



MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE
UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, 11/5/2024

Time: 11:00am

Venue: Virtual/Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Dr. Candace Carter-Stevens, Dr. Julius Ikenga, Mr. Daniel Splaingard, Dr. Theresa Rash, Dr. LaTosha Ceasar, Dr. Mary Shepherd, Dr. Oko Elechi, 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 11:02am.

Carter-Stevens requested approval of the Agenda, September meeting minutes, and October meeting minutes. All motions for approval were seconded, and all items were accepted.

AGENDA ITEM #2: OLD BUSINESS

A. FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS REVISIONS

Carter-Stevens reported that Fine Arts; Business Education; Mathematics, Computer & Information Sciences; and Natural Sciences have approved the Constitution & Bylaws Revisions. Rash stated that she was waiting for a response from two department members. Carter-Stevens requested results by the end of the week (11/8/2024) to be ready for the Full Faculty Meeting and to forward the document to Academic Affairs. Additionally, Carter-Stevens requests that documentation of departmental approval be sent to her as soon as possible.

B. FULL FACULTY MEETING

Carter-Stevens informed Senators that President Briggs has a conflict with the 11/21/2024 date, so the Full Faculty Meeting has been moved to Tuesday, 11/19/2024, at 11:00am in the Sutton Auditorium, Room 103.

Carter-Stevens requested agenda items to be addressed at the meeting and reported that she had asked the President, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs to speak. Rash asked about Mental Health Days prior to final exams for students. Carter-Stevens communicated with Dr. Bailey, who asked "What does a mental health day look like?" Rash responded that students would be off, studying, getting their mind together, getting ready for exams, etc. Carter-Stevens stated that she will forward that to Student Affairs.

Carter-Stevens requested that Senators inform their respective departments of the change of date for the Full Faculty Meeting.

OFFICE OF THE FACULTY SENATE

President: Dr. Candace Carter-Stevens | Vice President: Ms. LaTonzia Evans
Secretary: Dr. Shelly Garlotte | Assistant Secretary: Dr. Mary Shepherd | Parliamentarian: Dr. Christine Campbell
www.mvsu.edu

AGENDA ITEM #3: NEW BUSINESS

A. EXTENDED EXECUTIVE CABINET MEETING

Carter-Stevens commends the President's office for reaching out to the Faculty Senate with the special invitation to attend the 11/2/2024 football game. Carter-Stevens forwarded the responses to the President. Elechi stated, "It was fun. Thank you!"

Carter-Stevens reported that she is supposed to attend the meetings on the last Wednesday of the month at 10:00am, but she has a class that conflicts with that time. She requested anyone to attend the meeting in her place. Ikenga suggested the Vice President and then the Secretary. The Vice President was not in attendance to report availability, and Garlotte stated she has a lesson at that time. Carter-Stevens requests that Senators contact her if they are interested in attending these meetings.

B. UFSAM (UNITED FACULTY SENATE ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI)

Carter-Stevens previously emailed Senators regarding communication with UFSAM. Action items included a request for Senators to vote on a Resolution for Academic Freedom. Carter-Stevens explained that this Resolution arose from events that occurred at Jackson State University where the Faculty Senate President was terminated, seemingly without just cause, adding that this Resolution affects tenure. Carter-Stevens, on behalf of an HBCU in the state of Mississippi, attended the hearing for Dr. Dawn Bishop McLin, JSU Faculty Senate President in question. Carter-Stevens opined that the allegations had no merit and that she and many other representatives in attendance supported Dr. McLin. No results of the hearing are currently available, and decisions are forthcoming. Senators voted on the Resolution, and it was unanimously accepted by those present.

C. FACULTY CONCERNS

Peer Evaluations – Carter-Stevens stated that evaluations are needed, especially for tenure and promotion. An evaluation form is in the Faculty Handbook, but it is long and needs refinement. Carter-Stevens suggested that Peer Evaluations should be uniform, and a representative from Academic Affairs said that "as long as a Peer Evaluation has some meat to it" it will be sufficient. Carter-Stevens suggested Faculty use what is in the Handbook in addition to whatever form we have. Additionally, she has an abbreviated version of the form that is available by request.

Band Students – Carter-Stevens referred to correspondence from the Band Director and reminded Senators to forward student names to him. Rash added that some students say they are not telling the truth and some students she has not seen since midterm. Carter-Stevens notes that some student who have withdrawn from her class are no longer on the roster; they should still be listed with a score of WP (withdraw passing). She adds that students have low hours (part-time) after dropping her class but are still in the band. Ceasar questioned whether they are receiving a scholarship with the low hours and how that looks. Rash later requested that the issues with Band students be addressed at the Full Faculty Meeting.

Faculty Parking – Carter-Stevens states she has emailed Mr. Switzer about the parking area and sign requests but she does not have any additional updated information from him. She will reach out again before the Full Faculty Meeting for updates.

Outside Employment Approval – Carter-Stevens has communicated with Academic Affairs who clarified that outside employment will not be approved if it conflicts with responsibilities at MVSU. Carter-Stevens assumes an interpretation of Academic Affairs: they believe that most Faculty who request outside employment come from a department that is not producing students, and more students in that department’s major will require more focus. Elechi requested clarification about Faculty engaging in outside employment, asking if it was a reference to recruitment, and Carter-Stevens stated that while she does not want to say that specifically, she will say that “they want employees to focus on their department and making it better.” Elechi asked what this means, and whether Faculty is “...engaged 24-7? We don’t have weekends? What is our responsibility?” Carter-Stevens continued, if it does not interfere, they will likely approve, and she will ask Academic Affairs to speak about this at the Full Faculty Meeting. Ceasar referred to the form which requests the number of hours per month engaged in outside employment. She also asked about time, specifically nights and weekends, when Faculty are not engaged with MVSU responsibilities.

(Zoom meeting ended at 11:34am; meeting was resumed after immediate additional login)

Synchronous Option for Online Classes – Carter-Stevens has spoke with Academic Affairs about this and anticipates it will be discussed during the Full Faculty Meeting.

Book Vouchers – Ikenga expressed concern about lack of books until several weeks into the semester. He strongly requests a timely processing of book vouchers for students. Carter-Stevens agrees and will add this item to the list for Full Faculty Meeting topics.

University “In Motion” – Ceasar requests a list of things from President Briggs that he is doing to “move” the University.

Recycling Center Closing – Splaingard expressed concern about the unexplained closing of the Recycling Center; particularly concerning was the cafeteria and the high use of Styrofoam.

Restroom Soap/Paper Products – Garlotte queried Senators about whether any other departments struggle with maintaining paper products in student restrooms. Other Senators answered in the affirmative. Carter-Stevens stated she will forward this concern to the President.

Carter-Stevens requested additional concerns, but none were put forward.

AGENDA ITEM #4: ANNOUNCEMENTS

Carter-Stevens announced that . . .

. . . Garlotte was nominated for the Humanities Teacher Award from MVSU.

. . . Campbell has opened a new business, Drop Fitness.

Carter-Stevens thanked the Senators for their work and expressed her appreciation. She reminded Senators that the next project in line is the Faculty Handbook and suggested that Senators look at the areas they want to address.

Garlotte expressed appreciation of Carter-Stevens efforts and engagement. Elechi, Ikenga, Rash, and other Senators concurred.

AGENDA ITEM #5: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unofficially adjourned at 11:58am.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Senators should determine departmental approval or denial of Constitution & Bylaws Revisions by 11/8/2024.
2. Senators should send documentation of departmental approval to Carter-Stevens as soon as possible.
3. Senators should inform their respective departments of the change of date for the Full Faculty Meeting, which has been moved to Tuesday, 11/19/2024, 11:00am in Sutton Auditorium, Room 203.
4. In response to Dr. Bailey's question, Carter-Stevens will forward defining information about a student Mental Health Day to Student Affairs.
5. If Senators are interested in attending the Extended Cabinet Meetings on the last Wednesday of each month at 10:00am, please let Dr. Carter-Stevens know so that she can submit a name on behalf of the Faculty Senate.
6. Senators should remember that, if the virtual meeting ends before the meeting has concluded, they should re-login as soon as possible using the same link to continue the virtual meeting.
7. If Senators are interested in obtaining an abbreviated version of the Peer Evaluation Form in the Faculty Handbook, email a request to Dr. Carter-Stevens.
8. If Senators experience attendance issues with Band students, they should email concerns and a list of names to the Band Director. (miguel.bonds@mvsu.edu)
8. Dr. Carter-Stevens will contact Mr. Switzer for updated information about additional Faculty parking and signage placement.
9. Dr. Carter-Stevens will request that Academic Affairs speak about outside employment approval at the Full Faculty Meeting.
10. Dr. Carter-Stevens will request of Academic Affairs that a much more timely processing of student book vouchers be discussed at the Full Faculty Meeting.
11. Dr. Carter-Stevens will request that President Briggs offer information about the unexplained closing of the recycling center.
12. Dr. Rash will send Maintenance contact name and number to Dr. Garlotte.
13. Dr. Carter-Stevens will forward concerns about consistent availability of paper products/soap in the student restrooms to President Briggs.