

Missouri State University Faculty Senate Report to MSU Board of Governors

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Faculty Senate Activity Since Last Report

Senate Action Summary 2019-2020. Seventy-seven Senate actions were considered by the Faculty Senate during the 2019/20 academic year and all received administrative approval. Among these actions are 61 new programs, 8 of them interdisciplinary.

Changes to the Council of General Education and Intercollegiate Programs (CGEIP). CGEIP is responsible for reviewing the general education program and recommending changes. During the of Spring 2019, CGEIP reviewed the current system for evaluating general education courses and discussed possible improvements. The Council determined that to better assess the general education courses, focus should be on General Goals rather than on Student Learning Outcomes. Such a focus would allow general education faculty more flexibility in how they evaluate how their courses contribute to General Education. Review periods would also be biennial rather than the annual reviews plus periodic reviews. CGEIP proposed that it review Public Affairs and Natural World in 2019-2020, and Foundations and Breadth of Knowledge (Arts / Human Cultures / Humanities) during the next academic year. The proposed changes do not fundamentally change the nature of MSU's general education program. With the consent of Senate, CGEIP carried out a pilot program for reviewing general education classes in this manner. Response to the altered evaluation process was received well by both the course coordinators providing reports and by CGEIP members participating in report reviewing. At the February session the Senate granted CGEIP permission to continue the pilot program for the 2020 – 2021 academic year and revise Senate documents relating to the General Education program to implement the changes. We are excited to have a richer, more meaningful assessment of the program.

Changes to the Committee on University Budget and Priorities. During 2019-2020, the Rules Committee reviewed the purpose and membership of the Committee on University Budget and priorities. Given that the Budget & Priorities Committee reflects a time that predates the cost-center model long used by the university, the Rules Committee believed that the Committee on University Budget & Priorities' purpose could be clarified and updated. To build on the success of the 2017-18 ad hoc Committee on Personnel Hiring Trends the Rules Committee found a desire to see a comparable report be done every five years, with minor updates annually. The Rules Committee also concluded 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.

Given the lack of merit pay and the fact that annual raises in recent years have frequently been at or below the rate of inflation, equity adjustments have become a key issue related to budgets, priorities, and compensation. Accordingly, the committee strongly believed that tracking equity adjustments is of the utmost importance and should be included in the annual report card on faculty compensation.

The Faculty Senate approved these changes to the purpose of University Budget & Priorities, and also to have the university's CFO and a staff member from institutional Research serve as ex officio members on the committee.

Leadership Lunches. The leadership of faculty, staff, and students continues to meet monthly 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.

Faculty Senate Resolutions

A. Faculty Senate Resolution on Changes to the Charges of the Committee on Faculty Benefits
[Adopted at the September 2020 session of the Faculty Senate; Recommended by Committee on Faculty Benefits]

Be it Resolved that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee charge the Rules Committee to make appropriate changes to the charges of the Committee on Benefits, especially in reducing how often the Committee on Benefits is charged to present a report on comparative benefits at other universities and on results from the Faculty Morale Survey.

Faculty Senate Actions

A. Faculty Senate Action on Salary and Equity Benefits
[Adopted at the September 2020 session of the Faculty Senate; Recommended by Committee on Faculty Benefits]

Be it Resolved that salary and equity adjustments for faculty and administrators will no longer be drawn from the same pool of money available for raises. Rather, the total money allocated for raises and especially equity adjustments will be split into separate pools for faculty and administrators based upon their proportion of the total salary budget at MSU or at the appropriate cost center.

This would imply, for example, that if \$1 million dollars were allocated for salary and equity adjustments and faculty salaries represented 55 percent of the salary budget while administrators’ salaries represented 8 percent of the salary budget in a cost center. The total money available for faculty raises and equity adjustments would equal \$550,000 while the total money available for administrator raises and equity adjustments would equal \$80,000.

Be it Further Resolved that College Deans will no longer have sole decision-making ability as to the allocation of equity adjustments within their college. Rather, the College personnel committee will weigh in with recommendations of all equity adjustments including for both faculty and administrators.

B. Faculty Senate Action on Dental Benefits
[Adopted at the September 2020 session of the Faculty Senate; Recommended by Committee on Faculty Benefits]

Be it Resolved that MSU will increase the annual maximum coverage from \$1,000 to \$3,000 and

Be it Further Resolved that MSU will cover preventative services at 100% with no deductible and

Be it Further Resolved that MSU will cover both orthodontia and dental implants at 50 percent with a \$50 deductible.