

***Minutes of the November Session
of the Faculty Senate
Missouri State University***

The Faculty Senate held its October session on Thursday, November 10, 2005, in the Traywick Parliamentary Room, PSU 313. Chair Art Spisak called the session to order at 3:33 p.m. Dr. Eric Shade served as parliamentarian.

Substitutes: Scott Pierson for Mike Barnett, SGA.

Absences: John Bourhis, COM; Connie Claybough, LAB; Allison Crocker, Staff Senate representative; Ben Fuqua, AGR; Norm Griffith, Staff Senate representative; Charles Harvey, GSC; Susan Hinck, NUR; Kevin Hughes, A&D; Jerri Lynn Kyle, Lecturer representative, COM; Kandiah Manivannan, FCC chair, P&A; Norma McClellan, Rules Committee chair, MUS; Ralph Rice, PAS; Rhonda Ridinger, Secretary of the Faculty, HPE; Barbara Turpin, CGEIP chair, PSY; and Rod Williams, MIL.

Guests: Frank Einhellig, Provost's Office; Tammy Jahnke, Provost's Office; Lois Shufeldt, MKT; Kishor Shah, MTH; Skip Phelps, Provost's Office; Steve Bennaka, Student; Beat Kernnen, PLS; Roger Sell, Academic Development Center; Tyler Barnes, SGA; Linda Garrison-Kane, STE; Madeleine Kernnen, MCL; Cindy Pemberton, CHHS.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the October Senate session were approved as distributed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Chair Spisak announced the formation of the Committee on Student Fees. Dr. Dianne Strickland from Art & Design will chair the committee. Other members include: Don Aripoli, Student Affairs; Mike Barnett, SGA; Chuck Harvey, GSC; John Hoftyzer, ECO; John Satzinger, CIS; Lois Shufeldt, MKT; Art Spisak, Faculty Senate Chair; and Tom Wyrick, ECO.
2. A handout on the Veterans' Day activities was distributed outlining the November 11 events to be held on campus.
3. Senators were reminded that Senate resolutions must be received in the Faculty Senate office by 5 p.m. on the Tuesday of the week preceding the Senate meeting in order to be included on the Senate agenda.
4. The Higher Learning Commission's preliminary report was received yesterday. It recommended full 10-year accreditation. The final report and recommendation will be received in about 60 days. At the meeting, the Site Team Chair commented, "I'm not sure this University knows just how good it really is."

5. Chair Spisak announced there is a possible shortfall in Missouri's budget situation. According to an e-mail distributed by President Nietzel earlier today, higher education institutions have been asked by the Missouri Department of Higher Education to prepare contingency plans for core budget reductions of 10 to 12 percent. The e-mail linked to a story that was in the *Columbia Tribute*, which briefly explains the situation. Yesterday, the President called a meeting of the Administrative Council: both Diana Garland, chair of the Staff Senate, and Art Spisak, chair of the Faculty Senate, were included in the discussion and process of preparing a response to the Department of Higher Education. The President will provide some general information by this Friday's deadline, but the University's formulation will obviously be neither detailed nor complete. In the coming weeks, more specific plans will be developed, and the President has promised to keep the campus community informed.

At the same time, President Nietzel will be working with the Presidents and Chancellors of the state public four-year institutions to make a strong case that funding for higher education is too important to cut, even when budgets are difficult. His argument will be that "Higher education has a significant role to play in advancing the public good and in fueling economic development for Missouri," and hence "is key to Missouri's ability to compete and to progress." President Nietzel commented, "My hope is that we will not have to implement a budget reduction plan for Missouri State, but we need to be prepared."

6. Senator Kane announced that the Administrative Assessment will be distributed to faculty next week. He asked that Senators encourage their departmental faculty to complete the assessment as at least a 10 percent response rate is needed. Senator Wyrick clarified that the survey being distributed next week is for the departmental level. A parallel survey will be distributed at the college level at a later date.

RESOLUTION ON SUSPENSION OF DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR AND UNIVERSITY FELLOW

Senator Miller moved to suspend the rules to consider Item I on the agenda before Item C (seconded by Senator Wyrick). Her motion was approved by the required two-thirds vote. Senator Baggett moved and Senator Miller seconded the resolution endorsing continuation of the Distinguished Professor and University Fellow component of the Roles and Rewards plan for the current year (Attachment 3 to Senate agenda). Senator Baggett said it had been unilaterally decided to suspend the Distinguished Professor and University Fellow designations without consultation with the Faculty Senate or even the Compensation Committee and that the majority of the Senate is vehemently opposed to it. She was concerned that it was a violation of the *Faculty Handbook* and that the Senate was setting a precedence of allowing itself to be steamrolled.

Senator Miller spoke in support of the resolution, saying she felt the *Faculty Handbook* should not be unilaterally suspended as it would set a very bad precedence. The positions were budgeted for in last year's budget and are minimal cost items. Senator Wyrick also spoke in support of the resolution and mentioned that he has heard of other changes being made (e.g., sabbaticals and how search committees are chaired) without consultation of the Senate. Others speaking in support of the resolution were Drs. Satzinger, Shah, and Shufeldt. Skip Phelps pointed out that in the recent Budget and Priorities Committee survey 75 percent of the faculty had voted to suspend the current Roles and Rewards system. Thus, she didn't feel this was a unilateral decision. After more discussion, the motion to approve the resolution passed by voice vote. It will go forward as **Senate Resolution 6-05/06**.

REPORT FROM ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Dr. Roger Sell, director of the Academic Development Center, gave a brief report on the Academic Development Center. According to Dr. Sell, one-third of faculty participated in one or more of the ADC events during 2004-05. An ADC brochure and “Report of the Academic Development Center for 2004-05” were distributed to Senators.

NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN OZARK STUDIES

Senator Smith moved and Senator Wyrick seconded a motion to approve the new Graduate Certificate in Ozark Studies. According to Dr. Hoftyzer, Budget & Priorities Committee chair, his committee saw no problems with the certificate and endorsed its approval. After discussion, the above motion was approved by voice vote. It will go forward as **Senate Action 3-05/06**.

REPORT FROM PROVOST SEARCH COMMITTEE

Dr. Madeleine Kernan, co-chair of the Provost Search Committee, gave a report on the Committee’s progress. The deadline for receipt of applications is December 9. To date, 17 applications have been received. The Committee hopes to narrow the applications down to 4-6 names by January 20. Interviews will be conducted in February with an offer to be made in March. Committee membership is listed at <http://www.missouristate.edu/President/committees/provost.htm>.

Dr. Shah questioned whether the Provost position would be weaker than it used to be because the international component was being led by Vice President Baker instead of the Provost. Dr. Kernan said she thought it would ultimately be under the purview of the Provost.

REPORT FROM COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

Associate Provost Skip Phelps, chair of the Compensation Committee, reported that the subcommittee working to develop the new faculty compensation plan is trying to keep the new plan as simple as possible. So far not much very specific progress has been made, but an all-day subcommittee retreat is to be held this Saturday and she is hopeful the subcommittee will be able to put together something then. One consensus point the committee has is that merit pay should become a part of the base salary. A faculty “brown bag” meeting to discuss what kind of compensation system the University should adopt for faculty is being held on November 16 from 12-1 p.m. in PSU 313. Faculty may also submit comments and suggestions for the Compensation Committee at <http://www.missouristate.edu/President/committees/compensation.htm> (click on the Online Comment Form). The Committee has been asked to report by December 15.

REPORT FROM TASK FORCE ON MISSOURI STATE FUTURES

Provost Frank Einhellig, chair of the Task Force on Missouri State Futures, gave an update on the status of the Committee. The Committee continues to refine the clusters, and one of the biggest issues for the committee to decide is how broad or how narrow an embracement to have. Meetings in which faculty can provide feedback have been set for November 28 at 3:30 p.m. in Karls 101 and November 29 at 3:30 p.m. in Karls 102. Further information can be found at <http://www.missouristate.edu/President/committees/futures.htm>.

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PLUS/MINUS GRADING

Senator Wyrick moved and Senator Given seconded a motion to approve a resolution calling for the implementation of the plus/minus grading system which was originally passed by the Faculty Senate on May 8, 2003. Scott Pierson, vice president of SGA, spoke against the resolution, saying students feel the system hurts their ability to keep their scholarships and that they are not rewarded for excelling (can't get an A+). He felt the plus/minus system would actually take away some students who had planned to come to MSU.

Senator Herr remarked that he had just come from a university who had a plus/minus grading system, and he was of the opinion that the grades tend to balance out about evenly with either system. His department was unanimous in supporting the plus/minus system. Senator Windborne added that her department also was in favor of the resolution. Senator Satzinger moved the previous question (seconded by Senator Wyrick). By voice vote, the motion to move the previous question passed. Also by voice vote, the motion to approve the above resolution passed. It will go forward as **Senate Resolution 7-05/06**.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS - There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting will be on Thursday, December 8, in the Traywick Parliamentary Room, PSU 313.

Marvel Maunder
Substituting for Rhonda Ridinger
Secretary of the Faculty

Senate Action 3-05/06

Adopted by Senate on November 10, 2005

Right of Challenge Expires December 8, 2005

New Graduate Certificate in Ozark Studies

A complete copy of the above curricular proposal can be viewed in the Faculty Senate office.

Senate Resolution Regarding the Endorsement of the Designations of Distinguished Professor and University Fellow for the Current Academic Year

WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate of MSU endorsed the Roles and Rewards plan in 1996 and recently voted to support its continuation for the current academic year; and

WHEREAS, the Roles and Rewards plan includes the designations of Distinguished Professor and University Fellow to be bestowed upon the most exemplary faculty members of MSU; and

WHEREAS, the suspension of the Distinguished Professor and University Fellow portion of the Roles and Rewards plan was recently announced without consultation with the Faculty Senate, even though the application deadline for such honors had already been published;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate of MSU endorses the continuation of the Distinguished Professor and University Fellow component of the Roles and Rewards plan for the current academic year and urges the Administration to extend the application deadline to accommodate this endorsement.

Senate Resolution Calling for the Implementation of Plus/Minus Grading

WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate of MSU studied, debated, and passed a Resolution supporting the implementation of Plus/Minus Grading May 8, 2003; and

WHEREAS, the reasonable concern of students that Plus/Minus Grading might lower student GPAs (e.g., “You can get an F but not an A+ ”) can be addressed in a judicious manner that does not lower student GPAs (refer to the attachment, where the practice of the current grading system is maintained by awarding the maximum of 4 grade points for an A, 3 grade points for a B, 2 grade points for a C, and 1 grade point for a D); and

WHEREAS, the implementation of Plus/Minus Grading would more accurately describe the performance of students, both within the academic community and to potential employers; and

WHEREAS, the opportunity to earn slightly more grade points without having to improve their performance by a full letter grade would provide greater incentive to students than the present grading system; and

WHEREAS, the opportunity to earn slightly fewer grade points without having their grade lowered by a full letter would be less punitive to students with disappointing performance than the present grading system; and

WHEREAS, Plus/Minus Grading would be a more fair and equitable system for students with superior class achievement, whose accomplishments would be more accurately depicted than they are under the present system; and

WHEREAS, President Nietzel has on numerous occasions encouraged the MSU faculty to challenge students and adopt practices that would improve their performance;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate of MSU endorses the implementation of Plus/Minus Grading at the earliest possible moment that academic computing services and the MSU Records Office can accommodate the change in grade reports, official transcripts, and other reporting practices, and calls upon the Provost to advocate and otherwise promote this change frequently and enthusiastically.

Grade Points and GPA Under A Plus/Minus Grading System

(per the Senate Action of May 8, 2003)

Letter Grade Grade Points / GPA

A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
D-	0.7
F	0.0