

ROBERT HOLLAND FACULTY SENATE March 9, 2007

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular meeting in the Coskrey Auditorium of Memorial Hall at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, March 9, 2007.

Members absent and excused were Ben Blair, Pat Donohoe, Denny Eshee, Dana Franz, Marita Gootee, Allen Greenwood, Terry Hanson, Randy Little, Vince McGrath, Meghan Millea, Rich Raymond, Rudy Rogers, Ray Vaughn, Shu-hui Wu, and Jeremy Johnson.

No members were absent and unexcused.

The meeting was broadcast real-time over the World Wide Web. The file will be left active for a few weeks and can be reviewed by clicking on the Senate homepage at <http://www.facultysenate.msstate.edu>.

President Robert Wolverton called the meeting to order.

President Wolverton referred to the minutes of the February 9, 2007, Regular Meeting as distributed. Senator Deeds moved, Senator Nagel seconded, that the Robert Holland Faculty Senate approve the minutes as amended following clarification regarding the Traffic Policy Committee and committee membership. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

President Wolverton announced the outgoing senators for 2006-07 and thanked them for their service. Senator Adebisi provided updates on the MSU basketball game throughout the meeting.

GUESTS

President Wolverton introduced guests: Dr. Peter Rabideau, Provost.

PETER RABIDEAU, PROVOST

Provost Rabideau provided the following information:

- Dean searches:
 - A new Dean of Engineering has not been announced at this time, despite the announcement in the Reflector. Recommendations will go to IHL for the March 14th meeting and announcements will then be made.
 - The search for the Dean of Graduate Studies is progressing. Four candidates have been sent forward and interviews are being arranged.
 - The Meridian Dean is retiring and a search committee is working with advertisement in the Chronicle of Higher Education and other places. The

- search is chaired by Dean of the College of Education, Richard Blackburn, with a target date of July 1 for filling the position.
- The V.P. for Research and Economic Development position has been advertised in the Chronicle of Higher Education and announcements have been sent to Offices of Research in SEC and Land-Grant Institutions.
 - With regard to the budget:
 - A raise for faculty and staff is being considered, with various figures discussed (3 to 5%).
 - There is anticipation of funding beyond salary increases, perhaps with monies for seriously needed faculty positions. It is positive at this time, but much is to be determined.
 - Questions posed to Rabideau:
 - Senator Wood asked about the finalists for the Dean of Graduate Studies search. Rabideau responded that he would let the committee announce those individuals. Senator Susan Diehl referred to the recent search for the Director of the Diversity and Equity Programs and asked if the faculty would have the opportunity to interview the Graduate Studies candidates and if announcements of those times for interviews would be timely. Rabideau responded that faculty would have an opportunity to meet with the candidates in an open forum and that he believed he has met this request in previous searches (e.g., Deans searches) conducted out of his office.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Wolverton gave the following report:

- Wolverton provided a handout regarding the MSU Leadership Continuum.
- As a follow up to Senator Susan Diehl's comments about the Diversity search, Wolverton stated he was asked to serve on the search committee for diversity position. It is a large committee chaired by Sandra Harpole. He stated that he had been informed only the day before the scheduled interviews, but indicated faculty did have representatives at those interviews. He stated the committee will meet on Monday to possibly decide on the slate of names to send to the President.
- The Task Force on Promotion and Tenure has met and the document has been sent to Alan Greenwood then to the Senate, and will go through the required committee to make changes before coming back to the Senate.
- The Fall Round Table date has been set for Tuesday October 2, 2007. No topic or venue has been decided at this time.
- The contract for the food services has been held up at IHL. The proposal is under review and it is uncertain when a decision will be made. In response as to why the proposal is under review, Wolverton stated there were many small questions posed by one of the board members. Wolverton noted current employees will be retained and 40-60 new employees will be hired.
- Several AOPs which have been approved by the Executive Council and previously approved by the Senate.

- Among the AOPS included in their approval was one modified to allow senior citizens (60+ years) to enroll in up to 6 credit hours per semester, up to 18 credits in a calendar year, at no cost. These must be non AOCE credits and the individual will pay fees associated with the class. In response to a question as to whether an individual would be able to obtain a degree in this fashion, Wolverton stated he believed that it would be possible. This would be an option at all campuses.
- The AOP on Nepotism has been signed. The AOP on Developmental Courses has been controversial because various universities in the state include the grade from these courses in the calculation of a student's GPA. This issue will be decided by IHL.
- The Faculty Senate confidence survey has gone out, to date 390+ individuals have responded. The deadline has been extended through spring break.
 - The strongest asset that has been consistently identified at this time is the faculty and the biggest issue is funding.
 - The President's survey has also gone out. There are some questions which are similar on both surveys, but the President's survey is much longer (60+ versus 14 questions).
 - A third survey, developed by a sociology faculty member, has also been released for the Arts and Sciences faculty.
 - Wolverton stated some questions have arisen about the confidentiality of the Senate survey; he assured senators that the survey respondents cannot be tracked and all responses are anonymous.
- Questions posed to Wolverton:
 - In response to a question as to whether the results of the President's survey will be made available, Wolverton stated the Senate can and will make that request. Senator D'Abramo requested that Senators urge their colleagues to complete the Senate's confidence survey. Discussion about the President's survey included the intended use of the President's survey and whether it would be released in entirety.
 - Responding to a question about the AOPs that have recently been allowed to lapse, Wolverton stated that Senator Walter Diehl has reviewed the list. Diehl stated that a quick perusal of the list revealed nothing suspicious. For many AOPs, one was subsumed in another with elimination of duplication. He stated that he had not gone through the list item by item. Discussion included the idea that the President cannot unilaterally eliminate AOPs. Diehl indicated he did not believe any AOPs were eliminated simply because they were expired.
 - Delores Hudson indicated the list is available on the web. In a question to Delores Hudson regarding the trail of AOP changes, she stated we should be made aware of the AOPs in a letter to the Senate from Jerry Gilbert, and then the AOP should go through all the channels (Faculty Senate, Dean's Council, etc.). She stated that in the fall, President Foglesong changed how AOPs are reviewed. The turn around is shortened, and at the end of Past Senate President Goodman's term a large number of AOPs were sent to the Senate.
 - President Foglesong has since sent forward this list of lapsed AOPs. It was stated that this latest list included other items including OPs that do not necessarily come before the Senate unless specifically requested.

President Wolverton reminded senators that nominations for senate officers (President, Vice President, and Secretary) are due. Announcements will be sent by Delores Hudson and nominations are to be sent to Delores Hudson, email is acceptable. Elections will be held at the next Senate meeting.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President Swafford gave the following report:

- Several various meetings had been cancelled and much has already been announced.
- She reiterated that the Parking Committee does not have input into campus planning. In response to concerns expressed at the last Senate meeting, there will be parking for shopping (e.g., the florist, etc) in a well designed manner. It is important to remember this is only a preliminary plan.

REPORT FROM FACULTY SENATE DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

Employees' Benefits Committee – No report

Broadcast Board Committee – No report

Info-Technology Committee – No report

Faculty Research Advisory Committee – No report

Instructional Improvement – No report

Calendar Committee – No report

Facilities Use Committee – No report

Campus Planning and Development Committee – No report

BUSINESS SENT TO COMMITTEES

None

BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEES

None

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

No report.

ANCILLARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Wolverton stated reallocation of senators has been accomplished.

CHARTER AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE

No report.

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

No report.

STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

No report.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

No report.

OLD BUSINESS

An update on the student evaluations was provided by Senator Goodman:

- A list of questions to test the validity of the new survey has been developed and will be sent out to select classes (at least two from each college). The questions will then be reworked if found to have validity problems.
 - Several important issues have come up in discussion about the surveys. For example, the survey does not test the effectiveness of teaching, especially university wide. Second, students do not know how to evaluate teaching and have not been trained to do so. Thus, the survey appears to be a popularity contest. As such, the survey is prone to abuse by administrators. This cannot be resolved; however the latest version of the evaluation can mitigate weaknesses that currently exist.
 - Senator Adebisi stated the surveys were originally for the eyes of the faculty member only and we need to get back to that. Wolverton stated the current Center for Teaching and Learning resources are not new on campus, but had previously existed on campus when he was vice president.
 - Senator Coyne asked how teaching would be shown to be excellent if the surveys are taken out of Promotion and Tenure, Adebisi responded that teaching

could be observed and those comments could be used as a performance review, Senator Deeds indicated that peer reviews of classroom performance were regularly included in annual reviews. Standards and specifics for teaching reviews were discussed.

- Senator Walter Diehl stated the move to national reputation in excellence would make teaching excellence a moot point.

NEW BUSINESS

President Wolverton referred to an anonymous email was sent regarding an emails regarding inconsistency between two AOPs (student probation and suspension). Wolverton stated that the Faculty Senate does not act on requests outside faculty. This issue will be addressed through Dean's Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Adebisi moved, Senator Porter seconded, to adjourn the meeting. President Wolverton thanked outgoing senators for their service.

Submitted for correction and approval.

Carlen Henington, Secretary