

Missouri State University Faculty Senate Report to MSU Board of Governors

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Leadership Platform of Current Chair: Clarify faculty voice in university decision making.

2017-18 Ad Hoc Committees of the Faculty Senate

1. ad hoc Committee on Personnel Hiring Trends

Rationale and Background. The Faculty Senate committee on University Budget and Priorities has produced two five-year reports on personnel hiring trends that show ranked faculty numbers to be losing ground relative to student enrollment and all other personnel categories.

Purpose of ad hoc Committee. The ad hoc Committee on Personnel Hiring Trends, in collaboration with the president's office, will investigate the proportion of university personnel utilized employed during the past 15 years. The questions for the committee to answer are: Is the university employing appropriate numbers of ranked faculty? Are there personnel areas where dollars should be redirected to invest in ranked faculty? If so, which areas?

Deadline for Report. January session of Faculty Senate

2. Ad hoc Committee on Policy Review

Rationale and Background. During the 2016-2017 academic year, an ad hoc Committee on the Policy Library recommended the formation of a standing committee of Faculty Senate. During the 2017-2018 academic year the Rules committee will be reviewing this committee for inclusion in the Faculty Bylaws. In the interim, this committee will be formed as ad hoc.

Purpose of Committee on Policy Review. As per the resolution from last year's ad hoc Committee on the Policy Library, the Committee on Policy Review:

- Shall meet up to twice monthly to discuss pending policies under consideration by university leadership and to review current content in the university Policy Library.
- Shall identify current and emerging content in the university Policy Library (excluding the *Faculty Handbook*) that should be reviewed by the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee or warrants further review by the faculty.
- Shall prepare and present periodic reports with recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding policies being referred to the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee, pending operating policies (OP) under consideration by university leadership, and other Policy Library content that should be further reviewed by the faculty.

3. Ad hoc Committee on 120-Hour Graduation Requirement

Rationale and Background. Nationwide, as state appropriations have declined, the burden of college costs has been shifted increasingly on students through tuition increases. Affordability of a college

education has, consequently, been a pressing issue for universities to consider in various aspects of their requirements and costs. Many public universities require 120 hours for an undergraduate degree; Missouri State University requires 125. Changing the minimum graduation requirement is consistent with the university's focus on affordability, which aligns with the action plan goal of increasing graduation rates.

Purpose of ad hoc Committee. The ad hoc Committee on the 120-Hour Graduation Requirement will investigate the appropriateness and feasibility of changing the MSU minimum undergraduate graduation requirement from 125 hours to 120. The question for the committee to answer is: *Should MSU reduce the minimum graduation requirement for a bachelor's degree from 125 to 120 hours? If so, under what conditions should this change be implemented?*

Deadline for Report. December session of Faculty Senate

Other Faculty Senate Activity

Successful incorporation of an action plan item to improve the faculty-student ratio, which has been worsening for several years as enrollment grows but faculty numbers remain stagnant.

Parliamentarian Education to Senate. The Parliamentarian provided a handout and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of members of the Senate including the use of Resolutions and Senate Actions.

Missouri Association of Faculty Senates (MAFS) Tuition Exchange Proposal. The Committee on Faculty Benefits presented a Resolution in support of this proposal. President Smart followed-up with the other university presidents.

Stabilize engagement in MAFS by having Chair and Chair-elect attend MAFS twice a year. This includes reallocation of money in the senate budget to support travel and registration.

Sustaining First Generation College Students Conference. This inaugural event at MSU and was attended by faculty, staff, and students from five states and over 30 universities and organizations. The Chair of Faculty Senate, MSU President, and Commissioner of Higher Education were closing speakers.

Summer Schedule. A group of faculty, staff, and administrators is examining the possibility of moving from an 8-week summer schedule to a longer summer schedule. In addition to a longer session there would also be a greater variety of smaller sessions than the current 8-week model.

Textbook Affordability and Accessibility. Another work group is looking at ways to improve the affordability of textbooks for students while also improving the accessibility of instructional materials.

Curricular Work Group: A large work group is working to resolve various issues with the online curricular workflow system, initiated two years ago.

Leadership Lunches. The leadership of faculty, staff, and students has begun meeting monthly for lunch. This group includes the chair and chair-elect of Faculty Senate, the chair and chair-elect of Staff Senate, and the president and vice-president of the Student Government Association.