

***Minutes of the February Session
of the Faculty Senate
Southwest Missouri State University***

The Faculty Senate held its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, February 12, 2004, in Plaster Student Union 313. Chair Jim Giglio called the session to order at 3:32 p.m. Dr. Ralph Smith served as parliamentarian.

Substitutes: Dan Peterson for Sam Dyer, COM; Kishor Shah for Paula Kemp, MTH; Melanie Grand for Marvel Maunder, CFS; Art Spisak for Pauline Nugent, Associate Professor rank representative; James Woodland for Cynthia Winstead, T&D; and Rose Utley for Sue Yarbrough, NUR.

Absences: Dwaine Crigger, A&D; Charles Facer, LAB; Mary Ann Jennings, SWK; Tom Tomasi, Graduate Council chair; Pat Van Velsor, COU; Rafiel Warfield, SGA; and Rod Williams, MIL.

Guests: Kim Bell, Records & Registration; Linda Johnson, Records & Registration; Rex Cammack, GGP; Brett Grassmuck, The Standard; Victor Matthews, CHPA; Skip Phelps, Academic Affairs; Howard Berriman, Human Resources; Mary Routh, Human Resources; Scott Amos, Industrial Management; and John Chuchiak, HST.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 15 and 20 Senate meetings were approved as distributed.

Announcements

1. Mr. Howard Berriman, assistant director of human resources, reported on dental insurance plan recommendations recently sent to Administration from the Fringe Benefits Committee. The Committee reviewed proposals from five different insurance companies but decided to remain self-insured because the level of benefits offered by the companies was not comparable to the benefits SMS has today and the prices charged were out of range. The Committee recommended the University continue to pay for an employee dental plan that covers preventative dental checkups with cleaning and X-rays, if needed, two times per year with no deductible, the employee to pay 20 percent of the cost. In addition, the employee could elect to purchase comprehensive-level dental insurance with all the benefits currently available in the dental insurance plan for \$16.16 per month. Three different levels of family coverage would also be offered—~~for~~ spouse only, for child or children, or for spouse and children. The three different levels could be purchased at different costs for preventative visits only or at the comprehensive level.
2. On February 2 and 3, Lois Shufeldt, Rhonda Ridinger, and Jim Giglio attended the Missouri Association of Faculty Senates (MAFS) meeting in Jefferson City. The SMSU Senate resolution calling for a statewide faculty effort to advance the cause of and funding for public education in Missouri was well received. That resolution will be distributed to the member schools as a MAFS resolution and discussed and voted on at the October meeting. They also heard an address from State Senator Sarah Steelman (Rolla) and Robert Stein of the Coordinating Board of Higher Education and visited with four legislators from our area, all of whom were Republicans. Their belief is that we have no revenue problem (Rep. Roy Holand is an exception) and that further cuts

in the state budget can be justified. But they are projecting a flat budget for higher education for FY05 (Rep. Mark Wright even suggested a slight increase). The funding priorities seem to be elementary and secondary education at the top, followed by higher education, and then social services.

3. Next month the Senate Executive Committee will present to the Senate two nominees for the position of Faculty Senate Chairperson-elect and two nominees for the office of Secretary of the Faculty. Of course, you are encouraged to make nominations from the floor. The election will occur at the April meeting. Beforehand, a forum will be held on Tuesday, March 30, at 3:30 p.m., Karls 102. All faculty would be invited to attend. The intent of the forum is to hear the views of the candidates as well as to ask questions “on a variety of issues concerning the faculty and university.” Each candidate will also provide a statement of purpose to the Faculty Senate office by the morning of March 29th so that it could be distributed to the Faculty Senate electronically before the March 30th forum. Last year the Faculty Senate passed a resolution approving the above procedure prior to the selection of last year’s Senate Chairperson-elect.
4. Although no Board of Governors member is our guest today, Phyllis Washington agreed to appear at the March meeting and Michael Duggan at the May meeting. Chair Giglio is still working on the April meeting.
5. Chair Giglio said he hoped everyone had received *The Voice*. If not, Virginia Nelson of the Faculty Senate office has additional copies available. The Executive Committee hopes to provide the next issue sometime in May.

Report from the Academic Relations Committee

Senator Burns moved for approval of a Senate action from the Academic Relations Committee (seconded by Senator Garrison-Kane). Dr. Reed Olsen, chair of the Academic Relations Committee, presented the action on the redefining of letter grades which would put new wording in effect until the university implements a +/- grading system (see Attachment 1 to the Senate agenda). At present, the +/- grading system is on a priority list with several major projects slated for completion ahead of its implementation. Senator Baggett moved (seconded by Senator Buckner) to amend the wording for the “A” grade to read, “Excellent work. Performance was clearly outstanding.” By voice vote, the amendment was approved. Senator Burns moved (seconded by Senator Woodall) to amend wording for the “D” grade to read, “Passing work. Performance minimally met course requirements.” By a show of hands, the amendment passed 20-13. The main motion was approved by voice vote. It will go forward as **Senate Action 10-03/04**.

New Accelerated Masters Program for the Master of Science in Geospatial Sciences in Geography and Geology

Senator Mickus moved for approval of the new accelerated masters program for the master of science in Geospatial Sciences in Geography and Geology (seconded by Senator Richter). Dr. Rex Cammack answered questions from senators concerning the new accelerated program. Dr. Ridinger, chair of Budget & Priorities Committee, indicated no appreciable costs were associated with the program. After discussion, the motion passed by voice vote. It will go forward as **Senate Action 11-03/04**.

New Minor in Latin American Studies

Senator Baggett moved for approval of the new minor in Latin American Studies (seconded by Senator Mazzella). Dr. John Chuchiak answered questions from senators concerning the new minor. Dr. Ridinger, chair of the Budget & Priorities Committee, indicated no appreciable costs were associated with the minor. Senator Buckner pointed out that an asterisk was not needed after SOC 336, and several editorial changes were suggested in the names and degrees of participating faculty. After discussion, the motion passed by voice vote. It will go forward as **Senate Action 12-03/04**.

New Graduate Certificate in Technology Management

Senator Drake moved for approval of the new graduate certificate in Technology Management (seconded by Senator Byrd). No appreciable costs were associated with the certificate. After discussion, the motion passed by voice vote. It will go forward as **Senate Action 13-03/04**.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

Senator Wyrick moved a resolution on salary increases for 2004-2005 (seconded by Senator Woodall). He said the proposed \$960 one-time payment would represent a 1.8 percent increase for the average faculty member. Never before have faculty received a one-time raise, and by doing so, Senator Wyrick said it would break the rules set forth in the *Faculty Handbook* and *Faculty Roles and Rewards* document. Senator Shufeldt remarked that the Staff Senate had voted unanimously with one abstention to oppose the \$960 one-time payment because the money does not go into the base pay.

When asked for his opinion, Senate Chair Giglio stated he strongly supported the resolution as he does not want a precedent to be set regarding one-time payments. Whatever amount faculty receive should be attached to the base. He also stated dental benefits should not come at the expense of salaries. Chair Giglio said if the resolution passed, he would use it as leverage in conversations with President Keiser and in other ways to seek the attention of Administration, but he would not present it to the Board of Governors in February because he felt he should not take salary issues to the Board every month.

Budget & Priorities Chair Ridinger said it would make it much easier for her committee in budget discussions if the next to last "Whereas" paragraph on the first page of the resolution referencing a different percentage of salary for faculty than for staff was struck. Senator Burns moved her suggestion as an amendment (seconded by Senator Wyrick), and the motion to amend passed. After more discussion, Senator Shade moved the previous question; the motion passed. The main motion was also approved unanimously by voice vote. It will go forward **Senate Resolution 15-03/04**.

Discussion

Chair Giglio indicated that he will take the sexual orientation resolution the Faculty Senate passed in the fall to the March Board of Governors meeting. He didn't want it to be charged that the Faculty

Senate had any affect on the name change bill, so he has purposely waited for a decision on that issue before taking the resolution to the Board.

A draft of the new *Student Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures* document was distributed to Senate members as information. Discussion on the document will take place at the March Faculty Senate meeting.

Senator Burns spoke concerning what he feels are serious gaps in due process procedures for teaching assistants. Recently two teaching assistants were removed from their appointments, and since they are not considered faculty, they were not covered by the process outlined in the *Faculty Handbook*. He suggested Senate members provide any input they may have to the Graduate Council. Chair Giglio remarked that the current guidelines for Teaching Assistants may need to be reviewed.

Senator Richter spoke concerning the issue of the University still using social security numbers as employee/student numbers in light of serious problems with identity theft. Chair Giglio suggested he bring a resolution to that effect to the March Senate meeting. Kim Bell informed Senate members that the project had already been put on the Computer Services' priority list (ahead of the +/- issue). Senator Wyrick suggested the resolution should urge that the project be expedited.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting will be held on Thursday, March 11, at 3:30 p.m. in Plaster Student Union 313.

Robert E. Thurman
Secretary of the Faculty

Right of Challenge Expires March 10, 2004

Senate Action on Definitions of Grades

Whereas, The Faculty Senate passed a Senate action last year recommending that the university move to a +/- grading system; and

Whereas, That Senate action included revisions to grade definitions; and

Whereas, The SMSU administration has agreed in principle to implement +/- grading when possible in the future; and

Whereas, In the interim grade definitions at SMSU remain inadequate; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the definitions of grades at SMSU be revised as follows (new wording underlined, old wording struck out):

- A (4) = Excellent work. Performance was clearly outstanding.
- B (3) = ~~Superior Work.~~ Very good work. Performance was clearly above satisfactory.
- C (2) = Satisfactory work. Performance was adequate and clearly above the minimum passing work.
- D (1) = ~~Minimum~~ Passing work. Performance minimally met course requirements.
- F (0) = Failed - no credit. Performance was not at a level worthy of credit.

Senate Action 11-03/04

Adopted by Senate on February 12, 2004

Right of Challenge Expires March 10, 2004

***New Accelerated Masters Program for the Master of Science
in Geospatial Sciences in Geography and Geology***

See 2003/04 curricular proposals in the Senate office.

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Resolution on Salary Increases for 2004-2005

Whereas, The SMSU administration's December 2003 budget plans reflected an anticipated 10% appropriations cut and a 2% salary increase for FY2005, its most recent budget plans (January 26, 2004) surprisingly call for *a smaller one-time \$960 payment* to all employees (about 1.8% for the average faculty member) even if SMSU's FY05 State *appropriation is maintained* at its prior-year level instead of experiencing a 10% cut; and

Whereas, One justification provided by the administration for a one-time \$960 payment in lieu of a regular increase in the salary base is *uncertainty about future appropriations*, reliable reports emerging from Jefferson City in recent weeks strongly suggest that SMSU will receive approximately the same State appropriation in FY05 that it received in FY04, while SMSU will certainly generate more tuition revenue in FY05 than in FY04, and *both appropriations and tuition revenues are likely to increase in coming years* due to improving economic conditions, higher tuition prices and demographically driven enrollment increases; and

Whereas, The other justification for a single payment of only \$960 per employee is *the need to build up SMSU's reserve accounts*, much of SMSU's need for reserves exists because over the past decade, policy makers have intentionally not preserved reserves for unexpected, high-priority outlays or to cushion unpredictable revenue shortfalls, but have instead expended reserves when ordinary construction projects (Physical Therapy Building, Forsythe Athletics Facility) or capital acquisitions (KOZK) lacked funding but top officials were determined to proceed anyway; yet, because the Faculty Senate has warned in previous resolutions and reports of the risks that such policies pose to SMSU's academic program and faculty salaries, it is now understandably concerned that reserve accounts replenished with salary dollars may yet again be used to launch expensive unfunded initiatives; and

Whereas, Salary increases at SMSU have for more than 30 years—in good times and in bad—consisted of additions to the employee's base salary, *the administration's sudden and rare decision to distribute one-time payments* in lieu of regular raises is a signal that pre-exigency conditions prevail at this University and that other pre-exigency policies (i.e., significant cuts in nonacademic spending) should also be implemented; and

Whereas, The distribution of one-time \$960 payments will offset the impact of recent inflation for only the coming year (2004), it follows that *inflation-adjusted salaries at SMSU will be \$960 lower in 2005 and subsequent years* than in 2004, even if the Consumer Price Index remains unchanged at today's level; and

Whereas, The Consumer Price Index rose by 1.9% between December 2002 and December 2003, while section 2.10.1.3 of the *Faculty Handbook* states that “In any year when faculty salary moneys are allocated for distribution, the minimum percentage increase for an individual faculty member . . . shall not be less than the smaller of (1) the increase in the cost of living index . . . increase for the preceding year or (2) a percentage increase equal to three-fourths” of the pool of dollars available for salaries, the *Faculty Handbook* indicates a minimum payment for 2004 equal to 1.3% of salary for each faculty member rather than equal dollar payments; and

Whereas, Adequate funds also exist in the salary pool to provide *market adjustments* averaging at least 0.5% of current salaries to help move “the average faculty salary [at SMSU] to the average of all faculty salaries at comparable public, comprehensive universities” as prescribed by section 2.10.1 of the *Faculty Handbook* and spelled out in greater detail by the Roles and Rewards plan; and

Whereas, SMSU administrators commonly refer to the *Faculty Handbook* as the faculty member’s *contract* with the University, and the terms of the *Faculty Handbook* have been formally agreed to by the President, the Faculty Senate and SMSU’s Board of Governors, while the Roles and Rewards plan for faculty salaries was developed by a presidential commission and later endorsed by President Keiser and the Faculty Senate;

Therefore be it resolved, That average salaries for faculty continuing in the same rank for 2004-2005 should increase by 3% if SMSU’s FY05 appropriation is at least 95% of its FY04 appropriation and 2% otherwise, that any salary increase should be added to each faculty member’s base salary, and that salary dollars should be distributed as prescribed by rules in the *Faculty Handbook* and the Roles and Rewards plan, instead of equal dollar amounts for all faculty or other *ad hoc* approaches.