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## Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – June 2007

Faculty Senators

*University of South Alabama*

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Faculty Senate 2007-08

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University of South Alabama  
Faculty Senate  
2007-2008  
June 20, 2007  
University Library, Rm.110

## Approved Minutes

Present: Aliabadi, Allison, Amare, Aucoin, Baggett, Brown, Bru, Burnham, Carnahan, Carter, Estis, Doran, Falkos, Fresne, Green, Haas, Heins, Hubbard, Irion, Johnsten, Z. Khan, King, Kinniburgh, Lauderdale, Li, Loomis, Major, Morris, Porter, Prendergast, Prescott, Prokhorov, Rivers, Rowell, Santoli, Simpson, Tate, Woodford, Tony Wright, Tootie Wright

Excused: Britt, Dardeau, Douglass, Engin, Hamilton, Perez-Pineda, Robinson, Sachs, Teplick

Unexcused: Crumb, McNair, Pettyjohn, Phelan, Rego, Schamburger, Sherman, Vrettos

I. The meeting was called to order at 3:05 by Chair Tate. Lacking a quorum, Chair Tate tabled the approval of the minutes and proceeded to agenda item 3 "Chair's report." A question was raised regarding the use of proxies for those excused. The Chair stated that this was possible as long as we post the minutes on the computer beforehand.

A quorum was achieved at 3:09

II. Chair's Report (written report attached). Chair Tate summarized points from the written report:

- Chair Tate expects to add information to the web page and is trying to gather historical information on the Senate.
- Highlights of recent meetings:
  - Fringe Benefits Committee approved two changes: a) new benefit of air transport for medical services to be covered under insurance and b) a change in family medical leave from the current 16 weeks for 120 days to 12 weeks for a maximum of 90 days. This is what the government requires. Also, it will no longer be calculated on a one calendar basis, but a rolling calendar.
  - Meeting with VPAA Covey on task force of promotion tenure (PT) review. Covey has decided to delay this until the fall. Still do not know who will be on the task force which will review all the PT procedures throughout the colleges. Covey stated that she would like to design workshops for the deans and chairs of colleges.
  - Meeting with USA Foundation. Notes that the Foundation is proud to have given more than \$100 million to the University since 1990. Two new board members were selected though neither is USA alum as many had hoped for.
  - Slight change has been made in student academic conduct policy. Before, the appeal was given to VPAA, now it will first go to the Dean.
  - Budget Committee. Recommended a tuition increase of \$7/\$9 undergrad/graduate. This is the first increase in two years.
  - Board of Trustees (BOT). Both new VPs were present. Enrollment should be up with record number of ACT scores over 30. BOT passed the promotion/tenure policy for Mitchell Cancer Research

Institute, approved Phase II of Grove (student apartments) to start this fall, and approved the tuition increase. BOT selected a new chair and vice chair.

- o Executive Committee (EC) met with President Moulton earlier this week. Noting complaints forwarded to the Senate from Comrades of Courage, Moulton stated that the elevator in HUMB, ILB, and ADMIN have been fixed or replaced. In related matter, EC noted that the university web pages were still not in compliance with ADA regulations despite having been brought to their attention two years ago. Moulton asked for specifics. The matter was returned to the Technology Utilization Committee. Moulton was also asked about the use of TracDat and Assessment information. This system is not specifically required by SACS; they only require some form of planning and assessment. Moulton and Covey insist that administrators are looking at the information. EC also asked about JagTran providing limited service in the summer. Moulton noted that there is more flexibility in summer parking. The new recreation center has been approved and will be built across the street from Stanky Field. Moulton hopes to have bids during the fall and begin construction in the spring. Finally, noted that the change in the wording of librarian time and rank was sent to Dean Council and approved.

III. Having achieved a quorum, Chair Tate returned to agenda item 2: “Approval of Minutes” for the March 21, April 18, and April 25 meetings.

- Motion by Chair to approve minutes for the March 21 meeting; seconded by Brown; no changes or suggestions; approved.
- Motion by Morris to approve minutes for the April 18 meeting; seconded by Loomis; changes in the list of excused absences were recorded; approved.
- Motion to approve minutes for the April 25 meeting; seconded by Lauderdale; changes in the list of absences were recorded; approved.

IV. Chair Tate reported that there was no **Old Business**.

V. Under **New Business**, the chair of the Policy and Handbook Committee, Loomis, presented the proposal for a change in the Late Course Withdrawal Policy (handout attached).

According to Loomis, the proposal is the product of last year’s committee and recommends that between the drop/add date and the drop date students will need the faculty’s signature in order to drop a course. Drawing from the handout, Loomis provided an overview of the problems with the current system and the rationale for the proposal from the committee. Loomis noted that the committee looked at the policy of around 30 institutions and found USA’s withdrawal policy to be one of the most lenient, easiest, and latest. Students can withdrawal at any time until the last day – which has ranged from 12th week to last day of class in recent years – just by going into PAWS. The student suffers no penalty for doing so. Loomis also noted that about 38% of institutions examined require some form of signature by the advisor or instructor. Some institutions put limits on the number of WD’s a student can have during his/her career; some allow instructors to fail students even if they WD by using a grade of WF; some have financial penalties. The committee found a variety of problems with our current policy: 1) It is too easy for students and may be a spur of the moment decision without reflection. By requiring a signature, it would no longer be an impulsive or uninformed decision; 2) Withdrawing students are not aware of their standing in the class – chance for additional credit, underestimating their grade, etc. – or are unaware how often the course is offered or how easy it is to get into the class in the future. Consultation with faculty would help make sure they are aware of these things; 3) For instructors, if many students drop, the instructor may not know why, making it hard to make changes or adjust. The change would thus provide feedback to the instructor; 4) Though students withdraw for a variety of reasons, this would at least slow down the process and force students to provide a rationale for dropping; and finally, 5) Withdrawals make it more difficult for students to proceed toward graduation, so the policy should have a positive effect on retention. Students at academic risk will have a chance to interact with faculty at a crucial point.

-- **Q:** Hall asked if faculty will be able to deny students the right to withdraw.

-- **A:** Loomis argued that there is no motivation for faculty to deny it. We could add something to the policy regarding appeal, but the assumption is that faculty will sign the form.

-- **Q:** Bru asked if we are saying there is no compromise. Rowell posed a question about where the paperwork

would originate. Aliabadi asked if only the instructor's signature or the chair's should be required. What happened if s/he is not around?

-- **A:** Loomis explained that the form would come from the Registrar's office and that the chair or dean can make a judgment call, but the instructor should be around since there is a class.

--**Q:** Irion asked about web-based programs.

-- **A:** Loomis suggested perhaps an e-mail version or a web-based form, etc. that students could download.

--Chair Tate asked everyone to take the proposal back to the faculty for discussion and that the Senate would discuss the proposal at a future meeting.

## 6. Committee Reports.

- Academic Development and Mentoring (Steve Morris) – reported that the Committee had recently met and addressed two issues: orientation and mentoring. The Committee agreed to follow-up on the recommendations from last year's Committee on orientation and to gather information about mentoring programs. Members of the Committee have written to Deans requesting information about formal policies/guidelines on mentoring programs. The information is coming in and along with research on mentoring programs from other institutions, will be presented to the Senate at a later date.
- Environmental Quality (Susan Santoli) – reported that in April, Santoli attended a meeting of the University Environmental and Safety Committee and that she met subsequently with Wayne Davis and Chris Willis regarding recycling program. The Committee has yet to meet.
- Evaluation (Tom Johnsten) – have yet to meet, but will shortly.
- Planning and Development (*TBD*) – chair has been vacated.
- Policies and Faculty Handbook (Eric Loomis) – no report.
- Salary and Benefits (Jean Irion) –no report.
- Technology Utilization (Jie Li) – have yet to meet, but will soon.

## 7. Caucus Leader Reports.

- Allied Health (Zari Aliabadi) – Julie Estis is new senator.
- Arts and Sciences (Tony Wright) – no report.
- Continuing Education (Elliott Lauderdale) – no report.
- Computer and Information Sciences (Michael Doran) – continuing Dean search – candidate coming in this week.
- Education (Leah Kinniburgh) – no report.
- Engineering (*TBD*) --
- Library (Amy Prendergast) – no report.
- Mitchell College of Business (Greg Prescott) – continuing to prepare for AACSB review.
- Medicine (*TBD*) – Green was elected to be caucus leader; VPMS Franks now present beginning in July – Dean search will be revitalized.
- Nursing (*TBD*) –

## 8. Adjourn – thanks everyone for attending – adjourn at 4:04 pm

Minutes taken by Steve Morris

**[University of South Alabama](http://www.usouthal.edu/usa/fsenate/) - Faculty Senate - Mobile, AL 36688-0002**

For comments or questions about our web site, please E-mail [ap](mailto:ap).

Last date changed: **September 27, 2007**

URL: <http://www.usouthal.edu/usa/fsenate/records/minutes/20070620.html>

