



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, 9/3/2024

Time: 11:00am

Venue: Virtual/Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Dr. Candace Carter-Stevens, Dr. Zainul Abedin, Dr. Daniel Splaingard, Dr. Jocelyn Haley, Dr. Christine Campbell, Dr. Oko Elechi, Dr. Mary Shepherd, Dr. LaTonzia Evans, Dr. Latosha Ceasar, Dr. Theresa Rash, Dr. Julius Ikenga, Dr. Shelly Garlotte

AGENDA ITEM #1: OPENING

CALL TO ORDER and REMARKS; REVIEW OF MINUTES/APPROVAL; REVIEW AGENDA ITEMS/APPROVAL

The online/Zoom meeting was called to order at 11:00am.

Carter-Stevens asked about the minutes for approval, and Garlotte stated that she had not completed the minutes from the Full Faculty Meeting in April. The approval of minutes was tabled for a future meeting.

Carter-Stevens requested approval for the Agenda, and Agenda items were approved.

AGENDA ITEM #2: OLD BUSINESS

A. ACADEMIC CALENDAR (2024-2025)

Carter-Stevens notes that Academic Affairs seems to have aligned the 2024-2025 Academic Calendar to those of neighboring school systems. CCS requested additional concerns about the Academic Calendar. Splaingard asked if there had ever been two separate breaks, a Fall Break and a Thanksgiving Break, instead of them being combined as one break, noting this as a difference from local school systems. CCS stated she has only been aware of a single break, but she added that there used to be two “reading days” around exam times. Campbell added that Valley previously only had a Thanksgiving Break but after other schools instituted a Fall Break, Valley changed their terminology of the break. Splaingard admits that he was used to the schedule around Covid when the fall semester ended at Fall Break. Shepherd and Rash were able to confirm that Valley’s week-long break aligns with Alcorn and Jackson State respectively. No additional concerns were raised regarding the Academic Calendar. Rash inquired about our return date for the Spring semester. CCS stated that it was January 6, 2025 (her birthday).

B. FACULTY CONCERNS

1. Removal of “I” (Incomplete) Grades
2. Technology Infrastructure
3. Students’ Concerns (lost IDs, etc.)

OFFICE OF THE FACULTY SENATE

CCS emailed concerns to administration who forwarded concerns to proper departments. CCS received email responses and forwarded them to Faculty Senate members. CCS directed Senators to refer to those emails for responses from Mr. Loggins (Incomplete Grades), Mr. Shaw (Technology), and Student Affairs (Lost IDs, etc.). Rash requested that CCS resend responses to Senators. Ikenga later inquired what the issue with the “I” grades was, and CCS responded that the updated/changed grade; it was remaining an “I”.

C. FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS REVISIONS

1. Faculty Senate Review Deadline

2. Department Voting Deadline

CCS thanked everyone who submitted corrections for the Constitution and Bylaws. She added that they seem to be finalized. A new review deadline is needed, after which time CCS will forward the revisions to Senators. CCS adds that we are supposed to work with Academic Affairs towards aligning our document with University policies. CCS requested a deadline suggestion, with the reminder that our goal is to have the document adopted by the Full Faculty this (Fall) semester. Garlotte asked about having a Full Faculty meeting this semester, and CCS directed her to the Agenda bullet about the Fall 2024 Full Faculty Meeting. Shepherd suggested a review deadline by our next meeting on 10/1. Splaingard inquired about whether a sectional or full review should be done, and CCS responded that it is a full review at this point. CCS will forward the revised Constitution & Bylaws to Senators, Senators will forward it to department members, and any departmental concerns should be presented at the next Faculty Senate meeting on 10/1. After reviewing the revised Constitution & Bylaws, the deadline for departmental voting on acceptance or rejection of the document. Majority votes will determine whether the revised Constitution & Bylaws will be adopted. CCS requested a deadline suggestion for departmental voting. Garlotte inquired about the process after Senators fully review revised Constitution & Bylaws and department members vote. CCS offered that once the document is accepted and forwarded to the administration, it is considered adopted by the Full Faculty. In response to an inquiry from Splaingard, CCS explained that Senators should bring up Faculty Senate topics, such as Constitution & Bylaws document process, in department meetings.

Suggestions for dates for a Full Faculty meeting are 11/14 or 11/21. CCS will ask Administration and report back next meeting on 10/1.

AGENDA ITEM #3: NEW BUSINESS

A. FACULTY STANDING COMMITTEES

Carter-Stevens thanked everyone who agreed to be on a committee, adding that there were only fourteen responses from Faculty. CCS added that Academic Affairs will ask individuals who have served on committees previously to continue serving and will ask those who have not served to do so. No additional concerns were put forward.

B. FACULTY CONCERNS

1. Hiring Process – takes too long to hire new faculty and this is why we lose desirable faculty

CCS states that the President agreed to the issues of the hiring process.

2. Faculty Contracts – should be issued before leaving for summer

CCS states that the President agreed to the issues of the faculty contracts. CCS notes that they were issued earlier this year.

3. Grants Process – faculty member wanted to receive a grant but they were not currently on campus; a supporting letter was requested from Administration but faculty member was denied because they were not on campus at the moment; faculty member requested that the Administration letter be written with the stipulation of support upon return; faculty member is requesting that we have a grants process so that one individual will not be able to deny a supporting letter for a grant

4. Business and Finance Procedures – procedures do not operate effectively when someone is out, risking timely completion of grants and other financial- and business-related tasks

5. Faculty Parking – some departments sent requests for additional parking (Campbell and Abedin)

CCS forwarded the request to Facilities. Mr. Switzer emailed CCS requesting the desired locations for faculty parking signs.

C. UFSAM

Carter-Stevens informed Faculty Senate that recently, Jackson State University's President terminated their Faculty Senate President. There was no apparent reason for her termination. CCS speculated it was to prevent her vote of no confidence against JSU's Administration. USFAM wrote a letter of support to the President of JSU calling for her reinstatement.

D. FALL 2024 FULL FACULTY MEETING

Potential dates for the Full Faculty Meeting are 11/14 or 11/21. A definite date will be available at our next Faculty Senate meeting on 10/1.

(Zoom Meeting time expired. Some members returned.)

CCS mentioned that we will likely need to move from Zoom to Microsoft Teams for our meetings.

AGENDA ITEM #4: ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements, questions, or concerns were put forward.

AGENDA ITEM #5: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unofficially adjourned at ~11:35am.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Carter-Stevens will re-send faculty concern email responses to Senators.
2. Carter-Stevens will forward the revised Constitution & Bylaws to all Senators.
3. Revised Constitution & Bylaws should be: a.) forwarded to department members, requesting their concerns or issues; b.) fully reviewed by Senators. (Any concerns or issues should be communicated to Carter-Stevens by the review deadline of 10/1.)
4. Senators should forward fully revised Constitution & Bylaws to department members for voting on acceptance or rejection of document. Voting should occur in Senators' departmental meetings. Results of departmental voting should be brought to the 11/5 Faculty Senate meeting.
5. Carter-Stevens will inquire about a date for the Full Faculty meeting this semester and report back to the Senators.
6. Abedin and Campbell should communicate with Carter-Stevens regarding the specific placement of additional faculty parking signs.