



MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE  
UNIVERSITY.

## Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Tuesday, 2/4/2024    **Time:** 11:00am    **Venue:** Virtual/MSTeams Meeting

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**Attendees:** Dr. Candace Carter-Stevens, Dr. Shelly Garlotte, Dr. Daniel Splaingard, Dr. Joyce Haley, Dr. Julius Ikenga, Dr. LaTonzia Evans, Dr. Mary Shepherd, Dr. Latoya Ceasar, Dr. Oko Elechi, Dr. Christine Campbell

### **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 11:04am once a quorum was reached.

Approval of November and December minutes were approved and accepted.

Agenda items were approved and accepted. Senators agreed to Splaingard's request to add discussion of departmental meetings with Briggs and Shepherd's requests to add tenure track employee promotion letters and the policy for de facto promotions as Agenda items. Ikenga suggested that meeting minutes be approved as soon as they are ready.

### **AGENDA ITEM #2: OLD BUSINESS**

#### ***A. MICROSOFT TEAMS***

Some Senators had audio difficulties; attendees could not hear all members speaking. Garlotte shared that she unplugged from a 'microphone' jack and this restored her audio.

#### ***B. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT FORM***

Carter-Stevens reported that Dr. Golden stated that President Briggs signs the outside employment forms and suggested the forms be forwarded to President Briggs. Elechi questioned if length of contract should affect requests for outside employment, but no one could offer information. Carter-Stevens suggested that it should not conflict with contracted work hours. Ikenga added that there should not be a conflict of interest with outside employment, such as teaching the same class at different institutions.

#### ***C. BOOK VOUCHERS PROCESSING***

Ikenga related that a recent student communication revealed that no work was done in class because they had not received a book voucher to obtain a book. Ikenga states that this is unprofessional and does not look good for our university. Carter-Stevens has previously directed this issue to Student

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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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Affairs. Carter-Stevens suggested her departmental solution of using Syngage (books adopted, one set fee for all books (e-books or tangible books)). Other suggestions were to have the university purchase books and have them available in the bookstore. It is impossible to use voucher for Amazon books or books that are no longer available for purchase via a publisher. Shepherd added that Alcorn charges an e-book fee for students, orders them, and has them available for the students. Another suggestion was to have discontinued books available on reserve in the library for students.

#### **D. UFSAM**

Carter-Stevens referred Senators to review recent emails: 1.) to President Rankin regarding Academic Freedom; 2.) Parental Leave Act passed in House of Representative 114 to 0 – State employees will receive 8 weeks paid leave at 100% after the birth or adoption of a child and 2 weeks for a secondary caregiver; 3.) Commentary regarding the termination of JSU Faculty President, who was also a long-time employee/staff member.

### **AGENDA ITEM #3: NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2025-2026**

##### **1. Mental Health Days (Review Days)**

Carter-Stevens explained that these days could be used as “review days” and could not be termed “mental health days” as they must be included in the total amount of required instruction time.

#### **B. FACULTY CONCERNS**

**1. Band and Choir Rosters** – Carter-Stevens stated that rosters from extracurricular activities have been requested by teachers. She also adds certain behaviors, such as low GPA and low attendance, should not be rewarded and that extracurricular activities should not take precedence over academics. It was shared that students with good GPAs have very low academic hours on their schedule, and the best grade for students with low GPAs came from band. Shepherd shared a reminder that there is an attendance policy. Evans suggested that she requires struggling students go to the “learning center” an additional hour each week and bring back proof of their attendance. It is unknown whether there is an academic/GPA requirement for Band and Choir. Carter-Stevens will ask Administration about having a policy regarding extracurricular activity participation.

**2. Chair Evaluations** – Carter-Stevens refers to Golden’s email where she states she is open to evaluation instruments for all administration and that it be viewed and vetted. Garlotte added that it would be good to have records of opinions. Ikenga adds that we are likely not to be the first institution to do this, so we should look at other institutions’ evaluations as well as evaluations done here in the past. Carter-Stevens will share the IHL evaluation of the President. Garlotte will attempt to collect peer and administration evaluation instruments from other institutions.

**3. Faculty Office Hours** – A faculty member communicated with Carter-Stevens about the number of required office hours here at MVSU. It was suggested that more virtual hours be considered. Garlotte

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suggested that 10 hours is a lot in addition to the number of hours of teaching. She queried the Senators about how many office hours have been used in the past, but no information was offered. Ikenga suggested making our emails available, in addition to our office hours schedule, because it looks bad if students cannot reach us for help. Carter-Stevens also suggested an option of making office hours appointments with students.

**4. Faculty Salaries** – Carter-Stevens stated that staff has been hired who make more than faculty. The President got a raise. There was a \$300 increase in summer salary, but we asked that our pay be in line with other institutions. Splaingard asked how to find out salaries, and Haley informed him of a “salary book” on the first floor of the library, a resource of public record that contains the salaries of all MVSU faculty salaries.

**5. Students Not Meeting Pre-Requisites for Courses** – Carter-Stevens referred Senators to Dr. Golden’s email response.

**6. Departmental Meetings with Dr. Briggs** – Splaingard asked what the protocol is for these meetings? He adds that it would be nice to be prepared for them. While specific information could not be anticipated, Carter-Stevens encouraged Senators to urge respective department members to meet expectations so that they may be better prepared for meetings with Dr. Briggs. Splaingard suggested that it might be a good idea for departments to have brief annual meetings with Dr. Briggs to communicate information that is relevant to the department.

**7. Tenure and Promotion Letters** – Carter-Stevens reminded Senators that Dr. Golden stated in the Full Faculty meeting that Faculty can apply for tenure at any time. However, letters should be sent according to policy, so Carter-Stevens will inquire with Academic Affairs about all faculty receiving their letters on time. Carter-Stevens asked Senators to send her an email containing names of Faculty who should have received a letter.

**8. De facto Promotions** – Ikenga informed Senators that the policy for de facto promotions involves Faculty receiving a letter when they are eligible and according to information explained in the Faculty Handbook. Ikenga added that there are Faculty who have been here for many years but have not received a letter. Carter-Stevens will speak with Shepherd regarding de facto promotions.

**9. Academic Calendar** – Splaingard asked about the possibility of adding one more week to Christmas vacation and shifting that week into the following semester into May, adding that the quality of life for Faculty may be increased by that change.

### **C. FACULTY HANDBOOK REVISIONS**

Carter-Stevens encourages the Senators to continue looking at the previously specified sections for suggestions from our departments, and as soon as information is received, forward it to the Faculty Senate to discuss.

### **AGENDA ITEM #4: ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Carter-Stevens shared that Garlotte had an article written about her in the Gazette.

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Next Faculty Senate meeting will be on March 4, 2025, during midterms week. Discussion about moving the meeting to an alternate day and/or time occurred, but a motion to keep the meeting on March 4 was seconded and approved.

**AGENDA ITEM #5: ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting was officially adjourned at 12:11pm.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Senators should inform department members that outside employment forms should be directed to Dr. Briggs.
2. Carter-Stevens will inquire with Administration about having a policy regarding extracurricular activity participation (regarding Band, Choir, etc.).
3. Carter-Stevens will share the IHL evaluation tool for the President.
4. Garlotte will inquire with peers at other institutions about evaluation tools for Administration and peers.
5. Senators should encourage respective department members to meet expectations so that they may be better prepared for meetings with Dr. Briggs.
6. Carter-Stevens will inquire with Academic Affairs about all faculty receiving their letters on time.
7. Senators should email her the names of Faculty who should have received a notification letter regarding promotion.
8. Carter-Stevens and Shepherd will communicate about de facto promotions.
9. Senators should continue to examine the Faculty Handbook, especially the previously specified sections.
10. Senators should continue to encourage department members to examine the Faculty Handbook, especially the previously specified sections, and forward any suggestions for changes to the Faculty Senate for discussion.
11. The next Faculty Senate meeting will be on March 4, 2025, as per the usual schedule.

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