



## Robert Holland Faculty Senate

### **Uncorrected Minutes of March 8, 2024**

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular monthly meeting in Bost Auditorium at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, March 8, 2024.

Members absent and excused were Mike Breazeale, Mark Fincher, Skip Jack, Kimberly Kelly, Rocky Lemus, Adrian Sescu, Barry Stewart, Tara Sutton, Kim Walters, and Kelley Wamsley.

Members absent were Kris Krishnan.

Faculty Senate President Robert Banik called the meeting to order.

President Banik noted edits to the minutes, including correcting Ms. Leslie Corey's name in 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 Barrett seconded the motion.

### Guests

#### **Dr. Tracey Baham, Associate Vice President of Institutional Research & Effectiveness**

Dr. Baham spoke of the SACS Accreditation on-site visit results from the accreditation review. The review brought a committee of eight members representing eight different institutions from around the Southeast to our campus.

Dr. Baham said this process began two and a half years ago in December 2022 when we applied for and received a differentiated review. Dr. Baham stated that a very select group of institutions are allowed to do a differentiated review, which meant instead of 100 standards to maintain, MSU only had to report on 38. Those 38 narratives were submitted in September 2023 where a group of peers from another set of eight institutions we do not know reviewed them and had seven follow-up questions. Those seven follow-up questions and the QEP were submitted in the first week of January 2024. The on-site visit was the week of February 26<sup>th</sup> when those reviewers came onto campus and talked to students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, IHL board members, and the IHL commissioner.

Dr. Baham said at the end of the site visit no recommendations were made on any of those standards or the QEPs and there were no follow-up reports. Dr. Baham said the re-accreditation will be approved officially through the SACSCOC Board of Trustees when it is voted on over the summer. Dr. Baham thanked all involved in making the on-site visit run smoothly.

### **Dr. David Shaw, Provost & Executive Vice President**

Dr. Shaw stated he had been on many SACSCOC peer reviews for other institutions and had never heard a closeout report that went as well as ours did. He said no findings or recommendations were given, but very high praise for our institution in the work, standards, and the QEP. The QEP lead evaluator said that experiential learning is common, but they had never seen a QEP that made it a much more meaningful experience. Dr. Shaw stated it was a true team effort with many thanks to Dr. Tracey Baham and Senator Robichaux-Davis.

Dr. Shaw said he led a group to Cardiff University in Wales. He said there were conversations in engineering, cyber security and mechanical engineering, architecture, archeology, health, social sciences, psychology, Honors College, and the International Institute about the complementarity between the institutions. Dr. Shaw stated there are opportunities for both faculty collaborations and our students in experiential learning.

Dr. Shaw said the Great Colleges to Work survey went out on March 4<sup>th</sup> and a 20% response rate is needed for it to be able to register but so far we only have a 3% response rate. Dr. Shaw requested the Senators look back at their emails to complete it and go back to the colleges and the colleagues they represent and encourage them to complete the survey as well.

President Banik opened the floor for questions for Dr. Shaw.

Senator Gregory asked about book adoptions. She said she had received four emails in the past week from the bookstore asking for adoptions but had not yet been assigned classes. She asked about the status of working with department heads and deans and what the bookstore is doing to balance that out. Dr. Shaw stated he had met with Dr. Hyatt and the bookstore and thought they had those things procedurally worked out. He will look into the issue and follow up.

Senator Chamberlain asked Dr. Shaw what the university might be thinking or doing in response to the various bills that have been discussed in the Mississippi Legislature.

Dr. Shaw stated there is a bill that recommended merging MUW with MSU which was a surprise in that Dr. Keenum had less than 24 hours' notice before it was published. Dr. Shaw stated that our institution follows the will of the Legislature and our IHL College Board and we will follow the directives provided. He said the law must change if we do not have eight Institutions of Higher Learning in the state of Mississippi. He added that there have been some comments about IHL weighing in on the decision, however IHL follows the intent of the Legislature just as we do.

Dr. Shaw said another bill is regarding the Mississippi School for Math and Science, which had two separate pieces of legislation. The first piece is that it would remain on the campus in Columbus but would fall under MSU's responsibility. A separate piece has called for MSMS to be moved to the campus of Mississippi State University. President Keenum has been very clear that we would relish the opportunity to host MSMS but not at the expense of MUW.

Senator Chamberlain asked if Dr. Shaw could comment on the proposed legislation to phase out tenure. Senator Gregory stated it was Senate Bill 2075 Tenure Programs for Public University Faculty Phase Out. Dr. Shaw stated he was not aware of the bill and other senators commented to Senator Gregory the bill had died in committee.

Senator Adams commented on the bookstore issue. He said there are three MBA teams currently conducting a study and are proposing some operational changes and stated he has been their

faculty advisor and has seen their rough draft. One of the reasons the bookstore does begin their emails so early is because so many faculty are late in reporting what they want for books which creates an expediting problem. Senator Adams added that there was an issue with Bulldog Bundle as the bookstore goes off student registrations for a section instead of the faculty giving them the seats allocated, and they underestimate what they need in volumes. Senator Gregory stated she had no problem adopting books early but needed to know what she was teaching.

Senator Gregory stated the bill that Senator Chamberlin mentioned is Senate Bill 2075 Tenure Programs for Public University Faculty Phase Out. Other senators told Senator Gregory that the bill had died in committee.

### Report of the Faculty Senate President

Spring in Mississippi...nothing better. Enjoy the weather, for summer will soon be here. This year truly seems to be flying by! Spring break officially starts in just a bit.

Dinah and I have been actively moving the Senate office to Walker Hall over the last two weeks. Furniture is mostly in, and we will be wrapping up taking random items over. I want to encourage you all to stop by after Spring Break week and check out the new (and more permanent) space on the second floor of Walker Hall. The main office is Walker Hall 210.

The SACSCOC team was here last week, and Dr. Tracey Baham will be updating us on their visit. I had the privilege of meeting with the team for the Bulldog Experience presentation and having lunch with a few of the members.

The General Faculty meeting was on February 12<sup>th</sup>, and we heard about the many activities, events, and initiatives taking place at MSU. Dr. Keenum, Dr. Shaw, Dr. Jordan, and Dr. Coble all delivered very encouraging reports not only about what has happened at MSU but what is in the works for the days and years ahead.

We have a couple of events to be mindful of between now and our April 2024 meeting. Elections for new senators are open now and will close on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Please vote for your new representatives.

Faculty Senate will also begin accepting nominations for Senate officers after the Senate elections close. Be on the lookout for more information. Dr. Andy Perkins will serve as our elections officer so please send all nominations to him and Dinah, and we will begin the compilation process. The officers will be elected at our April meeting.

Dr. David Shaw met with the Executive Committee last week to discuss the current student course surveys and changes that could occur. There will be a committee formed including undergraduate and graduate students along with faculty members to discuss the methods of implementation and improvements for the student course surveys. There should be a report on this at the April Faculty Senate meeting.

#### **Reports from Committees on which I Serve:**

**Athletic Council** – This council met on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Athletic Academics is looking to fill 8 graduate student positions. If you know of someone who would be interested, contact Christine Jackson and she can get that going.

Softball now requires tickets, so be mindful of that if you wish to attend those games.

Dr. Joey Case spoke on the importance of mental health and the services provided to our student-athletes. Mental health is the number one reason athletes leave any institution. Overall, we have an impressive team to assist our student-athletes with their needs.

The next meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup> will be spent considering updates to send to the Standing Committee Review Board.

**Dean's Council** – This committee has not met since the last report in February. The next meeting is scheduled for March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**Design Review Committee** – This committee has not met since the last report in February. The next meeting is scheduled for March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**Executive Council** – This council did not meet in February due to the SACSCOC team being on campus. The next scheduled meeting is scheduled for March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**Game Day and Special Events** – No meeting was held in February 2024. The Division of Student Affairs, MSU Athletics, and the Office of Public Affairs will host student focus groups to discuss Game Day/Junction policies moving forward. These will take place on March 7<sup>th</sup> and March 20<sup>th</sup> in the Union Dawghouse. The plan is to invite students involved with fraternity/sorority life, the Student Association, and our major student organizations on March 7<sup>th</sup> and then have the March 20<sup>th</sup> open for general student participation. The Game Day Committee plus personnel from Athletics will facilitate the questions and the feedback will be used as a component of the formulation of Game Day/Junction policies.

**Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council** – The committee met on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024. We discussed reinstating the awards that were once given by the President's Councils on Women/Minorities along with the Diversity Awards.

The Bagley College of Engineering has rebranded its diversity office to be the BCoE Office of Inclusive Excellence to be more in line with the university committee.

The College of Arts & Sciences IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access) Committee has put out a Faculty Retention Survey to gather data to better understand how we can retain faculty in the college.

The College of Architecture, Art, and Design had their first official meeting last month and wanted to share an opportunity for a March 21<sup>st</sup> trip to the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama. There are roughly 30 seats available on the trip if you would like to share with students. Contact Silvina Lopez Barrera or Jenna Altomonte about this trip.

Be sure to check out the many events for Women's History Month throughout March.

**Information Technology Council** – This committee met on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024. A new mass email application is in the works for the university. The old system was developed in 2005, and many of the requests were not verified before going out. The new system will have a workflow, adding approvals, HTML editing, templates, and accessibility. February 19<sup>th</sup> was the pilot rollout, and early March will see full implementation.

Ellucian will be on campus again at the end of March to hold a two-day workshop for leadership, faculty, and staff.

The new Information Security Policy is now live (see [www.infosecurity.msstate.edu](http://www.infosecurity.msstate.edu)). Also, be mindful of the best practices for email forwarding and use.

**Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee** – This committee did not meet in January. The next scheduled meeting is March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee** – This committee met via MS Teams on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. Discussion included updating parking fines, parking space allocations around the Hunter Henry Center, and Gated Lot changes. The 56 spaces around the Hunter Henry Center will be zoned as Maroon Permit spaces. Within the gated lots, starting in the Fall 2025 semester, there will be four internal parking zones based on location. Lloyd-Ricks, Allen/McCarthy/Rice, Hand/Band/Rula, and Lee/George/Harned would be the general breakdown for the lots. You may still move throughout the gated area, but parking would be in a certain area.

**Sustainability Committee** – This committee did not meet in February.

**University Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM)** – The committee met on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. All nine senates across the state have passed the parental leave resolution. A formal letter will be drafted to send to IHL soon. We also discussed security at various campuses, and I mentioned some of our security protocols that other members thought would be useful at their campuses (such as the red STOP buttons in some classrooms).

### 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 were held since the last Vice President's report. We have been informed that regular meetings of this committee will resume shortly to begin work on the 2026 calendar 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**

This committee met on February 16. The Undergraduate Research Symposium Flyer is attached. If you are working with undergraduate students who are conducting research, you can remind them that the URS is April 11-12, with a submission due date of March 19<sup>th</sup>. Faculty were requested to help recruit others (faculty, graduate students, research staff) to serve as evaluators for the URS on April 11 & 12. They are seeking help in providing student presenters with feedback on their projects. If you can devote a couple of hours, please sign up at:

[https://msstate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_a5dWtwyaEGICrn8](https://msstate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a5dWtwyaEGICrn8)

### Reports from Faculty Senate Designates on University Committees

#### Business Sent to Committee

## **1. AOP 13.05 Faculty Grievance Procedures**

### **Business to be Sent to Committee**

### **Standing Committee Reports**

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS – No Report

ANCILLARY AFFAIRS – No Report

CHARTER & BYLAWS – No Report

#### **FACULTY AFFAIRS**

##### **1. AOP Credit for Prior Learning**

On behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, Senator Barrett presented the committee report on AOP 12.26.

In the agenda, Senator Barrett included both the AOP with the track changes and a copy with the track changes accepted due to the original AOP with track changes becoming difficult to read with all the edits.

The motion of the Faculty Affairs Committee to accept AOP 12.26 as presented passed by unanimous hand vote.

STUDENT AFFAIRS – No Report

#### **UNIVERSITY RESOURCES**

##### **1. AOP 13.05 Faculty Grievance Procedures**

On behalf of the University Resources Committee, Senator Perkins presented the committee report on AOP 13.05.

Senator Gregory stated under item E the actual standing committee members include the Chairperson of the Promotion and Tenure (Appeals) Committee but item C says, “the aggrieved faculty member should refer to other applicable University policies, including the Tenure and Promotion Policy.” She said she understood it as any tenure concerns would not go to a grievance committee and asked why a promotion and tenured person would be part of the proposed committee. Senator Perkins stated he did not have an answer as that part of the AOP was unchanged.

The motion of the University Resources Committee to accept AOP 13.05 as presented passed by unanimous hand vote.

#### **SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

President Banik requested a motion and a second to suspend the bylaws to include the special committee report that was inadvertently omitted from the meeting agenda. A motion to suspend the bylaws was given by Senator Robichaux-Davis and Senator Tschume seconded the motion.

### **1. Resolution for the Comprehensive Salary and Compensation Study**

Senator Barrett presented the **Ad Hoc Committee for the Comprehensive Salary and Compensation Study** report. President Banik opened the floor for discussion.

Senator Gregory noted the groups in the first statement were faculty, staff, and graduate students which was different from the last statement which only stated faculty. Senator Chamberlain said that was an oversight and should read the same and include all three groups.

Senator Gregory proposed an amendment for the last statement to read “all faculty, staff and graduate students at Mississippi State University.” Senator Musser seconded the motion.

The amendment passed by majority vote.

Senator Gregory asked if the committee had reviewed the Campus Climate research recently completed as it included a third-party vendor along with people across campus to inform that research. Senator Robichaux-Davis answered that the committee did not review the Campus Climate survey.

Senator Gregory proposed an amendment for item 4 to add the language to state, “The third-party vendor, along with a representative from the Faculty Senate, Graduate Student Association, and Staff Council will be required to present a detailed plan for study.” Senator Lemley gave the second.

Senator Messer stated he supported leaving the language change off as it is the vendor's decision whether to include those groups. Senator Gregory stated it would be helpful to find out if the campus climate survey included those groups as it was developed and how it did so.

The amendment failed with 15-yay and 16-nay.

Senator Spurlin proposed an amendment to change the bold text on the fifth bold point from “Be it resolved that” to “The Robert Holland Faculty Senate requests.” He said in the same sentence to change “shall” contract to “to” contract and at the bottom of the page to change the bold text from “Be it further resolved that” to “If a study is completed.” He stated we could request something but he does not believe we have the authority to require the executive administration to do something. Senator Adams seconded the motion.

The motion passed by unanimous hand vote.

Senator Haynes stated Senator Gregory might consider changing the wording in item 4 to “in consultation” with the Faculty Senate, Graduate Student Association, and Staff Council.

Senator Gregory made an amendment for the 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph to read “The Robert Holland Faculty Senate requests the executive administration of Mississippi State University to contract with a reputable third-party vendor, in consultation with a representative from the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, the Graduate Student Association, and the Staff Council, to conduct a comprehensive salary and compensation study.” Senator Musser seconded the motion.

Senator Carr suggested changing “in consultation with” to “following consultation with” as the third-party vendor should talk with constituents first and then do the independent study, but does

not need to read that the party should be involved in the study. Senator Gregory withdrew her motion.

Senator Gregory made an amendment in the same paragraph to state “with a reputable third-party vendor following consultation with a representative from the Robert Holland Faculty Senate, Graduate Student Association, and Staff Council to conduct a comprehensive salary and compensation study.” Senator M. Priddy seconded the motion.

Senator Robichaux-Davis stated she was unsure what the Executive Administration would be consulting with representatives about as the subcommittee proposed a third party to remove bias and to do the actual study of collecting numbers and data to present as a report. She added that the person chosen to represent each of those groups may not represent the majority of the people in that group.

Senator Grala said the initial intention was that the third party would consult with the different representatives to understand the background and then conduct the study.

Senator Rai said it would be beneficial for our representatives, student representatives, and the staff council representatives to be involved in the process of selecting the external vendor but the actual study is to be done by the external vendor.

Senator Musser said his understanding of the amended resolution is that the administration will hire a third-party vendor who will consult with the three representative groups and then conduct a study.

Senator Rai stated once a framework is developed in which the study is conducted, he would think the external vendor would have to reach out.

Senator Gregory stated because there seems to be confusion and we do not know about the structure of the campus climate study it should be sent back to the committee.

Senator Rai said once we develop a framework in which the study needs to be conducted the external vendor probably would need to reach out to the different groups.

Senator Messer stated the consultation should be more along with the administration, not the vendor, and proposed moving the suggested line to earlier in the sentence.

Senator Grala said the vendor would consult the representatives but to him, it now reads like the administration consults the representatives to select the vendor.

Senator Gregory said her point was when the vendor begins the study a representative from each of those three groups would say these are the concerns we believe should be addressed in the development of the study.

Senator Adams said the committee laid out that the study is to collect benchmarking data from other SEC schools and peer institutions and that adding another layer is not beneficial.

Senator Jarosz said the more we involve ourselves in this process the more it is not independent information and the data has become corrupted at that point.

Senator Messer stated it did not seem any more corrupt to add the other vested interested group as the executive administration is inserting themselves into the process of data collection by hiring the independent third-party vendor.



Senator Jarosz responded stating the point was for us to be involved with the executive administration and not once they have begun collecting data. He said we should be getting a say in who we are choosing to do the study and not in how that study is going to be conducted as that is the whole point of having an independent unit.

Senator Robichaux-Davis stated this request is coming from the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. She said we cannot demand the Graduate Student body or the Staff Council be involved as we do not know if they would want to be. Senator Robichaux-Davis said the RHFS wants the data collected to include everyone who gets wages.

Senator L. Priddy stated the only way to know if those groups want to be involved is to ask.

Senator Tschume called the question.

Senator Gregory withdrew her motion.

President Banik stated we were now back to the original discussion.

Senator Carskadon stated he found it troubling that we are implying the administration is unaware that we are underpaid. He said his impression is that their number one priority is to increase salaries because they have stated this many times. He added he thinks it is insulting to the people working hard on our behalf and he will not vote for it.

Senator Adams stated this is a tool the administration can use to our benefit because it will have to go to IHL as Dr. Keenum can then show the independent study results.

Senator Rai stated now that we have the document in hand and know who the committee members are it would be helpful for the ad hoc committee to spend more time discussing it.

Senator Tschume made a motion to table with edits. Senator Mochal seconded the motion.

Motion passed by majority hand vote.

## Old Business

### **1. Motion regarding Honors College**

Senator Vivier made a motion for representation for the Honors College. Senator Gregory seconded the motion.

President Banik opened the floor for discussion.

Senator Jarosz stated the Honors College faculty are often in two different colleges and questioned how they would handle the issue of double representation. He said the Honors College has 10 faculty and if given a Senator, they would then have two and a half times the representation in the Senate as other colleges.

Senator Barrett stated to determine where a faculty member sits within the Senate the financial support must be 50% plus 1. He said for example in the Division of Ag there is generally a lot of discussion on this subject as many have mixed appointments. However, where someone teaches versus where their funding comes from is not the same.

President Banik agreed and stated that the apportionment report is pulled from the majority funding. He added that the number of representatives per senator is roughly 50, not 25.

Senator Rai asked about a similar resolution passed some time ago. President Banik said he and Senator Vivier had conversations about the Honors College representation. After discussions with Dr. Shaw and the Executive Committee, the easier way to deal with the other resolution, because as Faculty Senate we make up how we are represented, would be if we want to include a new unit and do so in-house with a motion. Senator Vivier is making that motion to do that.

Senator Carskadon asked how many faculty teach honors prefix courses but no courses in their home departments or anywhere else. President Banik stated there were 3 faculty with majority funding from the Honors College.

Senator Carskadon asked if those funded by the Honors College teach within a department. President Banik stated the apportionment is not based on where you are teaching and added that Senator Vivier is funded by the English Department but is teaching an Honors College course so is counted as Arts & Sciences faculty due to his funding.

Jason Cory said the Faculty Handbook states that other units composed of members of the general faculty may be represented on the recommendation of the RHFS and the approval of the general faculty, so it would have to go to a general faculty vote. President Banik said it would go to a general faculty vote if the RHFS as a body so deems it.

Senator Vivier stated Honors College faculty who have joint appointments are not the only faculty on campus who have joint appointments. He stated the Honors College is a college, but not in the same way that the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Veterinary Medicine, or the College of Engineering is a college. Senator Vivier said the fact that the Honors College only has a certain number of majority-funded faculty members is beside the point, but that it is routinely left out of larger campus discussions such as hiring committees for administrative positions and in their role in supporting undergraduate student research.

Senator Vivier said Honors College is one of the colleges at Mississippi State University that should be represented on the Faculty Senate because it is a college, it is a collection of faculty who have a shared interest that is specifically about honors and not answerable by the College of Arts and Sciences.

Senator Barrett said from his earlier point he was not in opposition to adding an Honors College representative, our senators are determined because of the way our structure is now. He said to have 50 senators there will be one unit that will lose a senator. President Banik said by reapportionment, we are locked at 50 senators.

Senator Mochal asked if the bylaws were altered could the exception be made so that it is rewritten to make it 51 so that no one loses a seat. President Banik stated we could not at the moment.

Senator Wyatt stated he was concerned that we could start setting a precedent as we now have a college of professional studies and continuing education.

Senator Gregory questioned how we have the number of 50 senators as other universities are not represented by colleges but by one representative per unit or department. She stated the university needs to evolve as we add colleges and our Charters and Bylaws Committee evolve with our university instead of sticking with 50 just because it sounds good.

Senator Taggert said she would like to hear a more comprehensive assessment from the Charter & Bylaws Committee. She said Meridian receives separate representation, however many R&E centers throughout the state do not receive representation by being a separate entity. She said their representation is through either extension or where their salary is being paid. Senator Taggert said to be true and ensure consistency, she would recommend that they do a study. President Banik stated if the motion passed it would then go to the Charter & Bylaws Committee.

Senator Rai stated it is more important that everyone is represented so our goal should be to make that feasible.

Senator Jarosz stated that while he does think the Honors College deserves representation they are going to get considerably more voting power in the Senate than every other college. He said this relates to our bylaws and he is concerned that we must have a plan for how that is to be addressed before moving forward.

Senator Chamberlain said because the university is not only evolving and changing in composition but probably expanding why not add senators. He said if the resolution is passed, all we are saying is that the Honors College ought to have representation, but then we can leave it to another study to look at how exactly we should be thinking about the composition of this body.

Senator Vivier stated there is an attachment to the idea that the college is a meaningful unit. He said Faculty Senate representation is structured according to colleges so we should be consistent in representing all colleges and that the number 50 is an arbitrary number we should not be stuck with. He stated if the university administration is going to continue to grow Mississippi State by adding colleges and if we are going to continue to use the college as a meaningful unit, then the Honors College deserves a seat at that table.

Senator Spurlin stated the Charter and Bylaws Committee discussed this issue and did a rough poll of the committee which ended in a split vote. He did not believe the general Faculty would vote to allow the Honors College as a separate college and unit, whether we think they should be represented or not.

President Banik made a point of clarification: we have 50 members, but we also have four advisory non-voting type members, which include the Graduate Student Association, the Student Association Staff, Staff Council, and Student Affairs.

Senator Gregory stated as representatives of the faculty, it is of utmost importance to bring issues to the faculty we represent and do what we feel is appropriate and let them know why we think it's appropriate.

Senator Mochal called the question. Senator Messer seconded the motion. The motion to call the question passed.

The motion regarding the Honors College failed with 15-yay to 19-nay.

## **2. EOP 37 Resolution.**

Response letter from Dr. Keenum.

### **3. Ombudsman Resolution**

Response letter from Dr. Keenum

#### **New Business**

Senator Carskadon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Tschume seconded the motion.  
Meeting adjourned at 4:19 pm.

Submitted for correction and approval.

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Stacy Haynes, Secretary

Dinah Jenkins, Administrative Assistant

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Dr. Mark Keenum, University President  
Dr. Brent Fountain, Faculty Athletic Representative  
Dr. David Shaw, Provost & Executive Vice President

## REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

Let me begin by saying that it has been an honor serving as your president this year. Serving in this role over the past year has been both challenging and rewarding, and I appreciate the support and encouragement I have received. I believe we have made some significant contributions to this university, and we have been a voice for faculty throughout MSU. I appreciate your work and dedication to this body.

Along those lines, I would like to thank those senators who will be leaving us after today, including two former presidents of this body.

Amber Robinson – College of Arts & Sciences  
Charles Freeman – College of Agriculture & Life Sciences / MAFES  
Paul Tseng – College of Agriculture & Life Sciences / MAFES  
Kelley Wamsley – College of Agriculture & Life Sciences / MAFES  
Rebecca Robichaux-Davis – College of Education  
Adrian Sescu – Bagley College of Engineering  
Skip Jack – College of Veterinary Medicine  
Cate Mochal – College of Veterinary Medicine  
Beth Baker – MSU Extension  
Jason Barrett – MSU Extension  
Mary Love Taggert – MSU Extension  
Mark Fincher – MSU Meridian

Welcome to the new and returning senators to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate as well.

Robert Banik – College of Arts & Sciences  
James Chamberlain - College of Arts & Sciences  
Molly Zuckerman - College of Arts & Sciences  
Iva Ballard – College of Business  
Caroline Kobia – College of Agriculture & Life Sciences / MAFES  
Julie Parker – College of Agriculture & Life / MAFES  
Swapnil Patole – College of Education  
James Sobaskie – College of Education  
Lauren Priddy – Bagley College of Engineering  
Amirtaha Taebi - Bagley College of Engineering  
Robin Fontenot – College of Veterinary Medicine  
Alison Lee - College of Veterinary Medicine  
Courtney Crist – MSU Extension  
Whitney Crow – MSU Extension  
Rosanne Nunnery – MSU Meridian

A committee has been formed with four students along with the Executive Committee of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. The Executive Committee discussed the student course surveys on April 4<sup>th</sup> at the normal Executive Committee meeting. Senator Stacy Haynes will report on updates concerning this topic.

The Standing Committee Review Board will be meeting on April 17<sup>th</sup> to review all committees.

### **Reports from Committees on which I Serve:**

**Athletic Council** – The council met on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Macey Hodge, a member of the MSU Women’s Soccer Team, spoke about the impact of the recent trip to the United Kingdom. Dr. Brent Fountain, the Faculty Athletic Representative, will be attending the April 2024 meeting of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate. Two working groups were established. The first is to work on the composition and charter of the council. The second is to work on a report of the 2024 Athletic Academics and Other Student-Athlete Support.

**Dean’s Council** – This committee has not met since the last report. An email went out to the committee suggesting a technical change to AOP 12.12 Credits and Grades to include contact minutes for nursing/clinical students. I emailed this AOP to the Executive Committee for input as well. There were no objections from the Dean’s Council concerning this change. The scheduled meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup> was also canceled.

**Design Review Committee** – This committee met on March 7<sup>th</sup> to discuss two items. The first item was the exterior site review of Howell/Giles/McArthur Halls. The plans were approved with little discussion. The second item was the approval of an external storage space at the Phi Mu house. This was also approved with no discussion.

The April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting was canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Executive Council** – This council met on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024. There was a lengthy agenda, due to not meeting for several weeks. The only AOP on the agenda was AOP 12.11 Undergraduate Students Requirements for Graduation, which was approved with a slight change. Under the section “University-wide Requirements”, instead of having the AOP state the students must have a 2.00 GPA, the suggestion was to add back in the “C average” language. The edit changed:

- a. A student must make an overall 2.00 GPA on all hours scheduled and rescheduled at all institutions attended, including Mississippi State University.
  - b. A student must make a 2.00 GPA on all hours scheduled and rescheduled at Mississippi State University.
- to:
- a. A student must make an overall C average (2.00 GPA) on all hours scheduled and rescheduled at all institutions attended, including Mississippi State University.
  - b. A student must make a C average (2.00 GPA) on all hours scheduled and rescheduled at Mississippi State University.

The other agenda items, which were all approved, included:

OP 03.06 Workplace Safety (new policy)

OP 56.01 Sharing of Institutional Support Costs by Separately Budgeted Units of DAFVM

OP 65.03 Anti-Kickback and Procurement Ethics in Public Contracting

OP 65.05 Vehicle Purchase

OP 91.126 Electronic Communications with Students

OP 91.400 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Hybrid Entity Designation

There was one additional technical change. OP 01.29 Minor Protection. The modification clarifies the technology used to register programs and activities that involve minors.

**Game Day and Special Events** – No meetings have been held since the last report, but an update was provided at Athletic Council. MSU Athletics has a 6.5-billion-dollar impact on the state of Mississippi. That much of an impact will garner attention when things go awry. Roundtables were conducted with students to gather feedback about the Junction area during football games. MSU wants to provide a safe space, especially for older fans and those with young children, and the commotion that occurred last season doesn't need to happen again.

**Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council** – This committee met on March 26<sup>th</sup>. April is Unity month, and many events are planned throughout the month. One of the most popular is the International Fiesta on April 13<sup>th</sup>. There will also be an Interfaith Dinner and Dialogue on April 9<sup>th</sup> @ 6 pm. Be sure to sign up online for that. The 2024 IHL Diversity Award for Excellence was awarded to Dr. Jordan Lynton Cox. This committee will begin a nomination process for this award in mid-fall.

**Information Technology Council** – This committee met on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Verified Push is now active throughout campus for web-based logins. Desktops are not using the verified push currently. The additional password character length is being developed. Steven Parrott retired at the end of March. There was no April meeting, and the next scheduled meeting is May 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee** – This committee did not meet in March. The next scheduled meeting is April 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee** – This committee did not meet in person, but we did discuss one topic through email. The Psychology Clinic has been in a house at 223 Famous Maroon Band Street and is moving to Rice Hall. They have four spaces that are signed and reserved for their clients. They requested to move their four spaces to the rear of Rice Hall. This was approved.

**Sustainability Committee** – This committee met on March 28<sup>th</sup>. We have a new contact for this committee. Nicole Thomas is the Manager of Communications for Campus Services, and she will serve as the primary contact for this committee. I have asked if she would be willing to attend a senate meeting in the fall, and I have penciled her in for September. Sustainability does offer a minor, so encourage your students to investigate that option. The solar farm should be fully operational in May 2024 once it is tied into the electrical grid. Updates were given on Chadwick Lake, including the addition to the lake of some larger fish. A proposal by the College of Forest Resources was discussed to include a boat house for canoes/paddleboats on the lake. The MSU glass recycling drive is on April 9<sup>th</sup> from 1 pm – 5 pm. Earth Day is April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**University Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM)** – This committee will meet on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

## 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 were held since the last Vice President's report.

### **Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee**

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

### **Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery Committee**

This committee met on March 22. The Office of Research and Economic Development provides small **grants of up to \$2,000 to foster innovative, faculty-directed research opportunities for undergraduate students**. Funds can be used to support student wages, materials and supplies, or for other research related expenses from June 2024 to August 2025. Applications are being accepted now and are due April 14, 2024. Learn more and apply at <https://www.research.msstate.edu/initiatives/internal-funding>

**The call is out for the 2024 Research Awards.** For eligibility criteria, required nomination material, and submission instructions, please visit: <https://www.research.msstate.edu/initiatives/research-awards/achievement-awards> The deadline for nominations is May 10, 2024.

## REPORTS FROM FACULTY DESIGNATES ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

### BUSINESS SENT TO COMMITTEE

### BUSINESS TO BE SENT TO COMMITTEE

### STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### ACADEMIC AFFAIRS



## ANCILLARY AFFAIRS

### **Report to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate**

#### **Ancillary Affairs Committee**

#### **Report on the Confidence Survey**

**April 9, 2024**

#### **Background**

The university conducts a confidence survey of administrations to assess their performance and improve university functioning. However, administrators need to ask the next-level administrators to see the individual scores/comments related to their position.

#### **Recommendation**

**The committee voted unanimously to recommend that all administrators, above the department head level, have access to individual scores/comments without permission from the upper administration level. The department heads would need to ask the respective deans to see individual scores/comments.**

#### **Discussion**

Members of the committee have had extensive and robust discussion on the confidence survey, its implementation, and how it can be used to resolve various issues. We have discussed the pros and cons of various approaches (e.g., all administrators can see scores/comments related to their positions, only administrators above certain levels can see responses related to their positions, certain score levels trigger an automatic review of scores/responses with the upper level administrators). The committee recommends that all administrators, above the department head level, can see confidence survey scores/comments related to their position

**Committee Members: Robert Grala (Chair), Charles Freeman, Rocky Lemus, Derek Marshall, Lauren Priddy, Tara Sutton, Paul Tseng, Kevin Williams**

CHARTER & BYLAWS

FACULTY AFFAIRS

STUDENT AFFAIRS

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

## OLD BUSINESS

### AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORT ON FACULTY SALARY

#### **Resolution for the Comprehensive Salary and Compensation Study at Mississippi State University** *(as presented at the March 8, 2024 meeting)*

**Whereas**, the faculty, staff, and graduate students at Mississippi State University (MSU) and across the state of Mississippi have faced challenges concerning fair compensation and benefits, as highlighted by various reports indicating that university faculty in Mississippi are woefully underpaid, a condition exacerbated by inflation and economic realities;

**Whereas**, a comprehensive analysis of faculty, staff, and graduate student salaries and benefits is essential to ensure that MSU remains competitive and capable of attracting and retaining top-tier talent, thereby enhancing the quality of education and research;

**Whereas**, comparisons with peer institutions within the Southeastern Conference (SEC) are crucial for maintaining competitive standards in faculty, staff, and graduate student compensation and ensuring MSU's standing and reputation among these institutions;

**Whereas**, the cost of living in college towns, including Starkville, MS, significantly impacts the overall compensation package necessary for faculty to maintain a reasonable standard of living;

**Be it resolved that**, the Executive Administration at Mississippi State University shall contract with a reputable third-party vendor to conduct a comprehensive salary and compensation study. This study will include, but not be limited to, the following components:

1. **Salary Analysis across Faculty Ranks and Colleges, including staff and graduate students:** To assess and compare the current salary structure at MSU with those of our peer institutions within the SEC, identifying disparities and areas for adjustment.
2. **Benefits Evaluation:** To examine the full range of benefits provided to faculty members, staff, and graduate students, including health insurance, retirement plans, and other perks, and compare these with those offered by peer institutions.
3. **Cost of Living Comparison:** To conduct a thorough comparison of the cost of living in Starkville, MS, with similar-sized college towns and the national average for cities of comparable size. This analysis will help in understanding the real value of salaries in relation to living expenses and should include a qualitative component to address quality of life issues.
4. **Implementation Timeline and Budget:** The third-party vendor will be required to present a detailed plan for the study, including timelines and budget estimates, for approval by the university administration before the commencement of the study.

**Be it further resolved that**, upon completion of the study, the Executive Administration will review the findings and develop an action plan to address any identified disparities or issues. This plan will aim to ensure fair and competitive compensation for all faculty members, thereby contributing to the overall academic excellence and reputation of Mississippi State University.

## **Resolution for the Comprehensive Salary and Compensation Study at Mississippi State University** *(with updates from the March 8, 2024 meeting)*

**Whereas**, the faculty, staff, and graduate students at Mississippi State University (MSU) and across the state of Mississippi have faced challenges concerning fair compensation and benefits, as highlighted by various reports indicating that university faculty in Mississippi are woefully underpaid, a condition exacerbated by inflation and economic realities;

**Whereas**, a comprehensive analysis of faculty, staff, and graduate student salaries and benefits is essential to ensure that MSU remains competitive and capable of attracting and retaining top-tier talent, thereby enhancing the quality of education and research;

**Whereas**, comparisons with peer institutions within the Southeastern Conference (SEC) are crucial for maintaining competitive standards in faculty, staff, and graduate student compensation and ensuring MSU's standing and reputation among these institutions;

**Whereas**, the cost of living in college towns, including Starkville, MS, significantly impacts the overall compensation package necessary for faculty to maintain a reasonable standard of living;

**The Robert Holland Faculty Senate requests the** Executive Administration at Mississippi State University **to** contract with a reputable third-party vendor to conduct a comprehensive salary and compensation study. This study will include, but not be limited to, the following components:

- 1. Salary Analysis across Faculty Ranks and Colleges, including staff and graduate students:** To assess and compare the current salary structure at MSU with those of our peer institutions within the SEC, identifying disparities and areas for adjustment.
- 2. Benefits Evaluation:** To examine the full range of benefits provided to faculty members, staff, and graduate students, including health insurance, retirement plans, and other perks, and compare these with those offered by peer institutions.
- 3. Cost of Living Comparison:** To conduct a thorough comparison of the cost of living in Starkville, MS, with similar-sized college towns and the national average for cities of comparable size. This analysis will help in understanding the real value of salaries in relation to living expenses and should include a qualitative component to address quality of life issues.
- 4. Implementation Timeline and Budget:** The third-party vendor will be required to present a detailed plan for the study, including timelines and budget estimates, for approval by the university administration before the commencement of the study.

**If a study is completed, the Robert Holland Faculty Senate requests the** Executive Administration **to** review the findings and develop an action plan to address any identified disparities or issues. This plan will aim to ensure fair and competitive compensation for all faculty, **staff, and graduate students at Mississippi State University**, thereby contributing to the overall academic excellence and reputation of Mississippi State University.

## NEW BUSINESS

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President

Robert Banik

Vice President

Mike Breazeale

Secretary

Stacy Haynes