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Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – July 2009

Faculty Senators

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July 15, 2009

Approved Minutes

Present: Adams, Estis, O'Connor, Axsmith, Carr, Connors, Fisher, Haywick, Hillman, Husain, Lunceford, Perez-Pineda, Powers, Rowell, Shaw, Johnsten, Langan, Kingman, P. Turnipseed, Finley, Lemley, Prendergast, Bosarge, Burnham, Falkos, Perry, Rizk, Madden, D. Turnipseed, Woodford, Brown, Keasler, King, Meyer, Wright

Excused: Spector, Shelly-Tremblay, Toelken, McCormick, Baggett, Campbell, Omar, Kahn, Teplick, Keasler, Quereshi

Unexcused: Aucoin, Summerlin, Kinniburgh, Romey, Byrne, Allison, Ambrose, Pacheco, Retzlaff-Roberts

1. Call to order

3:08 by D. Turnipseed

2. Approval of minutes from the June meeting

Motion to approve the minutes as corrected -- S. Fisher; seconded; then approved unanimously.

3. Chair's Report

a. University Club. Plans for the club have been submitted and a construction permit has been issued. There are some design modifications being implemented based on President Moulton's desire for more windows. Hopefully we will see construction soon. Currently, a committee, including D. Haywick, is meeting to get policies and procedures in place.

One issue that needs to be addressed is whether lunch will regularly be served at the University Club. The University Club will be located in close proximity to the new University dining hall that will offer "fresh bar" style dining. Will people drive to the University Club on a regular basis for lunch and pay more for lunch there than at the University dining hall? That question needs to be answered. At the beginning of semester, we will do a survey of faculty and staff to get a feel for how many people will want to go to the University Club for lunch on a regular basis.

b. Homecoming – S. Falkos is heading the Faculty Senate's homecoming committee. At the last meeting, D. Turnipseed asked for volunteers to work on the faculty's role in the first homecoming. Please let Sheryl Falkos, David Turnipseed, or Kelly Woodford know if you are interested in working on the faculty homecoming committee. Sheryl has had great ideas to help portray the faculty in a positive sense to the community. For example, raffle a first football game ball signed by Coach Jones & players.

There are plans to have a faculty tailgating tent at the homecoming game. There will be a designated tailgate area in the Ladd Stadium parking lot. Groups will be reserving tailgating spots – e.g., sororities and fraternities, other student organizations, some colleges, etc.

Students want to host a fundraiser for the Mitchell Cancer Institute and/or for Women's & Children's to buy a piece of equipment. Students have asked to partner with faculty in a contest to raise money for this effort as part of the homecoming activities. Details to follow.

c. Technology/Distance Learning. At the executive committee meeting (see minutes), we talked about budget and on-going issues. Revenues are currently flat; no outlook on when we will recover funding levels in the foreseeable future. Common sense says that hiring will be limited to an as needed basis for the foreseeable future. So, we will continue to have fewer faculty members in the short term and, hopefully, more students. The faculty needs to play a proactive role in developing ways to teach more students, while protecting the research and service aspects of our jobs. Other universities are doing this through distance learning and other technology-based delivery systems. The Executive Committee has asked the Technology Committee to do a University-wide assessment of technology, determine strengths/weaknesses, and what tools are needed. The tentative charge to the committee is in the minutes of the July executive committee meeting.

4. New Business

- Proposal to change Faculty Senate Constitution to allow a Senator, if elected, to serve two consecutive three year terms.

At the last meeting, we talked about evaluating the current term limit policy and its impact on faculty members who are genuinely interested in Senate service (currently 3 years and out). This topic was discussed at length by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee voted in favor of a specific proposal: allowing two consecutive three-year terms.

- Proposal to change Faculty Senate Constitution to allow the President of the Faculty Senate to run and, if elected, serve two consecutive one year terms.

Currently presidential succession is not an issue; however, if we get a contentious issue before the Senate, the Senate's position is weakened by turnover. The Executive Committee proposes amending the Faculty Senate Constitution to allow two consecutive one year terms.

The earliest date the proposed changes can become effective is December – vote in September and, if the constitutional changes are approved, the changes must be presented to the Board of Trustees. The Faculty Senate's September meeting is after the September Trustees meeting; so any proposal would have to wait for the next Board meeting.

Estis moved to put the changes to vote; seconded by Meyer; passed unanimously.

Both proposals will be on the agenda for the September meeting. We need the caucus leaders to discuss the proposal with each College's faculty before the September vote.

- Faculty involvement in homecoming – see chair's report.

Senators were again asked to volunteer to help S. Falkos with homecoming planning. When asked what is needed, Falkos responded: ideas on how to get the faculty involved. Langan suggested inviting retirees.

- Charge to Technology Committee to study of campus technology, particularly in relation to distance learning and on-line content delivery. See chairs report.

The Technology Committee will need the help of both Senators and those outside of the Senate. The Faculty Senate needs to look at the technology issues now, rather than waiting and being on the defense. The administration is interested in keeping the balance: increasing teaching load without losing research and service time and is interested in faculty input to help maintain the balance.

5. Old Business

- Confirmation of new Faculty Senate Secretary, Kelly Woodford, to replace Steve Morris.

Woodford was unanimously confirmed as the new Secretary.

6. Committee Reports

- Academic Development and Mentoring (Phil Carr) – We talked with Rob Gray about having some of our members at new faculty orientation. We are going to work with PETAL to see how the 1 day orientation works. J Estis asked about faculty having to come to orientation without being paid. P Carr responded that it is now as close to the 15th as possible without making everyone come on Saturday. D Turnipseed commented that the upcoming changes to the academic calendar will eliminate the problem. T Meyer suggested a Faculty Senate resolution asking the chairs give new faculty comp time (e.g., a Friday off) to make up for unpaid work day. D Haywick suggested more general proposal re “compensation”.

Upon discussion, Senators raised a broader issue impacting many nine month faculty members: regularly being asked to work outside the contract period – e.g., coming in for advising during the summer, committee meetings during the summer, etc. without compensation. The issue will be put on the agenda for discussion in a future Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting.

- Environmental Quality (Doug Haywick) – Will meet again when students are back.
- Evaluation (Amy Prendergast) – No report
- Planning and Development (Sheryl Falkos) – homecoming is our biggest project. Send email to sfalkos@usouthal.edu with ideas.
- Policies and Faculty Handbook (Sam Fisher) – Met today and working on agenda.
- Salary and Benefits (Julie Estis) – will meet at start of fall semester. Reviewing faculty survey comments on salary/benefits. If anyone has issues, please email J Estis
- Technology Utilization (Tom Meyer) – committee hasn't met, but there has been some activity. Meyer & Burnham met with consortium of medical libraries looking for grant money for another tech fair.

7. Caucus Reports

- Allied Health (Tracy O'Connor) – Still moving; hope all will be in the new building within 3 weeks. All teaching in the new building in the fall. Will have big opening ceremony in September that corresponds to the Board of Trustees meeting.
- Arts and Sciences (Thomas Shaw) – Had special election last week to replace S Morris. Douglas Marshall won the election. Had meeting with Dean this a.m. – raised workload issue with the Dean. The Dean was receptive to developing expertise within the college to develop ideas on technology.
- Continuing Education (Vickie McCormick) – no report
- Computer and Information Sciences (David Langan) – ground breaking for new building in mid-September
- Education (Dennis Campbell) – no report
- Engineering (TBD) – no report
- Library (Vera Finley) –no report
- Mitchell College of Business (Donna Retzlaff-Roberts) – no report
- Medicine (Judy Burnham) – no report.
- Nursing (Diane Keasler) – T. Meyer reported that the College of Nursing had applied for 14 grants and had received 11 of the 14. First semester in new building is going smoothly. Faculty seminar and work days to finish labs are coming up. Have accreditation visit next year.

Questions were asked about the future use of the Springhill campus – S. Falkos said pediatrics will utilize some of the space and the Veterans Administration facility may also expand.

Adjourned 3:50