



MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE
UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, 12/3/2024

Time: 10:00am

Venue: Virtual/Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Dr. Candace Carter-Stevens, Dr. Latosha Ceasar, Dr. Jocelyn Haley, Dr. Mary Shepherd, Dr. Christine Campbell, Dr. Zainul Abedin, Dr. Julius Ikenga, Dr. Oko Elechi, Dr. LaTonzia Evans, 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 10:05am once a quorum was reached.

Approval of minutes was tabled for next meeting.

Agenda items were approved and accepted.

AGENDA ITEM #2: OLD BUSINESS

A. FACULTY SENATE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS REVISIONS

Carter-Stevens announced that the Faculty Senate Constitution & Bylaws revisions had been accepted by the Full Faculty.

Carter-Stevens additionally requested a decision about whether to delete the link to a Protocols document on the Faculty Senate page, explaining that the information therein was duplicated in the newly accepted Faculty Senate Constitution & Bylaws, and having the link on the page was unnecessary. It was moved and seconded to remove the link for the Protocols from the Faculty Senate webpage.

B. FULL FACULTY MEETING RECAP

Carter-Stevens commented on the Full Faculty Meeting in general, saying that it was a good meeting, it went well, faculty members reported to her that the presentation was straight forward and organized, but there were issues with recording attendance. Alternative options for sign-ins were discussed, and Campbell volunteered to assist with sign-ins in the future.

Carter-Stevens added that forwarding questions to various Departments prior to the meeting was very efficient and should be continued in the future.

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
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Ceasar asked if Dr. Golden's name could be removed from the Outside Employment form if Golden has stated she does not need to sign or approve. Carter-Stevens replied that she would investigate that.

AGENDA ITEM #3: NEW BUSINESS

A. MEETING VENUE CHANGE

Carter-Stevens reminded Senators that we will be transitioning to Microsoft Teams for our meetings in the future. We will not be using Zoom.

B. UFSAM (UNITED FACULTY SENATE ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI)

Updates – Carter-Stevens reminded Senators that we, as well as other institutions, voted on and approved the Resolution for Academic Freedom and Tenure Protections letter.

JSU Faculty Senate President – JSU's Faculty Grievance Committee voted on and approved the reinstatement and employment of their Faculty Senate President. They are waiting on a response from JSU's President.

C. FACULTY HANDBOOK REVISIONS PROCESS

Carter-Stevens queried the Senators about how revisions of the Handbook could best be done. She suggested that the goal date be moved to Fall 2026. No set method was decided, but some sections were prioritized for revisions: 2.08 Standards for Rank and Promotion; 2.09 Faculty Grievances; 2.12 Notice of Non-Renewal; 2.13 Faculty Roles and Responsibilities; and 2.13.02 Teaching Load. Carter-Stevens suggested requesting our individual Department members examine these sections and submit any concerns or suggestions.

D. FACULTY CONCERNS

Faculty Housing / Wi-Fi - (Not addressed in correspondence from Calhoun within Carter-Stevens' email of 12/2/2024)

Excused Absences Policy for Students - (Refer to attached correspondence from Calhoun in Carter-Stevens' email of 12/2/2024)

Student Attendance (Band) – Ceasar asked about the Executive Director of Bands's response within Calhoun's correspondence in an email from Carter-Stevens on 12/2/2024, stating that he didn't really respond to the information. Carter-Stevens stated that he requested a list of student names so that he can directly speak with those students instead of addressing it to students who may be attending on time and avoid this being considered a "band problem." Ceasar stated he could make a general announcement to band students about on time attendance. Ikenga suggested we should be careful about divulging specific student names.

(Zoom link expired; New Meeting Login: 10:35am)

(Student Attendance, cont.) ... Shepherd stated that we have an attendance policy, and instructors can contact students about attendance. Students, in general, are not attending class as they should, and

instructors should start enforcing the attendance policy. A concern is the pass-fail rate mentioned by Dr. Briggs in the Full Faculty meeting. Carter-Stevens suggested examining what we could do as a Faculty to make sure that students are attending class. Shepherd volunteered to research attendance requirement policies for the University. Garlotte suggested including IHL information for attendance policy information research. Carter-Stevens mentioned that there were GPA requirements for athletes and wondered if band students had similar requirements. Campbell added that GPA requirements may be applicable to band students, especially if they are receiving scholarships.

Office of Student Records, Admissions, and Financial Aid – (Refer to Carter-Stevens’s email of 12/2/2024 for attached correspondence from Calhoun)

Smoking and Vaping on Campus – (Response from Ro’Shawn Bailey within Calhoun’s correspondence attached in Carter-Stevens’s 12/2/2024 email) The campus policy states that they take these matters seriously and students are being held accountable, that items have been confiscated such as devices, drugs, and paraphernalia. Enforcement of the drug-free policy is important, and reporting is encouraged. Reports of smoking and vaping are thoroughly investigated by the Office of Student Affairs. A list of Sanctions begins on page 85 of the Student Handbook. Ikenga suggests that students be specifically informed that smoking and vaping should not be done in classrooms either.

E. MEETING WITH PRESIDENT

After last Full Faculty meeting, Carter-Stevens received Faculty concerns. She forwarded them to Dr. Briggs. He requested a meeting with Carter-Stevens where he requested clarification on the process of communicating Faculty concerns to the appropriate Department. Carter-Stevens explained that information requests often go unanswered when initiated by her, but Departments are more responsive when requests are initiated by the University President.

Carter-Stevens added that Dr. Briggs asked about various Departments being reciprocally allowed to ask questions of the Senators and their respective Departments, so all should be prepared if that happens.

Dr. Briggs stated that a student had expressed irritation about having to return during exam week to complete one exam; the student had completed other exams prior to Fall/Thanksgiving break. Dr. Briggs requested that Senators mention to their Department members that Faculty should not be giving exams early. There are exceptions, such as financial concerns of students who may be travelling internationally, but instructors should adhere to university policy regarding the final exam schedule. Ikenga suggested that we request documented proof from students to justify an exception to an exam prior to finals week, to protect ourselves as Faculty members.

Carter-Stevens also has a previously scheduled meeting with President Briggs on December 12, 2024, in lieu of the responses received from various Departments. She plans to keep that meeting (in addition to the aforementioned meeting on December 4, 2024).

Ikenga later added that some Faculty members may be hesitant to communicate concerns, fearing retribution, and they will speak privately but not publicly, even though it may be an issue that affects many/all. He adds that it is not a time to be afraid. Carter-Stevens reminded Senators that no names are attached to communicated concerns from her.

AGENDA ITEM #4: ANNOUNCEMENTS

Academic Affairs asked Instructors to post the course syllabus to the “Syllabus” tab in their Canvas classes.

In response to Ceasar’s question about programs that were discontinued, Carter-Stevens shared that Dr. Briggs and Academic Affairs say that information is public knowledge on the IHL website.

Elechi thanked Carter-Stevens for her work. Carter-Stevens extended appreciation to Faculty Senate.

AGENDA ITEM #5: ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was officially adjourned at 11:12am.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Garlotte should swap the newly accepted Faculty Senate Constitution & Bylaws into the link on the webpage.
2. Garlotte should remove the Protocols link and document from the Faculty Senate webpage.
3. Campbell will assist with sign-ins at Full Faculty Meetings in the future.
4. Carter-Stevens will look into the removal of Dr. Golden’s name from Outside Employment form and report back to Senators.
5. Senators should be expecting to use Microsoft Teams for virtual Faculty Senate meetings in the future.
6. Senators should request that their Department members review the Faculty Handbook over holiday break, specifically sections 2.08 Standards for Rank and Promotion; 2.09 Faculty Grievances; 2.12 Notice of Non-Renewal; 2.13 Faculty Roles and Responsibilities; and 2.13.02 Teaching Load; and ask for any suggestions and/or concerns about these sections of the document.
7. Carter-Stevens should forward Dr. Epp’s most updated version of the Faculty Handbook.
8. Shepherd will research attendance policy information.
9. Senators should remind Department members to post their class syllabus in the “Syllabus” tab in Canvas classes.