

MSU Faculty Senate

November 2020 Minutes (Draft for Approval)

The 2020-2021 MSU Faculty Senate met at 3:00 PM on November 12, 2020 via Zoom.

Senators present:

Chuck Bultena	Erica Judie	Karen Moriarty
Sarah Cobb	Attapol Kuanliang	Michael Olson
Eduardo Colmenares	Tammy Kurzewski	Morgan Page
Mary Draper	Adam Lei	Beverly Stiles
Rodney Fisher	Marcos Lopez	Christopher Vivio
Catherine Gaharan	Matthew Luttrell	Lynette Watts
Timothy Hinchman	Janise McIntyre	Tiffany Ziegler
Tina Johnson	Kelly Medellin	

Guests:

Ruby Garrett (Staff Senate Representative)

Call to order: 3:04 PM

Housekeeping:

The minutes and agenda were approved.

Current Business:

1. IT Handbook Changes (Dr. Lopez)

Dr. Lopez stated that the revised IT handbook makes a few changes. Minimum password length is increased from eight to ten characters, and a password reset will now reset the password instead of re-sending it. Testing requirements for web applications with sensitive information have been added. Specific timing for training modules has been added. IT will also log events such as opening or closing operating systems or applications. The information will be kept confidential.

Dr. Lopez moved to acknowledge that the faculty senate has been informed of the IT handbook changes and has no major objections to its implementation. The motion passed.

2. Recognition of Staff (Dr. Lopez)

Dr. Lopez reminded the senate of earlier discussions of ways to recognize staff and departments who have done exceptional work to help the campus adjust to the requirements of the Covid-19 pandemic. The senate's budget can be used for this. Several senators suggested lunch, gift cards, plaques, or a mixture could be purchased.

Dr. Lopez introduced the following resolution: "The Faculty Senate commends Dani McAfee, the Distance Education Department, the Information Technology Department, and the entire Custodial Staff for their efforts in aiding the return to campus for the Fall 2020 academic school year."

Dr. Lopez moved to approve the resolution and the motion carried.

3. Faculty Ombudsperson Inquiry (Dr. Lopez)

Dr. Lopez explained that a faculty ombudsperson is a faculty member operating independently of the administration. The ombudsperson would give faculty an unofficial avenue to discuss problems or grievances. The ombudsperson would not replace any formal procedures or grievance process. The Provost has asked whether faculty would be interested in pursuing creation of this position.

A senator asked whether this would be a new position, and expressed concern about creating additional positions. Dr. Lopez stated that the position would be held by a current faculty member.

A senator asked that the ombudsperson be appropriately trained in conflict resolution.

A senator asked that faculty representation be involved in the creation of the description for the position.

Dr. Lopez moved to approve that the Provost begin the inquiry into deciding whether MSU would benefit from the creation of a faculty ombudsperson position, and, if so, begin the initial steps into creating a job description for the position.

The motion passed.

4. Office Hours Proposal (Dr. Cobb)

Dr. Cobb reminded the senators that the senate had requested to have the number of required office hours reduced from ten to five per week. The deans responded by proposing that the requirement should be changed to five office hours and five residence hours. Dr. Cobb suggested that the senate's position should be that office hours and residence hours serve different purposes and should be dealt with separately.

Dr. Cobb moved to accept the resolution on amendment of the office hour policy.

Some senators expressed uncertainty as to whether a residence policy was a good idea.

A senator stated that faculty members who are not meeting expectations should be addressed on an individual basis through annual reports rather than through careful tracking of office hours or residence hours.

A senator pointed out that many universities, especially those with AAUP chapters, do not specify a number of weekly office hours in university policy.

Faculty stated that the policy involving a mix of office hours and residence hours was problematic because it would be difficult to enforce; it seems to be punitive in intent; and will not apply to all faculty (particularly those who are not teaching full time.)

A senator stated that the minimum number of required days would make more sense as a department decision. Dr. Johnson moved to amend the resolution by changing “minimum of three days” to “minimum number of days determined in consultation with chair and dean.” The motion to amend passed.

The motion to approve the resolution as amended passed.

5. Awards (Dr. Lopez)

Dr. Lopez stated that voting for the faculty award would be conducted electronically in two rounds.

Dr. Bultena is the university nominee for the Piper Award.

The winners of the President’s Staff Awards are Norma Ramirez and Amy Chase.

Committee and Other Reports:

1. Administrative Council (Dr. Carlston):

No meeting

2. Board of Regents (Dr. Carlston):

No meeting

3. Academic Council (Dr. Lopez)

No report.

4. Budget Oversight (Dr. Stiles)

Dr. Stiles stated that there are some concerns about enrollment, particularly with students who are taking fewer hours, online-only courses, or receiving tuition discounts.

5. Return to Campus Task Force (Dr. Stiles)

Dr. Stiles stated that the Return to Campus Task Force had met and had discussed reboarding housing, compliance fatigue, contact tracing, and non-academic events. The subcommittees will also consider their specific charges.

Dr. Luttrell indicated that both co-chairs of the committee had stressed the need to work quickly and that the committee intends to present its report by December 1.

6. Other active committees:

The Incident Management Team turned over operations to the Return to Campus Task Force.

7. Financial Report (Dr. Stiles):

No report

Old Business:

Discussion and results

New Business:

Dr. Lopez stated that the President's Office has received 1500 masks with MSU logos. Dr. Lopez asked anyone interested in volunteering to help deliver them to local health care workers contact him.

The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

Submitted,
Sarah Cobb,
Faculty Senate Secretary

Dave Carlston,
Faculty Senate Chair

Next Meetings:

The next **Executive Committee meeting** will be at 3:00 PM on Friday, December 4 via Zoom.

The next **Faculty Senate meeting** will be at 3:00 PM on Thursday December 10 via Zoom.