

MSU Faculty Senate

October 2009 Minutes

The MSU Faculty Senate met at 3:00 PM on October 8, 2009, in 109 Bridwell. Senators present included Brink, Jan; Bultena, Charles (Treasurer); Capps, Matthew; Carlston, David (Parliamentarian); Debois, Barbara; Elliot, Brent; Fidelie, Laura; Gorham, Jim; Green, Becky; Knox, Michelle; LaBeff, Emily; Lewis, Gary; McClintock, Stuart (Secretary); Medford, Ann (Chair); Morrison, Gary; Owen, James (Vice-Chair); Patin, Roy; Shao, Jiangao; Schulz, Ed; Wyatt, Frank. Brittany Norman from *The Wichitan* and University Registrar Darla English attended the meeting.

The agenda was accepted, and the minutes of the September meeting had previously been approved by e-mail.

Current Business:

1. President Rogers and Provost Long addressed the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Rogers informed the Faculty Senate that the operating budget was now driven by more than fifty percent by tuition and fees. For budgetary purposes this year, enrollment was estimated to be 6100 students. Dr. Rogers said that enrollment had increased beyond expectations to 6,343 students, which has resulted in the university's having about 900,000 dollars more than it expected. Designated fee money accounts for around 400,000 dollars of this total, which leaves approximately 500,000. Dr. Rogers will put some of this sum in reserves. The President will also recommend offering raises for faculty and staff for the 2009-2010 year, contingent upon the Board of Regents' approval at its November meeting. He plans to offer a three-percent raise to staff. Faculty are expected to get a two-percent raise with another one percent added in a merit pool. He hopes to increase salaries for university police officers, and he intends to raise hourly pay for custodial and maintenance staff from eight to nine dollars per hour. Raises will become part of faculty and staff base pay for the 2010-2011 year. Dr. Rogers plans to distribute the salary increases in a one-time check around December 10. Because the raise is for half of this academic year, the check will be approximately one and a half percent of this year's contracts.

Dr. Long and Dr. Rogers pointed out that this year's incoming freshman class had an average SAT of 1140 and ACT of 22.1. They also stated that admission requirements would again be raised. While details of the new admissions requirements still need to be worked out, they emphasized that the Board of Regents would have to approve any change.

Dr. Long presented a new exam schedule for the Senate's consideration, which would be implemented in spring of 2010. The schedule reduces finals from two and a half hours to two hours, which would allow for a sixth testing period per day, thereby eliminating Friday exams. Senator LaBeff motioned to accept the new schedule, and Senator Capps seconded it. It passed unanimously. Dr. Long encouraged professors to work with students who might have several exams on one day. He also emphasized that exams should be given at assigned times.

Dr. Long said that he was examining the entire evaluation process because of consistently low return rates with the electronic evaluation system. He stressed the importance of having statistically reliable return rates for professors to use who are going up for rank and tenure. Dr.

Rogers added that continued low return rates would be a problem with SACS at its upcoming accreditation. Dr. Long is looking at a paper-and-pencil evaluation form that will have approximately fifteen questions, a section for departments to add about five pertinent questions, and a space for written comments. He will also address creating an evaluation instrument for on-line classes.

Dr. Long also stated that the Core Curriculum Committee would have nine members, two from each of three colleges and one each from the remaining three. The colleges whose courses are more heavily part of the core will have two members.

The President and the Provost opened the floor for questions and comments. Senator Patin mentioned that he preferred the electronic evaluation system and felt that the low return rates were due to students suspicious of the system because they knew professors could see which students had done the evaluation. He suggested removing professors' access to this information as a means of improving return rates. Parliamentarian Carlston said that he appreciated the administration's willingness to reconsider this new evaluation system.

2. Information Technology Advisory Committee survey. Mike Dye, Director of Information Systems, addressed the Faculty Senate about a survey that the Information Technology Advisory Committee is going to make in December to be used as part of the university's Strategic Plan. This committee plans to survey faculty to see what their needs and their departments' needs are for upgrading technology in the classroom. He would like to include questions that address what is appropriate and needed, how many new SPSS licenses are needed, what software applications should be available, and what improvements could be made to Banner.

3. Photos of students in Banner. While Mr. Dye was still present, Senator LaBeff raised a matter brought to her attention by a professor in her college. In classes with very large enrollment, it is difficult for professors to link names and faces of the students. This professor wondered if it would be possible to have a photo of the student next to his/her name on class lists in Banner to better identify students for participation grades, for taking attendance, and for making sure that the correct student is taking a test.

Mr. Dye said that Banner could not store photos at the moment. He has an idea that might solve this interface problem and will report back to the Faculty Senate.

Senator Gorham was concerned about privacy issues and wanted to emphasize the necessity of keeping student photos secure and private.

4. Piper Award. The Faculty Senate voted to nominate Dr. Millie Gore, West College of Education, to be the university's nominee for the Piper Award.

5. Late registration. Senator Gorham brought up an issue that a colleague from his college wanted the Faculty Senate to be aware of. This professor was concerned about students being admitted past the fourth day and later, who were then admitted into classes without or against the professor's consent. This professor wondered if some students were being given preferential treatment because of family connections or other reasons. Secretary McClintock and Treasurer Carlston stated that one of the university's strengths was its willingness to consider special circumstances. While this point was well taken, it was emphasized that these students were admitted into classes against the professor's recommendation.

Senator Patin related an incident in which he told a student who was enrolling late that he/she could not enroll in his class and later found that student admitted to his class. Senator LaBeff said that such occurrences were outside of her experience because both she and her dean must approve a late enrollment or an enrollment in an already full class. Senator Knox mentioned that professors who teach the core college algebra courses were having to allow as many as forty-five students into a class to accommodate the extra number of students enrolled at the university this semester.

The Faculty Senate realizes that Senator Gorham's report from his colleague raised several different but related questions regarding late admission to the university and/or to classes. Are deadlines being ignored for particular students who are getting preferential treatment? Is there a university policy similar to the one described by Senator LaBeff above? If students are admitted in the second week of classes, can they possibly succeed?

The Faculty Senate took no action on these issues but wants to express its concern about them. Senators will poll members of their colleges to see how widespread these phenomena are.

Committee and Other Reports:

1. Administrative Council (Medford): (no report)
2. Board of Regents (Medford): (no report)
3. Academic Council (Owen): Because of a timing conflict, Vice-Chair Owen will not be able to represent the Faculty Senate at the Academic Council this semester. Treasurer Carlston will take his place for the semester.
4. Enrollment Management (Green): (no report)
5. Intercollegiate Athletics Council (Gorham): (no report)
6. Student Affairs (Medford): (no report)
7. Sustainability (McClintock): (no report)
8. Financial report (Bultena): The Faculty Senate has \$1,205.

Announcements:

The meeting adjourned at 4:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart McClintock
Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Ann Medford
Chairman of the Faculty Senate

The next Executive Committee meeting will be at 3 PM on Thursday, November 5, 2009, in the Apache Board Room of CSC.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be at 3 PM on Thursday, November 12, 2009, in the Kiowa Ex-Students Dining Room in CSC. ^L