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Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – April 2008

Faculty Senators

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Faculty Senate 2007-08

University of South Alabama
Faculty Senate
2007-2008
April 16, 2008
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Approved Minutes

Present: Aliabadi, Aucoin, Bru, Byrne, Campbell, Carr, Connors, Doran, Estis, Estrada, Engin, Falkos, Fresne, Hamilton, Haywick, Johnsten, A. Khan, I. Khan, King, Kinniburgh, Lemley, Loomis, Major, McCormick, McNair, Meyer, Morris, Nowlin, Omar, Pérez-Pineda, Prendergast, Prescott, Romey, Sachs, Summerlin, Tate, Toelken, Turnipseed, Vrettos, Woodford, Tony Wright, Tootie Wright.

Excused: Ambrose, Baggett, Burnham, Carter, Irion, McCready, Moore, Patterson, Perry, Teplick.

Unexcused: Green, Pacheco, Quereshi, Rowell.

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:08 P.M. by Chair Tate.

2. Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Chair to approve minutes for the March 19 meeting; one grammatical change (last page changing “waive” to “have”); no other suggestions; unanimous approval.

3. Chair’s End of Year Report: Chair Tate summarized points from the written report which is available in its entirety online. Highlights are listed as below:

- Passed a resolution endorsing the modification of the “Late Course Withdrawal Policy.”
- Drew up a list of responsibilities of elected officers and department caucus leaders.
- Conducted four “Town Meetings” to solicit suggestions for issues that were of concern of the faculty at large.
- Received support by the university administration for increasing the increments for promotion raises: the first raises in increments in over 15 years.
- Passed a resolution endorsing the revision of the “Policy and Procedures for Probationary Faculty Non-Reappointment.”
- Addressed the issue of football at USA.

5. Old Business.

- Elections: Chair Tate welcomed new senators and stated that there were two vacancies remaining: one in Nursing and one in Arts & Sciences.

6. New Business:

- Chair Tate announced that the Dean of Business is to serve as the Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs. There was much discussion from the floor about the search. Questions arose such as the following: was it going to be a national search; was it going to be conducted by outside sources; what was the MCOB going to do without a Dean; why has a search committee not already been appointed.
- Policies and Faculty Handbook Committee Chair Loomis brought forward a resolution that will recommend that professional development be included among the “Exceptions to Standard Workload Expectations” in section 4.3.5 of the Faculty Handbook. This change is intended to enable faculty, including instructor faculty, to be more clearly eligible for professional-development related workload exceptions. Discussion from the floor followed and the caucus elected to discuss this further at the next meeting.

7. Committee End of Year Reports: Committee Chairs summarized points from their written reports which are available in their entirety online. Highlights are listed as below:

- Academic Development and Mentoring (Steve Morris): Spent most of the year conducting two major fact finding initiatives: 1) the state of faculty mentoring throughout the university and 2) the opinions and experiences of recent faculty (faculty hired within the past three years.)
- Environmental Quality (Smoot Major): Spent most of the year investigating campus recycling issues and working with the physical plant in finding more efficient ways of this effort. Need written report.
- Evaluation (Tom Johnsten): Generated and conducted the 20th Annual Faculty Survey. The results will be distributed to the President, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the Chair of the Faculty Senate, and are accessible at:
<http://www.cis.usouthal.edu/~johnsten/survey08-results.htm>
- Planning and Development (John Sachs): Focused efforts on two items: 1) University Club and 2) campus accessibility issues for the disabled. Need written report.
- Policies and Faculty Handbook (Eric Loomis): The Committee authored, approved and brought two resolutions (Resolution Endorsing a Modification to the Late Course Withdrawal Policy and Resolution Endorsing Revision of the Policy and Procedures for Probationary Faculty Non-Reappointment) before the Faculty Senate, with a third resolution (intended to enable faculty, including instructor faculty, to be more clearly eligible for professional-development related workload exceptions) approved by the committee and to be brought before the Senate in the Spring of 2008.
- Salary and Benefits (as reported by Greg Prescott for Jean Irion): A few initiatives were addressed as follows: 1) Equity vs Merit Pay; 2) an increase in the raise for rank advancement to assistant and associate professor which was approved by Administration; 3) feedback from Faculty Senate Town Hall Meetings about tiered rates for health insurance premiums to add an additional tier for employee plus one dependent and the addition of some form of coverage for assistive reproductive technology; 4) discussion of the health and dental financial statement for the 2007 calendar year; and 5) further development of the University’s Wellness initiative has not occurred this year, but the committee will continue to push this effort so that a definite initiative is set in place during the next academic year.
- Technology Utilization (Jie Li): Items addressed were as follows: USA Web Accessibility with ADA Compliance; centralization of technology-related faculty development opportunities; Technology Fair; University email for retired faculty; email alias; iTunes U; campus wide Microsoft License; and USA wireless network status.

8. With the 2007-2008 annual reports given, Chair Sachs took over the proceedings at 3:58 P.M. and presented Chair Tate with a plant as a token of his appreciation of her efforts. Chair Sachs then spoke briefly about his goal for the upcoming year: to improve communication and the Senate's visibility.

8. Caucus Leader Reports:

- Allied Health (Zari Aliabadi): Searches in progress.
- Arts and Sciences (Tony Wright): Need one senator and a caucus leader.
- Continuing Education (Elliott Lauderdale): Need caucus leader.
- Computer and Information Sciences (Michael Doran): Transition of new Dean seems to be going smoothly.
- Education (Leah Kinniburgh): Searches in progress.
- Engineering (Peter Byrne for Ali Engin):
- Library (Amy Prendergast): Searches in progress.
- Mitchell College of Business (Greg Prescott): Searches in progress and their Dean recently announced as Interim VPAA.
- Medicine (TBD): Senate positions filled.
- Nursing (Karen Hamilton): still in process of elections: Dr. Catherine Dearmon is Associate Dean.

9. Meeting adjourned at 4:13 P.M.