



**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA**  
**Faculty Senate**

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**Plenary Session**

**February 15, 2023 –Zoom 3:00 pm**

**MINUTES**

Present: Faculty and Guests

- Adams, Jamie
- Amare, Nicole
- Arif, Delaware
- Bates, robin
- Batten, Lynn, excused
- Beebe, Donald
- Black, Michael
- Borchert, Glen
- Brannan, Lauren
- Brock, Casey
- Bunch, Jaclyn
- Copeland-Streeter, Donna
- Curtis, Missy
- Davidson, Clay
- Donaldson, Amanda
- Getch, Yvette
- He, Jia
- Holden, Shelley
- Huang, Jingshan
- Huang, Ying
- Jahnke, Karl
- Khan, Zoya
- Lynch, Colleen, excused
- Manders, Jenny
- Marri, Preethi
- Migaud, Marie, excused
- Meola, David
- Min, Hosik
- Myers, Charlene, excused
- Ní Chadhain, Sinéad
- Pavelescu, Andrei
- Raczkowski, Chris
- Rayner, Jonathan

- Rich, Tom
  - Richardson, Joe
  - Sehgal, Mukul, excused
  - Sayner, Sarah
  - Shaw, Thomas
  - Shepard, Beth
  - Spencer, Edmund
  - Swofford, Jim
  - Swanzy, Debra. excused
  - Thompson, Christina
  - Thompson, Tara
  - Turnipseed, David
  - Vandewaa, Elizabeth
  - Vandewaa, Arie
  - Walker, Sean
  - Wassenaar, Christina
  - Webb, Bret
  - Weber, David
  - Woodmansee, Brenda
- Meeting called to order 3:02 pm
  - Approval of the amended Minutes for 1/18/23 Meeting: Approved
  - Approval of Agenda for 2/15/23 Meeting: Approved
- **President's Report:** President's report attached below: (The report was sent out prior to the meeting for review and discussion of the President's report held during FS Plenary Meeting.)
    - **Administrative Searches:** The Provost informed us that the announcement for the new Deans of both Allied Health and Honors College will be made soon. The process of hiring new Deans of the College of Business and College of Education has started. Also, the search process for AVP of Enrollment has started.
    - **Ombudspersons Policy:** The FS president reports that we now have a new policy for appointing Ombudspersons. The President of the University will appoint Ombudsperson in consensus with the President of the Faculty Senate.
    - **Divisive Concepts Legislations:** A small working group is going to ask the campus community for feedback regarding proposed legislation on House Bill 7. Feedback form is located at the following link: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScAKO8HFAS7xoa\\_R5rfZ1J\\_ebQTIU9rWojlt74GCza3P4Wqg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScAKO8HFAS7xoa_R5rfZ1J_ebQTIU9rWojlt74GCza3P4Wqg/viewform)). The link was circulated via daily digest on February 10, Friday. You have one week to review questions and the community conversation will be held at 3:00 p.m. on March 1. If you have any questions or concerns, please email Dr. Joel Billingsley.

- **Salary Survey:** The provost's Office has shared the peer salary adjustment process with the FS excom. The document has been sent out prior to the meeting by the FS secretary.
  - **Faculty Ambassador Program:** The FS president reports that there is currently a faculty ambassador program for any faculty that travel outside of the country. He will share more information with faculty on eligibility and the application process.
  - **Gen-Ed Committee:** The FS president reports that there is a Gen-Ed committee for the university. He has appointed FS senators to the committee and the committee will give a report by the end of the semester.
- **Vice-President Report**
- **3 Activities of the Excom this Academic Year:** Dr. Bunch reports that the FS excom has been involved in three major activities:
    - FS representation (president and vice-president) as an observer at the Board of Trustees Meetings. They also present a report to the BOT at the end of their term.
    - Regular FS excom Meetings. One activity of excom was presenting a report for the Board of Trustees. The excom had lunch with the BOT and provided a presentation on salary and research expectations.
    - Have access to financial records
  - **FS president/Admin Meetings:** In addition, Dr, Bunch reports that the FS president has established regular meetings with the president and provost to build relationships between administration and the faculty senate.
  - **Town Hall Meetings;** The excom has asked for town hall meetings with the president. The provost has reported that these meetings have already been scheduled with the colleges and that faculty should receive information from their college about dates and times of the town hall meetings. Dr. Bunch also encourages all faculty senators to attend and ask questions to promote dialogue between administration and faculty and to ensure transparency as well as alignment of goals of both administration and faculty.
- **Reports from Senate Committees:**
- **Salary & Benefits Committee:** Dr. Vandewaa reported that the Fringe Benefit Committee meets 2/28/23 and she requests that faculty email her with any concerns so that she can bring them up at the meeting.
  - Dr. Vandewaa also reports that the committee is still pushing for salaries as the many faculty wages are less than that of the average salary in Alabama.
  - **Faculty Handbook Committee:** Dr. Chadhain reported that the FS voted to refer the Ombudsperson policy to the AACCP. The policy was approved for two Ombudspersons. The President of the University will appoint Ombudsperson in consensus with the President of the Faculty Senate. The Ombudspersons will serve staggered terms of four years.
  - Dr. Chadhain reports that the committee has met and the committee has voted to not change the present firearms policy.

- The committee is also looking at the sabbatical policy. The committee is doing research of policies of peer institutions and looking at establishing a possible rubric for faculty feedback. The DEI committee is also looking to gather information on how many people apply for sabbatical and the percentage of faculty awarded a sabbatical.
- Dr. Chadhain reported that the committee is looking at timely reviews for promotion and tenure. A motion was presented to form a workgroup of FS members to work on timely reviews for promotion and tenure. The motion was second and the motion was passed by a show of hands of those present. No abstentions.
- **Awards Committee:** Sean Walker reported that the call for nominations. The award categories are:
  1. **Semoon and Youngshin Chang Endowed Award for Humanitarian Services** - recognizes a student, faculty member, staff member, or alumnus who contributes most to humanity and makes a difference in the community.
  2. **Outstanding Research Partner** - providing direct support to the research mission of USA faculty through financial, in-kind, personnel, expertise, office space, consulting, or other means.
  3. **Outstanding Teaching Partner** - providing direct support to the teaching mission of USA faculty, broadly defined, by providing a setting and/or skilled supervision for USA students. This partner enhances the educational mission of the USA faculty by providing internship/externship/field placement to USA students.
  4. **Outstanding Community Partner** - for an organization/agency that works with USA faculty to address needs of the greater Mobile community through collaborative research and/or service delivery.

Faculty are encouraged to cast their vote so that the winners can be invited to a party before the end of the year.

- **By-Laws**-No report
- **Reports from Caucus Leaders:**
  - No caucus reports.
- **Reports from University Committees:**
  - None
- **New Business:**
  - **Guest Speakers:**
    - **R1/R2 Committee Summary by Dr. Sean Powers:** Sean Powers reported that there are two committees to improve research and the research status of the University. One committee is the R1 committee that is charged to look at how the university can make the transition to a R1 research facility. He presented information about the Carnegie classifications and the 10 measures for professional practice in determining research classifications according to Carnegie. First,

Carnegie looks at research expenditures and doctoral students graduated such as doctoral conferrals in humanities, social science, stem and other research fields. Increases in research expenditures and Ph. D graduates will be critical in moving on the trajectory to an R1 institution. They are charged with developing a business strategy to achieve this goal with 3-, 6-, and 9-year timelines with a draft plan developed by May.

- There is an adhoc committee that is currently looking at how to support existing research and incentivizing future research.
- **Grant Development Process by Angela Jordan:** Angela Jordan discussed grant development opportunities. The office provides over \$200 thousand dollars in grant funding per year. Angela Jordan demonstrated how to access the Office of Research and Economic Development website and reviewing all of the resources that can be accessed on the site to assist faculty in finding grant opportunities, applying for grants, and post-award information.
- **New Mental Health Support by Dr. John Friend:** Dr. Friend reported on the mental health support available at the university. An anonymous 24-hr website that students can access on the University Counseling and Testing Center website is available. They offer counseling, group counseling, and crisis management services. The department has received a grant to be a jet program campus. We are the first university in the state of Alabama to be accepted focused on college students and mental health. There is a jag student mentor network where students are trained on how to recognize students that are in need and help them access the needed resources. 24/7 access platform that is monitored by mental health clinicians and provide needed resources.
- The office has Kognito, a virtual realty teaching module for faculty and staff to train them on how to recognize students that need help to connect them with the resources they need.
- **GenEd Announcement by Dr. Christine Rinne:** Dr. Rinne reports that there have been forums scheduled for Feb 28, March 1, and March 2 to discuss GenEd at the university to determine what changes need to be made, what we are forgetting, and possibly who to meet. They will produce a proposal that will be voted on for a stamp of approval before the proposal is presented to the provost. Dr. Rinne recommends that if anyone has questions contact Angela Coleman.
- **HB7:** Final information from David Meola who is the fellow in DEI Office. He asked faculty if they have any questions related to the HB 7/law to contact him. A survey is open, and he asked faculty to answer the survey and make any comments at the following link:  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScAKO8HFaAS7xoa\\_R5rfZ1J\\_ebQTIU9rWojlt74GCza3P4Wqg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScAKO8HFaAS7xoa_R5rfZ1J_ebQTIU9rWojlt74GCza3P4Wqg/viewform)

Meeting Adjournment: MMSA 4:45 pm

Minutes transcribed by Donna Copeland-Streeter