

Missouri State University Faculty Senate Report to MSU Board of Governors

December 10, 2020

Cameron Wickham, Chair of Faculty Senate 2020-2021; cwickham@missouristate.edu

Faculty Senate Activity Since Last Report

Senate Action Summary 2020-2021 to date. To date, 23 Senate actions on curriculum have been considered by the Faculty Senate during the 2020/2021 academic year. All received Senate approval. Among these actions are 12 new programs, 2 of them interdisciplinary.

Proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook. The Faculty Handbook Revision Committee brought proposed inclusive, gender-neutral language edits of the Faculty Handbook to the Faculty Senate at the October 2020 session. This was a thorough look at the entire document done by Tracy Dalton, Senior Instructor in the Department of English (thank you Tracy!). The senators were given a month to look over the changes and voted to approve them at the November 2020 session.

Findings of the Committee on University Budget and Priorities. In my last report, I wrote about changes made to the purpose and membership of the Committee on University Budget and Priorities. To build on the success of the 2017-18 ad hoc Committee on Personnel Hiring Trends the Faculty Senate found a desire to see a comparable report be done every five years, with minor updates annually. The Faculty Senate also agreed that the existing report-card structure is useful but could be streamlined to focus largely on faculty salaries, especially given that the larger five-year report focuses on hiring trends. The idea of a report card is to proactively provide faculty with information that is both pertinent and easy to understand. The B&P committee released their first report card for the December 2020 Faculty Senate session (see attached). The report summarizes faculty salaries compared to CUPA averages and medians and the number of equity adjustments given in the previous year. Following are some of their findings and observations.

- MSU average salaries for ranked and unranked faculty are below CUPA averages. The salary difference tends to be greater for unranked faculty than ranked faculty.
- MSU mean salaries for ranked faculty follow the CUPA trend across all academic years except 2019-20. In 2019-20, the CUPA mean salary (across all ranks) dropped by 1%, while MSU mean salary (across all ranks) increased by 2.3%. This is probably driven by the increase in Professors' and Associate Professors' mean salaries during the same period. For the unranked faculty, the overall MSU means have followed the trend in overall CUPA means.
- The mean salary of MSU unranked faculty is steadily falling behind the CUPA mean. During 2015-16 to 2019-20, this difference increased from 10.6% to 14%.
- For the ranked faculty, MSU's overall mean salary is 3.4% below the CUPA overall mean in the academic year 2019-20.
- Average salary data is available for new ranked Assistant Professors for the Fall of 2015 through the Spring of 2018. MSU average salaries were lower than CUPA averages for two of the three years.
- MSU median salaries for ranked and unranked faculty are below CUPA medians.

In my last report I noted that the Faculty Senate approved two Senate Actions from the Committee on Faculty Benefits, one of which spoke to salary and equity adjustments. Neither received approval by the Provost or the President. While I understand their reasoning, faculty remain concerned about salaries continuing to stay below CUPA averages. I commend the focus of the administration and the Board of

Governors on raising salaries overall, and very much appreciate the across-the-board raise given to employees in such a fiscally challenging year. I urge all to continue to look for ways to help ameliorate these salary discrepancies.

Leadership Lunches. The leadership of faculty, staff, and students continues to meet for virtual “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.