



Robert Holland Faculty Senate

Uncorrected Minutes of March 7, 2025

The Robert Holland Faculty Senate of Mississippi State University held its regular monthly meeting in the Grisham Room of the Library at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, March 7, 2025.

Members absent and excused were Mike Breazeale, Alexis Gregory, Andrew Jarosz, Fris Krishnan, Rocky Lemus, Fred Musser, Rosanne Nunnery, Swapnil Patole, Lauren Priddy, Matthew Priddy, Amber Robinson, Tara Sutton, Eric Vivier, and Kim Walters.

Members on Sabbatical: Kimberly Kelly and Peter Messer

Faculty Senate President Robert Banik called the meeting to order and asked for corrections to the minutes of the March 7, 2025 Faculty Senate meeting. Hearing no corrections, President Banik accepted the minutes as presented.

Guests

Dr. Reuben Burch, Associate Vice President for Research

Dr. Burch greeted the senate and discussed the importance of research support and faculty participation. He emphasized the decline in attendance for research events and sought feedback. Dr. Burch gave a PowerPoint presentation which can be found in the online version of these minutes under [Appendix A](#).

Dr. David Shaw, Provost & Executive Vice President

Dr. Shaw greeted the Senate and stated he needed assistance from the senators to disseminate information regarding the Great Colleges to Work for Survey that was recently sent out. This survey is from The Modern Think Company, which randomly selected 177 faculty to participate, and they have been emailed by the Modern Think Company. This is the survey where the company picks and contacts the participants without input from the university. Dr. Shaw stated that as of now 13 of those 177 faculty members have completed the survey.

Dr. Shaw stated the Department of Education sent out a Dear Colleague letter, which he received upon returning to his office after the last senate meeting. He said the last two weeks had been very challenging and this institution has done its best to be able to comply with the intent of the letter.

Dr. Shaw stated the NIH cap has been paused, and several research programs on campus were notified they were to stop work. He said many things are starting to play out as it is government in action from the standpoint of the executive branch, judicial branch, and the legislative branch trying to grapple with all the changes happening at a blinding rate of speed and the institutions are caught in the middle.

Dr. Shaw stated the amount of federal funding this institution received last year is \$298 million dollars. He said if we choose to do something we know is putting us at risk, then that affects the fiscal viability of the institution. The administration is wrestling with how we interpret this to the best of our ability and not overreact or underreact so that we are choosing the pathway that protects our students and protects our institution in the best way that we can.

Dr. Shaw stated there was a great deal of conversation about the Mississippi School for Math & Science. He said the State Department of Education has had a great deal of conversation about the school's future and there should be a decision within the month.

Senator Kundu asked Dr. Shaw if he could give an update on the ORP process. Dr. Shaw said there was good news and a word of caution. The good news is that the bill that was going to dramatically impact ORP died in committee. Under normal circumstances we would not see anything else happen with the bill, however the word of caution is that just today there has been some conversations about that being added in to the tax cut bill. He said we are not out of the woods and are working furiously to ensure that everyone in the House and the Senate fully understands the impact that that would have. He said we are not letting up in any way to be sure that we represent our faculty here at this institution as well as the other institutions in the state.

Senator Williams asked if the proposal for the MSMS building will be shaped as in the design shown in the proposal. Dr. Shaw stated it will not be in that shape and that all they were wanting to do was show the position on the property.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT

Spring is in the air, and I personally hope that the cold weather is completely behind us now. Other than the pollen, I love this time of year. Spring break officially starts very soon.

We have a couple events to be mindful of between now and our April 2025 meeting. Nominations close for new senators on Tuesday, March 11th. Elections for new senators will open on March 17th and will close on March 28th. Please vote for your new representatives and encourage your colleges to do the same. We will also be working on the Confidence Survey that will be conducted in April, so be on the lookout for that.

Faculty Senate will also begin accepting nominations for Senate officers after the Senator elections close. Be on the lookout for more information near the end of March. As the outgoing president, I will serve as our elections officer. The new officers will be elected at our April 2025 meeting.

On February 21st, I attended the National Alumni Board meeting at the Mill Conference Center. Dr. Julie Jordan presented on generative AI, and other updates were given by athletics, the student

association, and development. It was a pleasure representing this body at the board meetings for the last two years.

Vice President Breazeale and I met with President Keenum and Provost Shaw on Monday, February 24 to discuss a wide variety of topics including the possibility of a DEI bill being passed in the Mississippi Legislature, the “Dear Colleague” letter, the bills being considered regarding state income tax, and the possible reforms on retirement accounts. I have also passed along the University of Connecticut letter to both Dr. Keenum and Dr. Shaw. After talking to President Keenum, his resolve is dedicated to looking out for the employees of this university. The people of this university are important to him, and he is going to bat for us every day in Jackson. Though everything does not get a response in writing from the administration, Dr. Keenum and the rest of the administration are there fighting for us.

On March 4th, I will be hitting the road to help in recruiting transfer students. I will be going to Northeast Mississippi Community College in Booneville, MS, which is the community college that both I and Dr. Keenum attended. I’ll be representing this body to the students and faculty at NEMCC.

Reports from Committees on which I Serve:

Athletic Council – The next meeting should be on March 19, 2025.

Dean’s Council – The next meeting should be on March 10, 2025.

Design Review Committee – The next meeting should be on March 6, 2025.

Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council – This council held an additional meeting for February on February 19th. This meeting concerned the “Dear Colleague” letter and possible DEI legislation in the Mississippi House of Representatives and Mississippi Senate. The council discussed what things should be or must be changed throughout the university, such as making all student organizations “registered” instead of “sponsored.” Also discussed were impacts on scholarships, presentations, teaching lectures, and exhibits. Much of what was discussed was looking to what “may” happen and trying to be proactive in our approach for opportunities for all students.

Executive Council – This council met on February 24, 2025. AOP 12.12 Credit and Grades and AOP 12.38 Undergraduate Academic Advisement were considered and passed. AOP 13.03 Responsibilities in Instruction and Curriculum, and Attendance at Classes was tabled for various reasons, mostly due to the wrong version being on the agenda. OP 70.05 Federal Property at Mississippi State University was on the consent agenda due to updating URLs in the policy. A technical change occurred to AOP 12.01 Academic Add/Drop due to a change in the drop time from 8am to 5pm.

Game Day and Special Events – No meeting is currently scheduled for this committee.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee – This committee did not meet in February.

Parking and Traffic Regulations Committee – This committee met on February 27th. Walker Consultants were in attendance and discussed the capacity issues from a parking aspect, stating that MSU operates at approximately 78% capacity at peak times. Full capacity is greater than 85%. They also discussed that if there was a 1.5% increase in demand for parking, at current levels, we would be out of parking spaces, especially for commuter students, within about five to seven years. Data from the recent parking survey and suggestions were discussed. The committee will consider all suggestions at the March 2025 meeting, but the plan is to implement some changes this year.

Another topic of discussion was the north side of campus. Currently, there is a very high volume of pedestrians, scooters, bikes, and vehicular traffic at the intersection of Barr and George Perry near the Old Main Academic Center. Just to the north of this intersection, Hurst Lane is the one-way street that runs south of Zacharias Village, between Ruby Hall and what will be Azalea Hall. With the introduction of Azalea Hall this fall, the volume of each mode of transportation is expected to increase, which causes safety concerns. To help eliminate cut-thru vehicular traffic and to give a safe passage corridor from the Zacharias Village area southward across Barr Avenue, bollards are proposed on Barr Avenue to close a small portion of Barr from George Perry Drive to the P1 entry of the Old Main Parking Garage. Additionally, to eliminate unneeded traffic on Hurst Lane, which becomes inundated with the residents in the area, gates on Hurst Lane are proposed to only allow emergency, service, shuttle, and delivery trucks so that the node between the front doors of each of the residence halls is a safe pedestrian area. No decision was made or voted upon, but this will also be considered at the March 2025 meeting.

Sustainability Committee – This committee has not met since the last report.

United Faculty Senates Association of Mississippi (UFSAM) – This committee had its first in-person meeting on February 20, 2025. The committee met in Jackson at the IHL Board of Trustees meeting. After the IHL meeting, the committee met together to discuss several topics including updates from the parental leave bills, DEI bills, changes in federal grants, state tax structures, and retirement plan issues. As the upcoming deadline was approaching fast, the decision was to craft a statement concerning ORP retirement plans. The statement was passed by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate on Wednesday, February 26 via MS Teams. All other faculty senates across the IHL system passed the statement as well, and the UFSAM will distribute to pertinent legislators.

Faculty Success Team – This committee met on February 19, 2025. The committee of 16 members reviewed the survey distributed to the committee members to discuss topics to take up. The major topics were picked. These included Faculty Mentoring, Faculty Professional Development, and Faculty Recruitment. The 16 members were divided into 3 teams of 5 members each, with Dr. Jim Dunne floating between the three teams. Each team will take on one topic. The subgroups will work on gathering information before our next meeting on March 19th.

REPORT OF THE FACULTY SENATE VICE PRESIDENT

Committee on Campus Access

This committee met March 3. We approved the design of the route and wayfinding signage that was mentioned last semester. This project will be moving forward with some funding that was allocated earlier this academic year.

Calendar Committee

This committee has not met since the last Vice President's report.

Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee

This committee has not met since the last Vice President's report.

Undergraduate Research and Creative Discovery Committee

Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium will be April 9-10, 2025.

Also, this is just a reminder that ORED provides annual internal funding for faculty projects with undergraduate student participation.

Reports from Faculty Senate Designates on University Committees

Business Sent to Committee

1. AOP 11.05 Requirements for Shortened-Format Courses

Business to be Sent to Committee

Standing Committee Reports

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS — No Report

ANCILLARY AFFAIRS

1. Confidence Survey

Senator Grala, on behalf of the Ancillary Affairs committee, presented the committee report on the updates to the Confidence Survey.

Senator Carskadon gave a friendly amendment to keep the original question of "Conducts themselves in a professional manner when interacting with faculty, staff, and students" and add "Effectively supports their faculty, staff, and students". The friendly amendment passed unanimously.

The motion to accept the committee's recommendation as amended passed by unanimous hand vote.

CHARTER & BYLAWS

1. Faculty Handbook

Senator Spurlin, on behalf of the Charter & Bylaws Committee, presented the committee report on the updates to Section V of the Faculty Handbook.

The motion to accept the committee's recommendations on the Faculty Handbook passed unanimously.

FACULTY AFFAIRS

1. AOP 11.05 Requirements for Shortened-Format Courses

Senator Tschume, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, presented the committee report to rescind AOP 11.05 Requirements for Shortened-Format Courses.

The motion to accept the committee's recommendation to rescind AOP 11.05 Requirements for Shortened-Format Courses passed unanimously.

STUDENT AFFAIRS– No Report

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES – No Report

Old Business

New Business

1. Letter regarding Faculty Senate meeting space

President Banik, on behalf of Senator Gregory, presented an email from Senator Gregory regarding concerns about the Faculty Senate meeting space in the Grisham Room of the Library.

President Banik asked for questions or comments.

Senator Beckman asked about the cost of other meeting spaces vs. the Grisham Room. President Banik stated that the library does not charge the Faculty Senate for use but there was a charge for Bost.

Senator Carskadon stated he thought the Grisham room was fine as there is good ambiance, acoustics, and parking. He questioned if we had a capacity problem. He added Bost was almost too big and cavernous and challenging for those with a hearing problem.

Senator Stokes stated a survey was done three years ago of meeting spaces and the library was the only one that was not going to charge. President Banik replied that other spaces were investigated at the beginning of this senate year and the prices from three years ago had increased.

Senator Chamberlain stated he liked the Grisham Room but wondered if the seating could be re-arranged to use the space differently. President Banik stated we would try to find a better layout.

Senator Chamberlain asked about the budget and expenses and being able afford another meeting room. President Banik stated the Faculty Senate budget was about \$2,000 per year and the cost for the TV Center to film is about \$1,800 per year. He stated our budget had been increasingly cut for the last eight years.

Senator Crow asked logistically where the best place from the senate office would be to have the meetings. She added that everyone is going to have to have some kind of commute which was a commitment made when they became a senator, so it should be the easiest for the senate office to set up. President Banik replied that because the senate office is Walker Hall, which is two buildings over, the Grisham Room is the most convenient from the office standpoint. He said if we were

located somewhere else it would possibly not be the best. He added when the office was in Howell, it was fine to use Bost as we were going to be transporting meeting items anyway.

Senator Jaffe questioned why the senate is charged for the TV center to record the meetings. He stated it was not for the senate body but for the service of the university. President Banik replied that before Covid, we were not charged as the Provost Office covered the charge, but during Covid for the hybrid meetings we had to have all the extras needed, and the bill began being sent to the senate office instead.

Senator Tschume requested unanimous consent to conduct a non-binding poll to determine whether members of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate are interested in changing venues for the meeting locations of the Robert Holland Faculty Senate.

President Banik stated a poll could be done if it was unanimous that everyone agreed to do the poll.

President Banik asked if everyone agreed to conduct the non-binding poll and all agreed.

President Banik asked how many senators were fine with meeting in the Grisham Room and would like to remain. 32 senators polled found the Grisham Room favorable and wanted to remain.

President Banik asked how many would want to move out of the Grisham Room to another location. 1 senator plus Senator Gregory would want the meeting location to change.

President Banik stated he would pass the information on to Senator Gregory to follow up as she would like.

Senator Williams stated the arrangement could be better. President Banik replied they would work on the arrangement.

Senator Haynes gave the motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Tschume seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:31 pm.

Submitted for correction and approval.

Stacy Haynes, Secretary
Dinah Jenkins, Administrative Assistant

Appendix A

ORED Updates for Faculty Senate

Dr. Reuben Burch, AVP for Research, ORED

Ms. Stephanie Hyche, Director, Office of Research Development

Mr. John Walters, Director, Office of Technology Management

Mr. Austin Check, Senior Project Manager, Office of Technology Management

- Info on programs, initiatives, services, and resources from the Office of Research Development to support grantseekers;
- Updates from the Office of Technology Management including a review of disclosure requirements and opportunities for IP protection to be **built** into proposals;
- Solicit suggestions from the senators for improving overall faculty engagement with ORED activities and for meeting the needs of their constituents regarding research translation and proposal supports.

Office of Research Development

- ORD is ORED's "service" arm (not regulatory or administrative)
 - Unique from OSP and ORCS, but we speak their language!
 - Collaborates **with** your college and department support personnel
 - Our key functions and services include:
 - ✓ Positioning and Analysis (*funding ID, landscape analysis, collaborator ID, etc.*)
 - ✓ Resource Development and Facilitation (*toolkits, templates, boilerplate, briefs*)
 - ✓ Education and Professional Development (*workshops, seminars, agency reps*)
 - ✓ Proposal Development and Management (*team building, proposal framing, review services*)
- *Our services are by request and referral and are free; start with your department first.*

NOTABLE CENTRAL-LEVEL INITIATIVES

www.ored.msstate.edu

■ Professional Development

- Programs and [Events Calendar](#) & program archives (and programming by request)
- Faculty Leadership Development Program (solicited each spring)
- D.A.W.G. & the Grants and Contracts Specialists Working Group (for staff)
- Research Awards & Research Celebration Week

■ Funding Opportunity Announcements & Resources (email: development@ord.msstate.edu to opt in!)

- OpsWatch/ Fuller Updates (weekly)
- ORD TOPS e-newsletter (Targets of Opportunity) and OSP updates e-newsletter
- ORED weekly email: various updates and announcements pertaining to research;
- Academic Research Funding Strategies , LLC (monthly)
- PIVOT (www.ord.msstate.edu) & GovWinIQ (funding source dashboards)

■ ORED support for Strategic Initiatives, Legislative & Sponsor Relations

- EPSCoR, economic development and sector-based initiatives, appropriations; guidance on current federal landscape

Office of Technology Management

The faculty at MSU serve as the primary leaders for innovation on campus via their research, which is often funded by federal and state grants, or other sponsored programs. We are now seeing opportunities for support for IP protection to be built into grant proposals and increased scrutiny by federal agencies for disclosures based on research outputs.

We are seeking guidance from the faculty senate to gauge awareness and identify mechanisms to promote disclosures where applicable.

OUR “ASK” TODAY...

- What are the primary needs of faculty regarding education and professional development content for external funding topics?
- What education and professional development delivery mechanisms are most desirable and engaging for faculty? (i.e., virtual, hybrid, workshop, seminar, etc.)
- How can we encourage faculty to opt in to the various ORED and support resources?
- What other resources or services would make faculty grantseekers' lives easier?



LET'S CHAT!