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Meeting Minutes

Faculty Senate

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10-12-2021

**October 12, 2021**

University of Mississippi. Faculty Senate

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## **Faculty Senate Minutes – October 12, 2021**

### **Zoom – @ 6:00 pm (details at end of Agenda)**

**Senators Present:** Kenya Wolff, KoFan Lee, Shari Holt, Kerry Bowers, Alex Watson, Joseph Carlisle, Joe Sweeney, Melissa Bass, Lance Yarbrough, Robert Barnard, Angela Green, Dan Durkin, Carrie McCormick, Matteo D’Alessio, Lauren Cardenas, Sasan Nouranian, James Cizdziel, Mike Cinelli, Donna Buckley, John Berns, John Lobur, Cole Stevens, R.J. Morgan, Carolyn Higdon, Whitney Sarver, Christy Nielson, Hans Sinha, Andre Liebenberg, Joel Mobley, Brian Boutwell, Carrie Smith, Brian Reithel, Heather Allen, Gabriel Garrido, Brad Jones, Sujith Ramachandran, Yunhee Chang, Jennie Lightweis-Goff, Scott Mackenzie, Randy Dale, Michael Repka, SueAnn Skipworth

**Senators Absent (Alternate):** Gary Theilman (for Jordan Ballou), Simone Delerme (for Willa Johnson), Macey Edmonson (for George McClellan)

- **Call Meeting to Order**
  
- **Approve minutes from the September 7, 2021, meeting**
  - Motion -
    - Second -
      - Vote – APPROVED
      -
  
- **Presentation by Dr. Joshua Eyler and Dr. Robert Cummings of proposal to extend eligibility for all university teaching awards to all Non-Tenure-Track faculty (see attached document)**
  - Eyler spoke in his role as faculty developer to advocate for all faculty at all levels about their teaching, research, and service.
  - A sampling of teaching awards reveal that only one is for NTT faculty, and it is restricted to NTT who teach in the first year, through the College of Liberal Arts.
  - Given that teaching is the primary reason for many NTT faculty to be hired, and many NTT have taught longer than anyone else at the university, allowing eligibility for all faculty to be nominated for all teaching awards would provide a reward structure for NTT work.
  - Expanding eligibility does not weaken the awards but rather enhances their competitiveness.
  - Requested for Faculty Senate to propose a resolution to expand all teaching awards to include NTT (not including graduate students, who are altogether different)

- Proposed a working group to meet with each administrative unit to assess any language in the Memo of Understanding (MOU) establishing each award. This will take time and work but is necessary to codify this change in the process of choosing each award.
- College of Liberal Arts quotes part of an MOU on its website designating the award is to “enhance retention of great professors.” But the criteria are vague, as this would technically mean only full professors could receive the award.
- Interpreting each MOU would be the responsibility of working group.

Q: Why this change now?

Eyler: Every spring many NTT faculty express dismay at being ineligible to be nominated for or receive any number of teaching awards.

Q. Do a majority of these awards have these limitations? How many just historically favored TT faculty?

Eyler: That’s what the working group will need to determine. If these were just historical, that’s an easier problem to address.

Cummings: Not every award was established by an MOU. Each award presents a different case.

Q. Do we know what percentage of courses are taught by NTT and TT faculty?

Eyler: Data is somewhat complex but sheer numbers show that 595 are TT and 495 are NTT, but fall 2019 sections show about equal numbers of sections being taught by NTT and TT, and based on total student credit hours, NTT teach a bit more.

Q. This proposal is inherently just. It’s utterly demoralizing to not have the means of rewarding those who teach the most. But what about those forces outside the university working to erode tenure altogether? Should we be cautious about removing tools for getting tenure, like teaching awards? Can we address both problems at once, perhaps by increasing the number of teaching awards with some earmarked for NTT and others TT?

Eyler: Thanks for that comment. I am in favor of expanding the awards. But if we are all one faculty, we should all be eligible for all awards. But I agree 100% on the threats.

Q. Would Faculty Senate contribute members to the working group?

Eyler: The Senate could put together its one working group or take it to an administrative unit to form a working group with some number of senators on it. I’m agnostic to either.

Q. Your hope is to broach the topic tonight and have us take this back to our departments for discussion and approval at next meeting?

Eyler: Yes, that process is fine by me. Take it to your constituents and we will come back next month. I will share my slides to you can share with your faculty.

Chair Durkin: Thanks, Josh and Bob, for that report and proposal. Students are another stakeholder in this conversation. Many students were disappointed not to be able to nominate a favorite instructor who was ineligible, so do consider the students as well.

- Update from Associate Provost Rich Forgette on Faculty Activity Reports and the next phase of student evaluations. (**See attached documents**)
  - Gave overview of task force, thanking Dan Durkin and Brice Noonan for serving.
    - Primary change was the move to a calendar year for faculty reporting and annual reviews.
    - Some changes to FAR template to align with strategic plan.
    - Requiring departments to reaffirm tenure and promotion policies every 8 years, regardless of changes.
  - Tonight we will discuss the Workload Report.
    - We covet our R1 status and now NSF has changed the rules so that research expenditures are auditable and that research corresponds with faculty effort.
    - Asking you to participate in workload reporting process
    - Discussed timeline with window for FAR by January 31, 2022, for this transition year. All reported activity will be for the past year, with workload distribution determined by department chairs, who will need to capture that information for the following reporting year.

Q: If we want to share this document with our faculty, may we do so?

Forgette: Sure. There will also be a chairs workshop October 29 to train them on the new procedures.

Q: Are you using fiscal language to describe non-fiscal matters?

Forgette: You're right. July 1-June 30 marks the fiscal year, and reporting is for the calendar year. We will be reporting for the fiscal year but using a calendar-year process to inform fiscal-year adjustment.

Chair Durkin: You are welcome to ask me questions as I was on the task force as well.

Forgette: Provost, did I get that right?

Provost Wilkin: Yes

- Forgette then addressed the second Student Evaluation of Teaching (SETs) task force that included representatives from all over, including students.
- Directed more focus on learning outcomes and less on teacher behaviors.
- Created another task force to establish which questions to replace those deemed problematic (too focused on teacher behavior and not on learning).
- Digging down on faculty development to supplement SETs.

Bob Cummings: I agree with everything Rich outlines. We have a lot of strengths in SETs due to aligning IT with our policies. But we need to take a harder look at the questions themselves, and Senate can help us develop new questions that we can then test. As a reminder, SETs should never be used as the only measure of teaching. We are happy to partner with the Faculty Senate on this.

Eyler: We can strengthen formative kinds of teaching development through the CETL partnering with departments to support professional development for teaching.

Chair Durkin: The Senate is happy to partner with you on all initiatives.

- Chair Durkin with COVID-19 Vaccinate Mandate Update
  - Drafting letter to IHL with other Faculty Senates around the state, then sending it back to each senate and eventually on to the IHL.
  - USM passed a resolution last week, MSU had previously passed one, and others are to be expected. Have not heard back from Delta State but others are in contact.

Q: Are those proposals all in favor of a vaccine mandate?

Chair Durkin: Not sure yet. We are also considering a more constructive approach than resolutions. ASB passed their resolution after we passed ours, and apparently things are in the works at Staff Council and the Graduate Student Council.

Joint UM governing bodies are working together and meeting monthly to address common concerns. We all agree, for example, that child care issues affect us all, not just as a benefit but for recruiting and retaining staff, students, and faculty. We are also together addressing expected drops in enrollment due to demographic changes.

Q: Which bodies are part of these meetings?

Chair Durkin: Graduate Student Council, Faculty Senate, Associated Student Body, and Staff Council are all trying to attend each other's meetings and share information.

- **Committee Updates**

- Academic Instructional Affairs (chair: Alex Watson) –  
The SET Task Force resolution was passed in May. We were asked to submit a committee member to the working group looking to replace those questions on the SETs deemed problematic.
- Academic Conduct (chair: Kenya Wolff) – Nothing to report
- Finance & Benefits (chair: Joseph Carlisle) – Nothing to report
- Development & Planning (chair: Jon-Michael Wimberly) – Nothing to report
- Governance (chair: Carrie Smith)
  - Committee will meet with new director of EORC and the new General Counsel to discuss the grievance procedure and other policies.
- Research & Creative Achievement (chair: Donna Buckley)  
Starting to work with Josh Gladden who wants to meet with our committee

- University Services (chair: Heather Allen) – Nothing to report
- **Old Business –**
  - Chair Durkin – we still have committee vacancies; expect emails to fill those by assigning people to open slots.
- **New Business**
- **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.
- - Motion
    - Second
      - Vote

**NEXT MEETING: November 9, 2021 @ 6:00 via ZOOM**

Zoom details:

Join Zoom Meeting:

Daniel Durkin is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Faculty Senate Meeting November 9, 2021 6:00 pm  
Time: Sep 7, 2021 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://olemiss.zoom.us/j/96700001406?pwd=UGRGR3BJY3dKQIZzZHVRd2IUNDJ1QT09>

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