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Meeting Minutes

Faculty Senate

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April 19, 2022

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Faculty Senate Minutes –April 19, 2022

Zoom – @ 6:00 pm (details at end of minutes)

Senators Present: Kenya Wolff, KoFan Lee, R.J. Morgan, Melissa Cinelli, Shari Holt, Kerry Bowers, Joseph Carlisle, Joe Sweeney, Melissa Bass, Lance Yarbrough, Robert Barnard, Angela Green, Dan Durkin, Carrie McCormick, Matteo D’Alessio, Lauren Cardenas, Sasan Nouranian, Elliott Hutchcraft, Donna Buckley, John Berns, John Lobur, Cole Stevens, Carolyn Higdon, Whitney Sarver, Christy Nielson, Hans Sinha, Brian Reithel, Heather Allen, Sujith Ramachandran, Shari Holt, SueAnn Skipworth, Simone Delerme, George McClellan, Gary Thielman, Randy Dale, Mary Mendolia (for Carrie Smith)

Senators absent (excused): Carrie Smith

Senators absent (unexcused): Zenebe Beyene, Brad Jones, Gabriel Garrido, Carmen Sanchis-Sinisterra, Joshua First

- **Meeting called to order**
- **Minutes approved from the March 22, 2022, meeting**
 - Motion
 - Second
 - Vote
- **Update on NTT Eligibility for Teaching Awards Task Force by Josh Eyler**
 - Task force finalized in January following the resolution the Senate passed at the end of the fall. Joining me on the senate were Carrie McCormick and Carrie Dowling, along with Bob Cummings and Rich Forgette.
 - Looking to see where NTT were not currently eligible within different teaching awards at all schools.
 - Began investigating how to modify those terms to include NTT faculty.
 - Lots of good news to report:
 - Many schools already included NTT faculty in their own teaching awards.
 - School of Journalism gives teaching awards to clinical faculty as well as TT.
 - School of Applied Science has just a faculty of the year award.
 - College of Liberal Arts has 4 teaching awards, including the Howell Family Award, the Cora Lee Graham Award, and the Liberal Arts Outstanding Instructor of the Year, and the Mississippi Humanities Council Teacher of the Year. At the moment the only one for which NTT are eligible is the

Outstanding Instructor of the Year Award and that award was created specifically for NTT faculty and only they are eligible for it.

- Bob Cummings had a good conversation about these awards with Don Dyer, who took it back to the dean's office:
 - Going forward, the CLA plans to open up the Mississippi Humanities Council Teacher of the Year to both TT and NTT faculty. The only award that will remain TT only is the Cora Lee Graham award, which is based on the Memo of Understanding and speaking with the donor.
 - Reconceptualizing the Howe Family Award, meaning reframing it in terms of its original purpose.
 - Also creating two new awards for which all faculty will be eligible, possibly teaching for general education or something similar.
 - I commend the work of Don and the Dean's office in making these important changes.
- Accountancy has teaching awards, one open to TT, one to FT NTT.
- Business has one award nominated by chairs open to FT NTT and TT faculty.

Reithel: I can actually report here that a NTT faculty received that award today for the School of Business.

Eyler: Great news!

- We brought the question to both schools, though the conversation hasn't gone further.
- The Elsie Hood Award is, of course, the largest award the university offers and it is currently open only to TT faculty. Chancellor's office is the owner of the Elsie Hood award, but a conversation has not yet happened at that level. The award selection committee is aware of the resolution and had a mixed reception. The resolution is much larger, however, than the selection committee.

Q & A

- Watson: You did a very thorough job and I am impressed. You said you are still going at this but do you have an idea of how much longer you might be at work on this, and over the summer perhaps?
- Eyler: As long as it takes but I would like to have something by summer of fall, if possible, but I will keep the work moving.
- Watson: Is the committee now discharged then?
- Eyler: That's more appropriate for the Senate and Dan to determine.

Chair Durkin: Thanks for your hard work and that of your committee. I will take up that question with the Executive Council and get back to you.

- **Discussion of changes in ORSP by Josh Gladden, Vice Chancellor of Research and Sponsored Programs**

- Trying to get the word out about a number of changes and improvements. Some of you may have attended a town hall, so my apologies for much of this will be repeated. The Zoom recording is available to anyone who wants to access any prior town hall. We will have more soon.
- We have also updated the University Research Board.
- Here are some highlights that are broadly relevant to faculty and researchers across campus:
 - In 2016 we transitioned to a Carnegie R1 institution, from an R2, and have been reaffirmed in that rating twice.
 - Our research enterprise is growing in magnitude and breadth across campus.
 - One challenge is that we are building this on an antiquated system.
 - Long-range plans but we need interim solutions.
 - Information flow is a major issue.
 - Sponsor Program Action Notification (SPAN) intended to be a single point of entry for anyone to contact us and request a particular action.
 - Programmed the system to automatically route it to the correct person in our office.
 - It allows us to better track and keep visibility on various action requests.
 - The SPAN form does NOT replace our transmittal system, TSS, but augments it.
 - Piloting the system with 4 units and collecting feedback.
 - Effective July 1 we intend to roll it out all over campus.
 - We ask that you get action requests to us 30 days prior to due date, not completed but just with enough information on what you intend to submit, its title, to give us notice to smooth things out prior to your request.
 - We process about 25 different types of agreements, and these will also be submitted through the SPAN form.
 - Behind the scenes is a separate tracking system with ORSP and the General Counsel's office to ensure we are complying with all these various agreements.
 - Attempting to streamline our service to you and improve return time.

- Some actions, like IRB requests, patent applications, licenses, etc. cannot be submitted through the SPAN form. (see attached)
- We have always had a 5-day window to have signatures and administrative pieces in our office ahead of due date, and we will continue to do so. The scholarly narrative does not need to be finalized by then; that can take up to 2 days before the due date.
- The earlier you let us know you plan to work on something, the sooner we can begin smoothing out the wrinkles.

Q& A

Watson: Is this PP presentation available at the link?

Gladden: Yes, or I will make sure it is available. I can just email Dan the slides and make them available to everyone. We are also working with Blackboard to have a class to coordinate training, outreach, etc. through a central access point.

Watson: That sounds great. I definitely will appreciate seeing that PP and sharing it with researchers in the library.

Chair Durkin: I will just send it out to everybody.

When you do send that out, be sure to use a filter so it doesn't go into your SPAN folder. [laughter]

Chair Durkin: That Blackboard course will be self-paced?

Gladden: We're thinking of this as more of a repository for answers to questions we get a lot, a series of training and information videos, especially on federal compliance issues and different aspects of grant proposals. There will be more town halls on this as well, but we may have to develop this over the summer and roll it out to faculty in the fall. Help us get the word out!

- **Discussion of the 60th Anniversary of Integration at the University by Shawnboda Mead, Vice Chancellor for Division of Diversity & Community Engagement**
 - We sent an April 4 campus-wide email marking the 60th anniversary and commemorating the enrollment of James Meredith throughout the year.

- The theme will be: “The Mission Continues: Building on a Legacy.”
- Several profiles will connect with 4 the pillars lining the Meredith statue.
- Signature week will be the main focus but with events year long.
- We encourage faculty teaching special topics courses to incorporate these events in your classes.
- Help coordinate our efforts.
- We need to remember that Mr. Meredith does not live in Oxford so we want to be mindful of his need to travel.
- Mr. Meredith loves books, so we will have events centered around reading.
- Some events are being designed specifically for student engagement, especially for small groups.
- Will be offering incentives for faculty that we will share details about soon.
- Our website will also offer ways to connect around this anniversary, inviting the community to write letters to Mr. Meredith and will use Mr. Meredith’s own words to honor the occasion and preserve it for posterity.
- An in-depth interview with Mr. Meredith next week will air next week. Randall Pinkston interviewed Mr. Meredith for the 50th anniversary and will do the honors again next week for the 60th.
- Mark your calendars for Wednesday, September 28, when Mr. Meredith will deliver the keynote address at the Ford Center.
- University will play Kentucky in football that week, just as they did 60 years ago, an occasion we will commemorate.
- Pathways to Equity: We continue to make progress implementing action items for each pathway.
- Resources to share with others about legal names vs. preferred names will be coming soon. There are some times when we must use the legal name and pronoun, but when possible, we honor the use of one’s preferred name and have done so since 2018, but we are trying to get the word out about that.
- Additional sessions of inclusive faculty training have been added.
- Expansion of MOST program to two conferences: July 10-12 and July 17-19.

Q& A

Sinha: One thing students are concerned about is the lack of ability to use their preferred pronouns. Does this affect that?

Mead: The problem is more of a technological fix and we prioritized names first, but we should be able to get it done within the next academic year. The preferred names question was resolved in 2018 and we have been trying to get the word out. Changing pronouns is our next priority.

- **Update on Pending Policy Revisions by Rich Forgetting, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs**
 - Academic policy review committee has been operating for the past 18 months to look at which policies are enhancing student success.
 - Class schedules and registration policy that establishes a shift in course withdrawal deadline from 30th day to 35th day, the rationale being that we want to afford students time to seek advising before withdrawing. This gives them another week to talk to faculty or an advisor to find out if it is really in their best interest to withdraw.
 - If there are no major objections, we plan to get moving within the next month.

Q & A

McClellan: My department likes all three of these policy changes. But we wonder why is the Academic Restart Policy is limited to previous Mississippi enrollment?

Forgetting: Denise is not with us tonight but I will try to explain. Because we have various ways for students to effectively waive some earlier grades or grant grade forgiveness, so the spirit of the change is that you are starting afresh and potentially be waiving earlier coursework in getting. It's intended to address a period of interruption.

McClellan:

Chair Durkin: If and when you get those answers, please send them to me and I will get passed on to the Senate. I was a restaurant manager for a long time in a college town, and I noticed a lot of servers sort of washed out the first couple of years because they weren't ready for school. For when they went back, they were great students, so I really support the policy too.

- **Update on University's Website Redesign by Jim Zook, Chief Marketing and Communication Officer**

- Our team has worked with IT and OHO Interactive for the past year to redesign the website. Now getting at content refresh.
- Working directly with academic units.
- Important changes in how we manage site.
- Our website completes with ALL other content on the web and not just universities. Our site must meet student expectations:
 - 77% of students agreed that a poorly designed website would affect their opinion of a college; 62% said they would abandon college website that are not user-friendly.
 - What makes content effective: immediacy, relevance, authenticity, answers, ROI (return on investment)
 - Users get frustrated on college sites by: confusing navigation (some parts take 7-9 links to find what they need); uninspiring content (we can provide more compelling images and content)
 - We need to talk about the experiences students will have here.
- Project timeline: we are roughly in the middle of the development phase.
- Website Advisory Council has worked with us for more than a year to give us insight, including Meagan Rosenthal, Brian Reithel, and others on this body.
 - Key changes:
 - New governance: We have a web governance council, which includes Dr. George from the Senate.
 - New content management system (Cascade 8 instead of Wordpress)
 - New approach to subdomains (Google's algorithms see our subdomains as 400 separate sites, so we are streamlining for better search optimization, which will help us better monitor and support the site overall.
 - New sitemaps and templates
 - New training and support: taking a holistic approach to how to manage a website now, best practices for writing for the web, content planning, etc.
 - We are about to post position for Web Editor-in-Chief, marketing counterpart to IT Webmaster

We will be offering training and documentation on: accessibility, content strategy, brand tutorial videos, content management system, submission of documentation

- Think on the front end of what your site needs to achieve.
- Near-term priorities: meeting with units to start content planning process (have 42 meetings booked so far)
- Working to get more photographs of people on campus without masks.
- Helping every group on campus prepare for this transition to make the most of your web presence.

Q & A

Bowers: When you say site managers, are those people with other job titles with this added on as additional work? And if so, is there a plan to help facilitate that portion of their work?

Zook: Yes, many people wear multiple hats and that has been a challenge in maintaining a quality site. A lot of the content on our site is better suited for other platforms. Some items should be archived but not living on the website. We have been able to hone things down to about 25 pages for most units. But we are planning to add a couple of web designers for our team to centralize some of this. But we will also make sure that every page has a certified owner responsible for maintaining its content. We're hoping to get additional resources but the new content management system should do a lot to help.

Bowers: We've needed this a long time, so thanks very much.

Barnard: One thing that differentiates departments is how faculty pages are handled, who controls the profiles, etc.

Zook: We are looking into how easy it is to allow everyone access to their own page. It will be more standardized in formatting, but you will be able to create the content.

Chair Durkin: We really appreciate the university is making this effort.

Update from Chair Durkin on the Recent Changes to Tenure by the IHL

The Chancellor was trying very hard to make it to this meeting to share this update with you, but we may consider calling a special meeting when he is available.

Update by Chair Durkin on the State Organization of Faculty Senates:

- We should be meeting next week and will be spending the summer figuring out who we are and what we are doing. The post-CRT statement we discussed was a big ask so we are leaving that to each faculty senate.
- Will focus on IHL policies that affect all institutions like “contumacious” behavior, tuition remission for the children of adjuncts.
- Mississippi State is still not participating with the state group. Similar for student groups.
-

Update on “Where We Are Lean” Requests for the Chancellor

- Sending an email to all of you next week asking you to submit to the Chancellor a few examples of where we might be running lean as an institution to see if that is what he’s looking for then will come back to Senate to update and create a Qualtrix survey.
 - Bowers: I want to suggest we create a Qualtrix survey to give people a list of categories, to try to limit all these different requests from getting out of control.
 - Durkin: Yes, and I welcome your help on that. One of the things we end up prioritizing could be things that show up repeatedly as requests.
 - Watson: You heard Dan: let’s all press for more library funding!
- **Committee Updates**
 - Academic Conduct (chair: Kenya Wolff) – nothing to report
 - Academic Instructional Affairs (chair: Alex Watson) – nothing to report
 - Development & Planning (chair: Jon-Michael Wimberly) – nothing to report
 - Finance & Benefits (chair: Joseph Carlisle) – nothing to report
 - Governance (chair: Carrie Smith, in absentia) – The recommendations for changes to the grievance policy currently sit in the executive council for feedback and will bring it to the full meeting next month.

- Research & Creative Achievement (chair: Donna Buckley) – nothing to report
- University Services (chair: Heather Allen) – nothing to report

- Old Business
- New Business – At next meeting, we want to move to in-person senate meetings next fall.
- Adjournment
 - Motion:
 - Second:
 - Vote adjourned at 7:25 PM.

NEXT MEETING: May 3, 2022 @ 6:00 via ZOOM

Daniel Durkin is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Faculty Senate Meeting

Time: May 3, 2022 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

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