to talk about this issue beforehand rather than later.

This position is important because it is a best practice in major universities. Alice Clark has a great knowledge of everyone, and is familiar with the players in the state and the federal delegation. As transition chair, she's helped me connect with more people than I thought possible. Through the flagship forum, I've been able to talk directly to faculty, students, staff, etc. and receive immediate feedback. I want to reaffirm that I want to work collaboratively. If anyone has any suggestions, let us know at [flagship.olemiss.edu](mailto:flagship.olemiss.edu).

One positive thing that I want to announce is that the legislature has no immediate plans for further cuts from the academic budget.

Q: You mentioned earlier that the appointment of Dr. Clark is only interim; what is the plan after her interim position is over?

A: Dr. Clark has agreed to serve for two years. After that, we will likely have a formal search. The position really needs someone who knows all the players in Mississippi. We needed that transition stability when we appointed Dr. Clark. We'll see where we are at in two years' time.

Q: You also mentioned about the appointment of the Vice Chancellor of Research. Will there be a search for that?

We are starting a search. We also have an ongoing search for Vice Chancellor of Diversity that started a little earlier. We have a committee for that. We're not as far along with the research position as we are with the search for the Diversity position and haven't formed the committee yet, but it will happen.

Follow up Question: Is there a plan to include faculty senate representation to be included in these searches?

A: Yes, and Michael Barnett and Rachna Prakash are already on the search committee for the Vice Chancellor of Diversity and Communications. There surely will be the search committee on Vice Chancellor of Research as well.

Q: Will the duties of the Chief Communications Officer be given solely to the Vice Chancellor of University Relations or will they be spread out in a different way?

A: The strategy part is really going to be taken over by the Vice Chancellor of University Relations, and then more of the nuts and bolts of how do we communicate to meet those strategies- you know we have a really good Interim Director of University Communications- many of you know Danny Blanton left around November sometime, but John Scott, who is very good and able will take over those nuts and bolts. The same with Development. The Vice Chancellor is not a fundraiser. We have a head of the foundation that handles more of the business aspects. The real role of the Vice Chancellor of University Relations is to make sure that we get the right groups together on a regular basis and have those strategy discussions. We really want to better connect donors what they're passionate about. We want to connect people with their passion. They'll get ten times more out of passion than they will loyalty, even though loyalty is our strong suit at Ole Miss. That conversation is always upfront and driving things.

Q: A concern that I commonly hear from faculty is that when we have openings for administrative positions, and I understand that this is an existing position but hasn't been filled for years, is it due to the fact that faculty pay grade is well below our peer institutions, and could you speak to that?

A: As you said, this is not a net new position. We are an administratively lean university. Compared to our peer universities, in general the administration is focused on being efficient. You could certainly justify filling this position by how beneficial it will be for our capital campaign. We're simply filling position a position that is not currently filled instead of filling a different vacant one.

### **Senate Committee Reports**

**Executive Committee:** Nothing to report.

**General Academic Affairs:** Nothing to report.

**Academic Support:**

#### **Revision to E-mail storage capacity and security**

IT and Kathy Gates have indicated that they are aware of our concerns. Kathy Gates will come speak to the Faculty Senate in the May meeting to discuss plans to increase e-mail storage.

**Finance:**

#### **Exploration of the Relationship Between the University and the Local Metro Narcotics Unit**

Report on the procedures used by Local Metro Narcotics. It is currently being reviewed by an expert.

Should our funding of this unit go away, we will lose our seat at the table.

The individuals who are informants have been apprehended. A concern was raised concerning their ability to seek legal services. When someone has been apprehended and is offered a chance to work off the offense, they have to sign a statement saying that they either need legal counsel or don't need legal counsel

While this is a grey area in police operations, the police department does not want low-level informers as part of the program. They want to keep chipping away at the next highest person – horizontal operations are generally discouraged. Some individuals are aware of this program and may initiate discussion with the arresting officer to keep this off of their record. Ideally the targets are not small scale users. Informants are supervised during the process and not sent out unsupervised during the buy.

There is no preference given to students or non-students – the bulk of these arrests were made off-campus. A small percentage are students, both University of Mississippi and non-University of Mississippi students.

If the University finds out about a violation of its policy, under the MBook, their process will be separate from a criminal process.

Since January, Director Waller has been conducting an evaluation of what is appropriate – this will help with the next four months of assessment regarding what improvements may exist. The board is undergoing an accreditation process which would make them the first accredited board in the State. They also undergo training programs.

University is committed to appropriate use of funds.

Based on all of the information, the Finance Committee does not feel like there is any action to be taken pending the review and process review. The Committee supports the continued funding of the program and commends the UPD for its involvement in the process.

## **Governance:**

### Discussion of counter-offer policies

Committee met today regarding recommending a policy for counter-offers – there is no existing policy in the University.

In the Faculty Excellent Task Force document, there was mention of matching counter-offers. Based on the fact it was already in the task force from 2 years ago, the Committee unanimously passed a motion recommending that the Executive Committee recommend to the Provost to set up an ad-hoc committee to create a counter-offer policy and that significant faculty involvement be in the committee.

Last month a similar recommendation was made concerning the dual career policy.

**University Services:**

Resolution Regarding a Transparent Leave Policy

Met with Pam Johnson in HR regarding this Leave Policy for continued discussion regarding the Transparent Leave Policy and commonly asked questions to be included along with policies.

HR provided us with a laundry-list of questions and explained to us that they are undertaking a complete overhaul of the HR website with easy-to-access pages with policies, with explanations and with frequently asked questions followed by cross-links. At the bottom of each page will be a frequently asked question section.

They expect to have this prepared in June when they will roll it out, at which point they will solicit our input.

**Old Business**

Nothing to report.

**New Business**

Time for elections for next academic year will be coming up soon for the Faculty Senate. Please request your heads to be looking for this email from Chairman Barnett.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting is Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at 7:00pm in Bryant Hall 111.