



**Plenary Session**

**May 17, 2023 –MCOB 265 & Zoom 3:00 pm**

**MINUTES**

**Present Faculty (& Guests)**

- Adams, James
- Barber, William
- Bates, Robin
- Black, Michael
- Borchert, Glen
- Brock, Casey
- Brower, Greg
- Ni Chadhain, Sinead
- Copeland, Donna
- Coronado, Yun
- Curtis, Missy
- Davidson, Clay
- Donaldson, Amanda
- Ferguson, Susan
- Fonseca, Annabelle
- Getch, Yvette
- Godang, Romulus
- Hauff, Caitlyn
- Holliday, Candice
- Hoffman, Alma
- Hudson, Geoffrey
- Huang, Jingshan
- Huang, Ying
- Jahnke, Karl
- Kersey, Jeremy
- Khan, Zoya
- Marass, Ashley
- Marri, Preethi
- Miller, Kristina
- Meyers, Charlene
- Pavelescu, Andrei

- Pfleegr, Jenna
  - Rabideau, Brooks
  - Raczkowski, Christopher
  - Rayner, Jonathon
  - Richardson, Joe
  - Shepard, Beth
  - Ter Horst, Eleanor
  - Thompson, Christina
  - Thompson, Tara
  - Turnipseed, David
  - Vandewaa, Arie
  - Vandewaa, Elizabeth
  - Vrana, Laura
  - Walker, Sean
  - Wassenaar, Christina
  - Webb, Bret
  - Weber, David
  - Williams, Ashley
- Meeting called to order 3:07 pm
  - Approval of the Minutes for April Meeting: Approved
  - Approval of Agenda for May Meeting: Approved

**President's Report:**

**President's Report  
5/11/2023**

First, I would like to thank all of you for your support, and I hope that I can count on each one of you in the faculty senate to work together with me as we tackle the important matters facing us this upcoming year. We have so much talent within the faculty senate that we can accomplish great things together if we work as a cohesive team! I also want to let you know that I will do my absolute best to represent you in the matters that are most important to you and the faculty senate at large. With that said below is a brief president's report. I will be glad to answer any questions or concerns you may have during the next upcoming plenary meeting.

**Governmental Relations:**

- The House of Representatives approved the General Fund Budget of just over \$3 billion related to spending for the 2024 fiscal year. We are likely to see the Education Trust Fund (ETF) move forward in the Senate this week or next.
- On May 3rd, 1963, the University of South Alabama was created by a legislative act and will be celebrating 60 years this month. This past week the Senate passed a resolution commending the USA on our 60th anniversary.

- SB 247 Relating to education; to provide prohibitions on the promotion, endorsement, and affirmation of certain divisive concepts in certain public settings; and to authorize certain penalties for violation. was introduced in the committee and passed on May 3, 2023. It is pending action on the Senate floor.

### **Town Hall Meetings:**

- The ExCom shared with the president and provost that the Town Hall meetings have been well received and asked if they could continue them this year as well. The provost shared that the Town Hall meetings were beneficial and that they would be glad to continue to schedule them throughout the year.

### **Academic Dean Searches:**

- Doug Marshall has been named the next dean of the Honors College.
- The College of Business search team is conducting Zoom meetings with 9 candidates. They will narrow it down to bring 3-4 to campus.
- The College of Education search committee is in the process of narrowing the candidate pool to 8-9 candidates to bring to campus for interviews. They plan to start zoom interviews beginning the 1<sup>st</sup> week of June with hopes of bringing 3 candidates to campus after July 4.

### **AVP for Enrollment Management:**

- Mathew Cox has been named as the next Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management effective May 4, 2023. Since he is new in his role, he will not be able to attend the plenary this month, but he has agreed to come to the August plenary meeting to share his strategic plan for student enrollment and management with the faculty senate.

### **Building Updates**

- No recent updates
- An announcement was made that the USA will receive a \$20 million legacy gift from Abe Mitchell for the construction of a new performing arts center. Further fundraising for the project will be needed but hasn't started at this time. The site for the future performing arts building is yet to be determined.

### **Academic Council of Deans:**

- The ExCom asked the provost for the minutes for the Council of Academic Deans (CAD) to be published on the website. You can view the CAD minutes at the following link below:  
<https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/academicaffairs/committees.html>

### **Enrollment:**

- The provost has not provided us with any enrollment numbers haven't received any numbers for enrollment yet because it is still too early to tell; however, the provost shared that there is an increase in incoming freshmen and transfer students for fall 2023. Graduate student enrollment is down, and retention of the COVID-19 cohort of students is down.

### **Faculty Survey:**

- Please take a few minutes to complete the annual Faculty Senate Survey, and caucus leaders please encourage your colleagues to complete the survey as well. The goal of the survey is to provide the senate and its committees with information that will allow the Senate to better represent faculty concerns and advocate for faculty priorities in the upcoming year. The survey will close on Friday, May 26. If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact Chris Raczkowski at [raczkowski@southalabama.edu](mailto:raczkowski@southalabama.edu).

### **Follow this link to the Survey:**

[Take the Survey](https://southalabama.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6Gyi9NZUF4cHSOG?Q_DL=eTAY4obyH1cdF03_6Gyi9NZUF4cHSOG_CGC_ffUBAIy7B9Wu9tX&Q_CHL=email)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[https://southalabama.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6Gyi9NZUF4cHSOG?Q\\_DL=eTAY4obyH1cdF03\\_6Gyi9NZUF4cHSOG\\_CGC\\_ffUBAIy7B9Wu9tX&Q\\_CHL=email](https://southalabama.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6Gyi9NZUF4cHSOG?Q_DL=eTAY4obyH1cdF03_6Gyi9NZUF4cHSOG_CGC_ffUBAIy7B9Wu9tX&Q_CHL=email)

Response solicited from senate. Question: *When will we hear from Nick about allocation or senate bill?* Answer: *We are not sure at this time.*

- **Administrative Searches:**

With AVP and next AVP of finance there will not be a search. They have already named the people and because they are not faculty they do not have to do a search.

### **Reports from Senate Committees:**

- Christina Wassenaar sent out the faculty survey so we can decide priorities for the coming year. Caucus leaders need to send out to faculty. The survey closes on May 26.
- Sean Walker wants to send out a google doc to collect feedback from town halls. Caucus leaders can collect that information from their colleges.
- Sinead Ni' Chadhain (Handbook Committee)-will send out nontenure track promotion information since it is now part of the handbook and applications would need to be started in August.
- Oct. 2022-guidelines for searches were presented to CAD and denied, and they said those were addressed in the handbook, so we referred to the DEI committee.
- CAD approved update of Title IX language
- There was Pushback from CAD on adding a second ombudsperson. The issue was that CAD wanted the University President to have selection power, and we wanted faculty senate to have voice, so now we nominate, and then the president approves. We will get the entire language to review.
- Chair policy—language has gone back and forth, was sent back to CAD in January, and they have yet to bring it up on their agenda (or Sinead has not been contacted to present). We will have to reach out to CAD to find out where it stands.
- Two open items carried over:
  1. Can we put something in the handbook to allow sharing of mid-probationary review docs with college review committees, so adding a sentence that mid-probationary reviews are shared with review committees? It is an easy ask, but formalizing the

process would prevent a chair or dean from withholding the information (there is currently nothing that prevents or requires).

2. Also working on revisions to sabbatical policy
- If there are issues have faculty contact Sinead, so we can be proactive in terms of needs and revisions and can take before CAD.
  - Bylaws were shared on screen, and we discussed clarification of language (i.e. meaning of “at large”), as well as editing the document by way of sending suggestions to Beth so we can discuss them in senate.

### **Reports from University Committees**

- None

### **Reports from Caucus Leaders:**

- None

### **Reports from University Committees:**

- None

### **New Business:**

- AVP student enrollment mgmt., Matthew Cox, had a meeting with Donna. He wanted to know our concerns: ex. enrollment up and when down impacts our salaries (and possibly positions)—so we have asked to see the strategic plan. He is scheduled to come to our August meeting but could also meet with ExCom. He shared research he plans to apply here—based on a Gallup done several years ago—student relationships and mentorship in higher education. He wants to see whether we meet those measures toward improving enrollment, including relationships with faculty. What do we already do to build relationships and make contact and mentor students? If faculty are not comfortable with this, he will mentor faculty in how to mentor students, provide scripts, etc.,
- Process improvement committee—This existed in the past as a means for faculty to present ideas for making things flow better/more efficiently. Dr. Kent said we can start it back up, and that she will look into how to make that happen.
- AdHoc Committee on Bachelor of Applied Science—Sean Walker and Amanda Donaldson agreed to be on the committee and look at the MS State model. Ex. If someone goes to a 2 yr. in culinary arts, how can we get them here, accept credits, and turn it into a Bachelor of Applied Science in a related degree area?
- Simpson and Scarborough has been hired to help the University refresh our brand through research. Six of us will be in the research meeting. There are two meetings (May 22 & 23), because they want something by the end of the summer.

- Ombudsperson Report: 177 logged hours, 49 visits, notable trends: evaluative relationships, peer and college relationships, (see report for more information), evaluations, schedules, toxic work environment, enrollment, work load, lack of professionalism, interpersonal conflicts, etc. Recommendations: see report (there is a greater emphasis on stability).
- Question: Is discussing an issue you have with the ombudsperson is a precursor to filing a formal grievance. Do we know anyone who filed a grievance last year? It could be useful for the senate to see whether people are having to carry things to the next level or are the issues being solved through the ombudsperson.
- We only had one person nominated to the grievance pool (in the past Beth said she nominated three people). You do not have to be a senator to be nominated to the grievance pool.
- Christina-committee assignments (Susan sent these out), people got their number 1 & 2 choice typically. The goal is to get letters and official appointments sooner than last year.
- GenEd Committee-provost suggested that we reach out to Dr. Angela Coleman if we have questions—report of last meeting was sent out. Christine Rinne was unable to attend our meeting. They felt like there was a lack of interest in the committee. Phil Carr resigned as coordinator of the GenEd Committee, but he made a recommendation to determine vision and goals if they are to continue. The committee has disbanded as of now. We will reach out to see if Dr. Coleman can provide us a report. She can come to next plenary.
- Senate Bill 247—Divisive Concepts—Nick Lawkis will come to our August meeting to explain the bill in more detail. ExCom recommended a working group to start working on Q&A for the bill.

Meeting Adjournment: 3:55pm

Minutes transcribed by Susan Ferguson