

## Minutes of the January Session of the Faculty Senate

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The Faculty Senate held the January session on Thursday, January 18, 2024, in PSU 313. Chair Beth Walker called the session to order at 3:30 p.m. Mike Hudson served as parliamentarian.

Substitutes: None.

Absences: Judith Martinez, Asst. Prof. Rep; Christopher Collins, COM; Holly Holladay, MJF; Jenifer Roberts, MFD; Alex Hamwi, MK; Richard Belshoff, MA; Bonnie Slavych, CSD; and Brooke Whisenhunt, PSY; Adam McGee, AS.

Guests: Katrina Chavez, Registrar's Office; Angela Young, Registrar's Office; Amber Abernathy, Graduate Council; Ken Brown, Office of the Provost; and David Hall, University Safety.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The December minutes were approved as posted.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. If necessary, a carry-over meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 23, at 3:30 p.m. (location TBD).

### DISCUSSION ON CUPA

Kenneth Brown, Chief Academic Strategy Officer, discussed CUPA data, guidelines, rules, and system updates. Dr. Brown answered questions from the Senate.

### PRESENTATION ON UNIVERSITY SAFETY

David Hall, Director of University Safety, reviewed the areas under the department, the University Safety website, crime log, and recent cases. Mr. Hall answered questions from the Senate.

### ACTION ON CURRICULAR PROPOSALS

New Program: **African & African American Studies Undergraduate Certificate**

Moved by Senator Sarah Mellors/History

**APPROVED: SA 23-23/24**

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Action on Ombudsperson.

Mike Foster made a motion to add the following as the last "whereas" paragraph:

**Whereas the appointment of a truly impartial Ombudsperson will contribute significantly to fostering a harmonious and productive academic environment for all members of MSU.**

The motion to amend passed.

**The Action passes.**

**SA 24-23/24**

### NEW BUSINESS

Mike Hudson led a discussion on the ending of Stream.

The Senate discussed and expressed concerns on the inclement weather policy.

Chair Walker shared with the Senate the great discussion with the Presidential Search Committee.

### ADJOURNMENT

Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Melinda Novik  
Secretary of the Faculty

**Senate Action 23-23/24**

**Adopted by Senate on January 18, 2024**

Faculty Senate Chair Must Be Notified of Intent to Challenge By: January 27, 2024  
Right of Challenge Expires February 11, 2024

**New Program: African American Studies Undergraduate Certificate**

**Senate Action 24-23/24**

**Adopted by Senate on January 18, 2024**

Faculty Senate Chair Must Be Notified of Intent to Challenge By: January 27, 2024  
Right of Challenge Expires February 11, 2024

**Senate Action on Appointment of an Impartial Ombudsperson**

**Whereas** we, the faculty, acknowledge the importance of having an Ombudsperson to address grievances and conflicts within our academic community; and

**Whereas** the current arrangement, in which the Dean of the Graduate College concurrently serves as the Ombudsperson and reports directly to the Provost, raises significant questions about impartiality; and

**Whereas** the role of an Ombudsperson is pivotal in ensuring fair and unbiased resolution of issues affecting faculty, students, and staff; and

**Whereas** impartiality is a fundamental principle of the Ombudsperson role, inspiring confidence that concerns will be handled objectively and without undue influence; and

**Whereas** the appointment of an Ombudsperson is independent of the administrative hierarchy to foster an environment of trust and transparency; and

**Whereas** an impartial Ombudsperson will be better equipped to address the diverse range of issues in our academic community, from faculty disputes to student concerns, without any perceived bias,

**Whereas** the appointment of a truly impartial Ombudsperson will contribute significantly to fostering a harmonious and productive academic environment for all members of MSU,

**Be it resolved** that the Faculty Senate of MSU requests the university administration to reconsider the current appointment of the Dean of the Graduate College as the Ombudsperson.

**Be it further resolved** that we urge the university administration to explore alternative non-administrator candidates, with approval of Faculty Senate, who can serve as an Ombudsperson with greater impartiality and dedication to resolving conflicts fairly.