



Robert Holland Faculty Senate

Corrected Minutes of February 9, 2024

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular monthly meeting in Bost Auditorium North at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, February 9, 2024.

Members absent and excused were Tom Carskadon, Alexis Gregory, Skip Jack, Cheryl Justice, Stephanie Lemley, Derek Marshall, Beth Stokes, and Kevin Williams.

Faculty Senate President Robert Banik called the meeting to order.

President Banik stated Dr. Robert Wolverton, Sr.'s memorial service was earlier in the day. Dr. Wolverton was a former senator and president of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. President Banik led the Senate in a moment of silence to pay respects for Dr. Wolverton's service to the Senate and the university.

President Banik described edit corrections to the minutes from the February 9, 2024, Faculty Senate meeting. Hearing no further corrections, President Banik requested a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Senator Robichaux-Davis made a motion to approve the February 9, 2024 minutes. Senator Wyatt seconded the motion.

Guests

Ms. Harriet Laird, Senior Associate Director, OPA

Ms. Laird thanked the Senate for allowing her to give an overview of The Hub in the Office of Public Affairs. She stated that the University's Strategic Plan consists of five main pillars and one of those pillars is to Tell Our Story to grow awareness and shape the perception of MSU by amplifying the stories, impacts, and excitement of our community. OPA's focus is to improve the tools used for communication so that it is in a more cohesive direction across all the different pieces of content to better come across as one.

Ms. Laird stated that to help achieve that goal, OPA has launched The Hub. She stated The Hub is an online portal where divisions and departments can submit final proofs of external facing marketing and advertising materials for review such as print advertising, digital ads, and graphics, radio and television advertising, billboards, magazines, event graphics, fliers, magazines, newsletters, and other promotional materials. The Hub is found under Request Services on the OPA website (<https://www.opa.msstate.edu/>) and is a quality control

mechanism to check for correct use of university logos, properly sourced photos, and more so that we can move in a more cohesive direction across all different channels and pieces of content and come across as one Mississippi State University. Ms. Laird stated Chris Bryant in OPA manages The Hub and can assist with more questions, details, and training.

Senator Kelly stated she is the Director of Gender Studies and has about 3 to 5 events per semester that need a poster and has just started going exclusively through The Hub. She said some of her favorite posters in the 12 years she has directed this program have come from The Hub and they do fantastic work. Ms. Laird thanked her and said 80% of what is sent to us is going to stay the same, but about 20% of the time they may see ways to enhance what is sent.

Senator Baker asked if Extension publications should or should not run through The Hub at this time. Ms. Laird stated she was unsure if Extension publications were coming through the OPA office or the Division of AG. She said she was sure Sid Salter was in talks with Elizabeth North in Ag Communication about how they could be incorporated but hasn't gotten that far yet.

Senator Vivier asked about the guidelines stating he has heard from faculty members in his college about posters having to change. Ms. Laird stated the visual identity standards have been set for several years at www.brand.msstate.edu where those can be found under the Visual Identity section on OPA's website <https://www.opa.msstate.edu/> Ms. Laird stated the site has information on how to use the logo with its correct size and position and a color palette. She said the verbal identity standards were new and OPA has a small booklet with information on verbal identity that can be sent if requested. She said there were specific phrases and words used in everyday language but we want to use them repeatedly on pieces sent out to portray the university positively.

Ms. Leslie Corey, Chief Human Resources Officer

Ms. Corey spoke to the Senate regarding two of HRM's recent policies that went through the Executive Council and were revised because of federal law changes. She stated that because HRM and Legal Counsel work closely on these policies, she asked Ms. Joanne Lucas from Legal Counsel to accompany her.

Ms. Corey stated the first policy is HRM 60.227: Break Time for Nursing Mothers. Ms. Lucas stated policy changes were made to comply with the Pump Act, which was put into place in December 2022. This expanded the requirements under the Affordable Care Act to provide spaces for all employees who are nursing to pump for a year after childbirth. The policy requires there be a private space (one that is not a restroom or locker room) such as an office with a sink for pumping mothers. Additionally, nursing mothers are allowed to use refrigerators in breakroom spaces to store their milk. This does not extend to lab refrigerators.

Ms. Corey stated the second policy is HRM 60.123 Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Reasonable Accommodation in Employment. Ms. Corey stated they updated the policy to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). She said if a disability accommodation is

requested it goes through the supervisor and then HRM reviews and meets with the employee. She said they must be able to perform the essential functions of the job.

Ms. Lucas said under the ADA, pregnancy is not recognized as a disability, but in the past, symptoms of or complications with pregnancies could qualify. She stated in 2023 the federal government passed the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, which is what these policy revisions track. While pregnancy is still not classified as a disability under the ADA, we are now allowed to offer accommodations under the ADA without there being a substantial impairment, which is what is allowed under the ADA.

Mr. Les Potts, Interim Vice President of Finance & Administration, CFO

Mr. Potts thanked the Senate for inviting him to introduce himself. Mr. Potts stated he had been in Finance and Administration for close to 15 years. He said in 2018 the division name changed from Budget and Planning to Finance and Administration.

Mr. Potts said the VP of Finance & Administration's office took over the infrastructure division in 2018 when Vice President Amy Tuck, who was previously over that area, retired. Mr. Potts stated he values the experience of learning the infrastructure side and pairing it with what he had been doing previously. He said it was a steep learning curve going in right before Covid hit and managing the infrastructure, construction, and temporary spaces for students.

Mr. Potts stated he is very honored to be in the interim role despite the fiscal situation in the country and the state of higher education as an industry. He said we are facing many obstacles, from the national perception of whether a college degree is needed anymore to issues specific to our state such as the retirement system PERS.

Mr. Potts said he is available at any time for further conversation and discussion on topics involving the VP of Finance office.

Senator Barrett said he appreciated Mr. Potts speaking today and asked what faculty members could do to help him and the Office of Finance Administration. Mr. Potts replied that the financial challenges he previously mentioned are not unique to us. He added that one way to help is by communicating that as an administration we are doing the best we can with limited resources and that we have hard decisions that must be made. He stated the goal of the administration is the sustainability of the institution financially. Mr. Potts said there are more often communication issues than bad intentions on either side between the faculty and the administration.

Dr. David Shaw, Provost & Executive Vice President

Dr. Shaw began by thanking Senator Robichaux-Davis and the QEP office for their work with the Bulldog Experience and the SACSCOC re-accreditation visit coming the week of February 26th.

Dr. Shaw discussed the faculty performance evaluations, especially with the rewrite of the P&T document and the new faculty ranks implemented. He has had very engaging conversations

with the deans and Dr. Jim Dunne and the University P&T Committee to discuss addressing department head training for these evaluations. Dr. Shaw stated that department heads approach performance evaluations in various ways. He said they will be developing a draft of a series of best practices for these evaluations.

Dr. Shaw stated that there is a lengthy list of things that should be done to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. He said we default back to the student surveys, which is easy but not the best thing to do. Dr. Shaw said he wants our department heads to push our faculty to look at the reflections, the peer evaluations, and other mechanisms to be more effective in our evaluation of teaching than what we do currently.

Dr. Shaw stated that next Thursday, February 15th, IHL should approve the new nursing program in Meridian. If approved next Thursday morning, the website will go live Thursday afternoon for applications for the fall. Dr. Shaw said there is momentum being created in Meridian not only because of nursing but because of all the opportunities that are being created.

Dr. Shaw stated that EOP 37, the Engineering operating procedure that the Senate rescinded in the fall, is not being implemented. Dr. Julie Jordan is looking at ways to incentivize research activities in other parts of the university and at what other universities are doing to incentivize rather than looking like it's punitive or penalizing. Dr. Jordan is developing recommendations to send to President Keenum.

President Banik opened the floor for questions. Senator Rai stated that the Engineering update was helpful. He also said the Engineering Senators request that EOP 37 be university-wide and not just for Engineering. Dr. Shaw said one reason for his success was having a great department head who set aside 2 hours during performance evaluations where we probed more deeply into where my passions lay, where I wanted to see my research program grow, and suggestions and opportunities. He said it had a huge impact personally. He said we need department heads to truly feel empowered and expect them to provide very effective mentoring such as this.

Dr. Shaw said he agrees that EOP37 should be university wide. He said some incentives will be more appropriate for some disciplines than for others and Dr. Jordan will use those incentives as a base to expand it. Dr. Shaw said they have looked at ways other institutions handle similar policies. He asked that if someone knew of some practices at another institution that have been effective to please give him that information.

Senator Messer stated his department is receiving 2-3 responses in classes of 25 and 15-30 responses in classes of 150 from the survey so they are not receiving good information.

Dr. Shaw said although we do have good questions on the survey we need to rethink how we expect students to complete the survey. He said an electronic survey should get a higher response rate if it is done correctly.

Senator Sutton stated a colleague had a student review that was horrendous and filled with personal attacks and a gendered slur but they could not find a way to report the incident. Although the colleague did not want to know the student's identity they did want to be able to report it had happened. She asked as they were reworking the survey the students were warned that inappropriate comments may be investigated and how the faculty could report the comments. Dr. Shaw stated we should be open to additional instructions for the students and although we can't stop them, we can encourage them with more effective instruction.

Dr. Shaw added there is a full understanding by the administration that a one-off comment does not reflect poorly on a faculty member. However, if there are several negative comments the department head must delve deeper to understand why the comments were communicated. He said the department head training will be very useful so that our faculty are more comfortable if they do receive negative comments that it will not affect their career.

Senator Wyatt asked about new forms for department head training and asked what the faculty should include in the reviews to cut down on paper usage. Dr. Shaw said three colleges have made some steps to be all digital in their reviews and there have been discussions to move everyone to all digital. He said we are setting high expectations for department heads to be consistent across the institution and for their mentoring to guide their faculty in putting the packages together in the best and most consistent way possible.

Report of the Faculty Senate President

I hope that everyone is getting back in the full swing of the spring semester. I know this time of year is exciting for various reasons. Basketball is in full swing and baseball is just around the corner. Student research is going on and the research symposium will be on us very quickly (April 11th/12th), with abstracts due by March 19th. Spirit of State Award nominations close on February 22nd.

I want to particularly point out the Student Experience Expo on Wednesday, February 28th from 10:30 am – 2:00 pm in the Bost Conference Center. This is a come-and-go event designed to showcase how you can utilize the diverse programs and activities to enhance our students' experiential learning. Come check out the vast array of programs and services that you can use to incorporate experiential learning within your classroom or research. Refreshments and a food voucher will be provided.

The Spring General Faculty meeting is Monday, February 12th, 2024, at 2:00 pm in the Colvard Student Union's Fowlkes Auditorium. I encourage you all to attend if possible. The program will include updates from President Mark E. Keenum, Provost and Executive Vice President David Shaw, Vice President for Research and Economic Development Julie Jordan, and Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine Keith Coble.

I informed the president of the University Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM) of our vote to accept the invitation and join on January 22, 2024. A meeting was held on January

29th, 2024. I will be including this committee in the reports as a committee on which I serve the Robert Holland Faculty Senate.

The Standing Committee Review Board also met on January 24th, 2024. We discussed the structure of our review board and the annual reports from the standing committees. We have about 50 out of 59 committee reports. The twelve members will be split into four groups of three members each. All groups will meet to review their assigned committees and be prepared to discuss their recommendations to the full board in early April.

The Student Affairs Committee reached out to me concerning the student course surveys. The Faculty Senate approved the current course surveys in fall 2021, doing so with the understanding that after the initial two-year period, the survey would be evaluated. I reached out to Dr. David Shaw and Dr. Tracey Baham about the current student course surveys, and I specifically asked whether an evaluation process has already been initiated. There has not been, but Dr. Baham said that the raw data was collected over the semesters, and analysis should be quick. I am meeting with Drs. Shaw and Baham to discuss this soon.

Reports from Committees on which I Serve:

Athletic Council – This council did not meet because the meeting date was January 17th, 2024. That day, the university held no face-to-face classes due to the weather, and the meeting was canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for February 14th, 2024.

Dean’s Council – This committee has not met since the last report in January. The next scheduled meeting for February 12th, 2024, was canceled as well due to the Spring General Faculty meeting.

Design Review Committee – This committee did not meet on February 1st, 2024, due to a lack of items for the committee to review. The next meeting is scheduled for March 7th, 2024.

Executive Council – This council did not meet in January due to a lack of agenda items. The next scheduled meeting is scheduled for February 26th, 2024.

Game Day and Special Events – No meeting is currently scheduled, and no meeting was held in January 2024.

Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council – The committee met on January 23rd, 2024. Delaney Vampran-Foster shared updates concerning the Office of Inclusive Excellence. There will be workshops on ways to boost funding proposals. The first was on February 5th, with two additional workshops on March 4th and April 1st. Safe Zone has moved into this office out of the FLARE student group. A graduate student database is in the works for the university, as we have no such database currently. Recruitment boxes will be sent to prospective students with “goodies” in them (still working on what those may be). We also discussed HB 127 and the impact that this bill (if passed) would have on this university. No details to report yet.

There is also an Inclusive Excellence Certificate that faculty can get by attending 3 workshops and completing a reflection at the end of the semester. Those workshops are February 13th, March 5th, March 19th, and April 4th. Lunch/dinner will be served at all these workshops. To register for these or any workshops within the Office of Inclusive Excellence, visit <https://www.oidi.msstate.edu/inclusive-excellence>.

February is Black History Month and there are several workshops, discussions, and events planned. A list of these events can be found at <https://www.msstate.edu/newsroom/article/2024/01/msu-commemorates-black-history-month-numerous-special-events>.

Information Technology Council – This committee did not meet in January. The next meeting is scheduled for February 6th, 2024.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee – This committee did not meet in January. The next scheduled meeting is February 8th, 2024.

Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee – This committee met on January 25th, 2024, to discuss two topics. First, the email discussion and vote in mid-December concerning the parking for faculty and staff at the Hill Science Building on the west side of campus next to Newell-Grissom was revisited at the request of Dr. Regina Hyatt and Mr. Les Potts. The committee decided to leave the parking as is, not rezoning the Maroon (any permit) to be allotted to staff parking since staff can park in the Maroon lots. This will allow students to park there if spaces are available.

Also discussed was the possibility of having an “employee of the month” space for the College of Veterinary Medicine outside of the Dean’s office at the Wise Center. After some discussion, the committee felt an approval of this would open a wave of “designated spaces” for all sorts of faculty members around campus. The decision was to deny this type of parking space to anyone who is not at a President/Vice President administrative level.

Sustainability Committee – This committee did not meet in January.

University Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM) – The committee met on January 29, 2024. We discussed a report from an ad-hoc committee formed in the Fall 2023 semester consisting of various senators from across the state of Mississippi. The ad-hoc committee was charged with researching, preparing, and submitting a proposal for paid parental leave for faculty employees of IHL universities in Mississippi. The report is presented in this report as well. The committee concluded that granting 12 weeks of paid parental leave to faculty employees of IHL Universities of Mississippi will have a positive impact on the recruitment and retention of faculty, the intellectual growth of IHL institutions, the morale of employees, and Mississippi family values. Senator James Chamberlain was a member of this ad-hoc committee and is bringing this proposal to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate today.

President Banik asked for comments and questions. Senator Sutton asked President Banik for an update on the resolution put forward at the last meeting on the competitive salary structure. President Banik stated an Ad Hoc committee had been formed and would meet immediately after the current Senate meeting.

Senator Sutton asked why an Ad Hoc Committee was formed and how the committee members were chosen. President Banik stated the Ad Hoc Committee is being chaired by Vice President Breazeale and was formed because the issue was not specific to any one Faculty Senate Committee. He and Vice President Breazeale compiled a list of members and tried to include members from each college.

Senator Rai asked who the representative was from the College of Engineering. President Banik replied that they asked Senator Taggart, as she is from Ag & Bio Engineering. Senator Rai noted that Senator Taggart does not represent Engineering. President Banik said as there were already nine members on the committee, they felt it was good representation and did not want to add more members. Senator Rai stated it was the prerogative of the president to select the committee members, but it would not be accurate to say all major colleges are represented on the committee.

Senator Rai requested that information about the resolutions that come through the Senate and require action or any feedback be included in the President's report.

Senator Krishnan asked that the graduate student database be further explained. President Banik stated it was for current graduate students. Dr. Shaw stated the database is intended to compile potential graduate student assistantship opportunities for prospective graduate students.

Report of the Faculty Senate Vice President

Committee on Campus Access

No meetings were held since the last Vice President's report.

Calendar Committee

No meetings have been held since the last Vice President's report and no meetings are scheduled to date. Proposed dates for all 2025 semesters have been sent out for approval. The committee plans to resume meetings later this spring where the chairs will provide all the variables and "constraining factors" that are involved in planning the semesters. Discussion of the 2026 calendar will begin in hopes of having it determined and posted by October 1.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee

No meetings were held since the last Vice President's report.

Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery Committee

No meetings were held since the last Vice President's report. Campus-wide ORED Research Week is scheduled for the week of April 8. Individual units are encouraged to host their own Research Week the prior week. ORED Undergraduate Faculty Research Grant applications will soon be live on the ORED website. The deadline for applications is April 1. UG faculty can apply for up to \$2,000 to be made available as summer funding.

Reports from Faculty Senate Designates on University Committees

Business Sent to Committee

Business to be Sent to Committee

Standing Committee Report

Academic Affairs

1. AOP 12.04 Final Examination

Senator Robichaux-Davis, on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.04.

Senator Vivier asked why the permission of the respective Department Head and Dean was necessary. Senator Robichaux-Davis stated the committee thought if there was going to be a change in the way the final exam was delivered from the format of the class that the student had enrolled in, the Department Head and Dean should permit that change.

Senator Tschume stated in the College of Arts & Sciences the Department of Chemistry gives a National Exam in which they are given 110 minutes. He asked if this would be implemented in that department. Senator Robichaux-Davis said she couldn't speak to that and if they are not following the policy then something would be done.

Senator Spurlin asked if the Department Head and Dean are still needed to approve the Hybrid Courses, as those students expect to have some flexibility in class delivery, including exams. Senator Robichaux-Davis said yes, any mode other than asynchronous online.

Senator Lemus stated the faculty provides information on how the exams are going to be presented to the students on the class syllabus. Senator Robichaux-Davis stated the committee thought the delivery method of the class should match the way the student takes the final examination.

Senator Musser stated that if it is clearly stated on the syllabus there is no real rationale for requiring the extra signatures.

Senator Vivier questioned how the statement aligns with the university syllabus statement on continuity of instruction, which seems to expect some flexibility of students as well as faculty between modes of delivery depending on the external circumstances of weather and such.

Senator Robichaux-Davis stated the committee did not intentionally go against the continuity of instruction in the syllabus, but that they were discussing the policy as it was presented to them. The committee read it as any course that is not asynchronous could be put online.

Senator Herrmann stated if a course is only approved for face-to-face instruction, giving the examinations asynchronously online seems inconsistent with the mode of delivery that has been approved for the course.

Student Association President Elle Herndon asked why, in a face-to-face course, if all the examinations were offered online the final examination would need to match the course of instruction and not how the rest of the tests were formatted. Senator Robichaux-Davis said she thinks it may be because the final examination was weighted heavier.

Senator Chamberlain stated many of the assessments his students do, such as assignments and papers they write, are outside of the classroom. He said with face-to-face classes work is done outside the classroom and asked how the final examination is any different. Senator Robichaux-Davis stated the final examination applies to the total number of contact hours, so if it is a 3-hour lecture it is part of the 45 hours of contact.

Senator Kundu asked how the policy would be applicable if the final exam was a take-home exam. Senator Robichaux-Davis said that a take-home exam is not an online exam.

Senator Spurlin made a motion to amend the committee's report to add "or Hybrid" so it would read "For courses delivered in a mode other than asynchronous online or hybrid." Senator Fincher gave the second. The motion passed by majority hand vote.

Senator Vivier made a motion to delete the text stating "with permission of the respective department head or dean." Senator M. Priddy gave the second.

Senator Tschume asked if allowing any faculty to go asynchronous online is going to affect contact minutes as far as accreditation and SACS. Senator Robichaux-Davis replied that was discussed at the Associate Dean's Council and the last sentence states "In these cases, the final examination must include at a minimum the full three-hour session allotted by the academic calendar."

Senator Stewart stated some courses do not have to count the final exam as hours of contact as the 45 contact hours have been met by that point. He added in best practices for online exams you do not give them 3 hours and are instructed to limit the time on an online exam. Senator Robichaux-Davis confirmed with Provost Shaw that online exam times could be shorter.

Senator Herrmann stated in an asynchronous online class many students are non-traditional and do not know one another. However, for a face-to-face class, the students may meet at someone's apartment and do the exam together, so her concern was if the class was face-to-face the examinations should be delivered in the same format as the course. Senator Robichaux-Davis stated that given that concern, the committee felt the Department Head and Dean should be aware of exams being put online.

Senator Chamberlain stated the faculty have the freedom and control to an extent in how they assess their courses. Needing a department head to sign off on how exams are given, then do they also need to make sure we are assigning enough essays and other assignments? President Banik stated there is only an AOP for the final exams but not for other assignments.

Senator Robichaux-Davis stated that students who want to come to campus to take a face-to-face course are not required to have access to technology or there may be the potential to not have access to technology. She said the committee felt that if there was a legitimate reason why it should be online, just get permission, otherwise it should be on campus for the final exam.

Senator Grala stated we do require students to have access to certain items such as textbooks and calculators, so we can also require access to the Internet. He said if they do not have that access from home, they can come to a university computer lab. President Banik stated if a student is coming to campus to take the test they may as well come to the classroom.

Senator Vivier clarified that the added language giving the Department Head and Deans more authority, which they did not ask for, came from the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee. President Banik stated that was correct.

Hearing no other comments, President Banik asked for a vote on removing the added phrase "with permission of the respective department head and dean." The amendment passed with a majority hand vote.

Senator Musser stated in his opinion the wording of the last sentence in the same section says the final examination due date must include the full three-hour session. He said the date and three-hour session do not seem to go together. Senator Robichaux-Davis said it is an asynchronous exam, which means it could be open for 72 hours if it is in a regular time period, which must include at a minimum the full 3-hour session allotted by the academic calendar. If it is a face-to-face examination and we are opting to go asynchronous online, the amount of time they have to take it has to include the face-to-face schedule of the regular final examination period on the academic calendar.

President Banik asked for questions or comments on the original discussion on the approval of the AOP as now presented.

Senator Perkins made a motion to amend the already amended AOP to change the last sentence of the paragraph being discussed to replace “due date” with “window” so that it reads, “In these cases, the final examination window must include at a minimum the full three-hour session allotted by the academic calendar” and to move the second paragraph on the first page that begins “For the purpose of this policy” to the top of the AOP as the first paragraph. Senator Musser gave the second. The motion to amend the AOP to include those two changes passed by unanimous hand vote.

President Banik asked for any comments or questions on the amended AOP. Hearing none he moved to vote on the amended AOP. The motion passed by unanimous hand vote.

1. Academic Amnesty for Graduate Students

Senator Robichaux-Davis, on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.18.

Senator Lemus requested to add (GPA) in the first paragraph after “their grade point average (GPA) upon successful readmission.”

Senator Freeman moved that any grammatical or correctional statements be corrected by the Secretary of the Faculty Senate. Senator Haynes gave the second. The motion passed unanimously.

The motion to approve AOP 12.18 passed by unanimous hand vote.

Ancillary Affairs – No Report

Charter & Bylaws

1. Report on Senate Apportionment

Senator Spurlin presented the report from the Charter & Bylaws Committee. He stated the Charter & Bylaws Committee is tasked with reporting the apportionment across the 11 college units represented in the Faculty Senate. Per the Faculty Handbook, in odd-numbered years we can reapportion; for this year, 2024, we are simply providing a report of the total count of general faculty represented and how those should be apportioned. He stated if we had done reapportionment this year there would be no changes. This can be found in the Faculty Handbook, section 3 pages 17-20, which goes into further detail on apportionment.

Senator Vivier asked about the letter of request sent to the Faculty Senate last November concerning representation for the Honors College on the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. The letter was sent to the Charter and Bylaws Committee in January, which then recommended in

April the Senate appoint a special committee to address the issue of unrepresented faculty. He asked the Faculty Senate President in October if the committee had been formed and was told it had not been. Senator Vivier stated the Senate voted to form a committee to discuss unrepresented faculty in general and representation in the Honors College in particular. He asked if the committee had been formed and if not, why not.

President Banik stated it had not been formed as the official breakdown of the Senate is based on the colleges represented in the faculty handbook. He said the Honors College is not listed as well as the new College of Professional and Continuing Studies. He said as far as representation goes for those positions the Honors College is represented by Senator Vivier's presence as an Arts & Sciences Senator as well as for the Honors College. The Executive Committee discussed the formation of said committee and in speaking with Dr. Shaw, it seemed more logical at this time to place those unrepresented faculty in colleges instead of doing a whole section to try to get those people in there.

Senator Vivier asked if it was within the power of the president of the Faculty Senate to determine not to form a committee when the Faculty Senate has voted to do so. Senator Freeman stated any resolution that is presented before the Senate that relates to the internal operations of the Senate would then need to be sent to a committee to be reviewed within a timely manner. If that committee fails to act or make a recommendation of no action, the originator can bring that resolution before the full Senate to take a vote.

Senator Viver stated that Senator Freeman's response had not answered his question, which was about a president failing to form a committee that the Senate voted as a body to form. Senator Freeman stated Senator Vivier could still bring the resolution from the committee back in front of the whole Senate to vote. President Banik stated it was discussed with the Executive Committee and they did not see the purpose of that committee being formed.

Senator Vivier stated the Senate voted on it and asked President Banik if he had the power to not form it. Senator Freeman stated the President did have to form the committee if requested to do so, but the President could decide who is on the committee.

President Banik stated it would go to the Executive Committee and they will have that report back in March.

The motion and second from the Charter & Bylaws Committee to accept the Apportionment Report from the Charter & Bylaws Committee passed by hand vote of 18 yay and 0 nay.

Faculty Affairs

1. EOP 12.26 Credit for Prior Learning

Senator Tschume gave an update for Senator Barrett regarding AOP 12.26 Credit for Prior Learning. He said it was discussed via email and afterward the Executive Committee had some concerns about the amount of work faculty would have to put in towards approving credit for prior learning. Senator Barrett will be meeting with Dr. Susan Seal and the committee will have an update next month.

Student Affairs

1. AOP 12.21 Veterans' Academic Status

Senator Haynes, on behalf of the Student Affairs Committee, presented the committee report on AOP 12.21.

Senator Haynes stated the committee had Andrew Rendon, the new Executive Director of Veterans and Military Affairs, review the AOP to ensure the policies and procedures being described were consistent with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Senator Haynes said the edits in red were to make the AOP consistent with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The motion to accept AOP 12.21 as presented passed by unanimous hand vote.

University Resources – No Report

Pending Business

New Business

1. Resolution for the Ombudsman

The resolution for the Ombudsman was presented by Senator M. Priddy and Senator Haynes in the form of a motion. Senator L. Priddy passed out a letter of support from the Graduate Student Association President Luck Tucker. Senator Sutton gave the second.

Senator M. Priddy provided context for bringing the resolution forward and stated that there have been many faculty to use the Ombudsman office over the years and the confidentiality of the Ombudsman office coupled with the fact that it is not within their chain of command has been very important to them receiving swift feedback and resolution to issues.

Senator M. Priddy stated there is one modification in the original Resolution under the Resolved section at the very end to strike the verbiage in (ii) from “an election cycle/protocol” and replace it with “a protocol.”

Senator Robichaux-Davis asked why the suggestion of multiple ombudsmen was included given the confidential nature of everything that happens in that office. Senator M. Priddy stated other universities have three ombudsman people who rotate on three-year cycles so there is some continuity within the office of how they are allowed to pass information, but they also learn from each other. He stated other universities have an ombudsperson that is specifically for certain constituents, such as one to answer faculty questions and another for graduate students. The thought is they are better trained in knowing how to provide feedback.

Senator Musser said in the first sentence of the Resolution it states there are plans to restructure the Ombuds Office and asked Dr. Shaw what that meant. Dr. Shaw stated the intention is to reevaluate how to approach the office of the Ombudsman.

President Banik stated if the resolution passes it will be sent to President Keenum to take action.

The motion on the resolution as presented with one edit passed with unanimous hand vote.

2. Resolution for Parental Leave

Senator James Chamberlain presented the resolution in support of the Parental Leave Policy Adoption in the form of a motion. Senator Chamberlain was part of a committee in the fall made up of representatives of faculty members across the state from various institutions.

President Banik stated this resolution will not go to our university president but to the University Faculty Senate Association of Mississippi.

President Banik asked for a second. Senator Tschume gave the second.

Senator Fincher asked how this policy would be squeezed into a semester schedule as it states it is for 12 weeks and we have 16-week semesters.

Senator Kundu said most of us are nine-month faculty and asked how it is going to be considered in the 16 weeks or 12 weeks of this plan.

Senator Chamberlain stated the way it is written is in terms of the existing FMLA policy and they adopted the language of 12 weeks because that was more than what any of our peer institutions were already offering.

Senator Robinson said fellow faculty members came in and took on her classes when she had medical leave due to pregnancy. She stated there may be a proposal that could be written on how to deal with that situation as it does put the students in an unfortunate situation and there are a lot of complaints because they have two different instructors of record.

Senator Chamberlain stated the policy proposal was for paid parental leave not how we would handle the course.

Senator Tschume said he wondered if this policy would be struck down because IHL thinks 12 weeks is too much.

Senator L. Priddy commented that just because we aren't sure they are going to accept this doesn't mean we shouldn't put it forward.

President Banik stated as a point of clarification, that the Faculty Senates do not talk to the State Legislature, which is where this would have to ultimately go for any significant change. This would go from the United Faculty Senate to IHL.

Senator Haynes stated part of the reason it is important is because there is so much inconsistency across departments about how it is handled as sometimes people are reassigned. She said having some kind of policy in place is going to be good for people to make sure there is consistency because not everyone has had fortunate experiences.

President Banik moved to vote on the Resolution. The motion passed by hand vote with a majority hand vote.

President Banik asked for a motion to adjourn. Senator Robichaux-Davis made a motion to adjourn. Senator Tschume gave the second. The motion passed by unanimous hand vote.

Meeting adjourned at 4:19 pm.

Submitted for correction and approval.

Stacy Haynes, Secretary

Dinah Jenkins, Administrative Assistant