

Voting members present:

Charles Abraham
Leslie Fadiga-Stewart
Michael Paulmeno
Temika Simmons
Sam Washington
Eyad Youssef

Debra Allen
Severine Groh
Bret Pimentel
Eckward McKnight
Timothy Watkins

Jana Donahoe
David Hebert
Arlene Sanders
Jeff Smithpeters
Virgina Webb

01) **Meeting called to order** @ 3:34pm by President Fadiga-Stewart.

02) **Agenda:** Approved.

Minutes of the May 7th 2015 FS meeting approved after motion by Senators Pimentel/Groh.

03) **Guest Speaker: Dr. McAdams, Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs**

A. From talking to faculty and staff around campus, Provost McAdams felt that the semester had started well and that we had much to look forward to this year. Dr. McAdams specifically wanted to share his thoughts on three main areas of focus for 2015-2016: **1) Active engagement of faculty in DSU next step for student retention, 2) Strategies to increase DSU Academic Excellence, and 3) Annual faculty evaluations.**

1. **Active engagement of faculty in DSU next step for student retention** – Dr. McAdams presented the rationale to promote student success at DSU and the university-wide initiatives that were implemented to this end over the past few years.

Student success-defined includes retention and graduation; increasing graduation rate is both a national and a state-wide focus. Latest DSU graduation rates of 32% and 15% for the 6-years and 4-years graduation rates respectively, indicate that too few students are retained and/or that too few students graduate. In this context, the Student Success Center and the DSU Student Success Task Force had worked on several strategies over the past few years 1) to increase the success of our students, and 2) by focusing on students who may be at risk of failing. These strategies included 1) the redesign of the GST100 course in the current FYS100 course, 2) the implementation of an early-alert program, 3) the compilation of resources to help faculty advising their students, and 4) the start in spring 2015 of the Okra Scholar Program.

New for fall 2015, a program called Supplemental Instructors is being piloted in 6 courses identified as “gateway courses”. Gateway courses are typically introductory 100-level courses with large student enrollment and high D/W/F/I rates. Examples of such courses include American History, General Biology I, General Chemistry I, and College Algebra. A supplemental instructor for a specific gateway course is typically a current DSU student who has already successfully passed the course and help students currently enrolled in the course. Supplemental instructors are hired by the Student Success Center after recommendation by the departments that offer the courses. Supplemental instructors have 1) to attend the weekly course meetings, 2) to host a weekly 2h-tutoring session for current enrolled students, and 3) to be

available at the Student Success Center for 3h of one-on-one tutoring. Dr. McAdams stressed that the concept of supplemental instructors is not a novel one: the concept had been successfully implemented in other schools across the country. Dr. McAdams has agreed to send Dr. Fadiga-Stewart the complete list of the gateway courses in which the supplemental instructor initiative is being piloted this fall.

The Student Success Center is also working on developing workshops and trainings to help faculty getting access to academic advising resources. This initiative stemmed from the acknowledgement that faculty do not typically get formal training on academic advising but that resources are actually available.

Finally, Provost McAdams stressed the fact that all recruitment and retention efforts were intended to be made within a frame of excellence; standards in term of university admission, course curriculum and expectation, and graduation, are not meant to be jeopardized.

2. ***Strategies to increase DSU Academic Excellence*** – President LaForge had initiated a discussion during the summer 2015 with Deans and Chairs on how to take Delta State University to the next level of academic excellence. Six major points of discussion were identified and compiled in a document entitled “Academic Excellence - Goal and Strategy Planning Process 2015-2016”. This document was sent to the Chairs at the beginning of the fall 2015 semester.

Provost McAdams is now expecting discussions to take place at the department and division level about these 6 major points. Faculty input is requested on 1) what constitutes academic excellence and 2) the identification of strategies that can be developed to reach the next level of academic excellence. Dr. McAdams explained that by initiating a collaborative and broad-based effort with multiple points of entry, the goal was to create a culture of academic excellence while continuing on working on measures to help students who are the least prepared for college work. Dr. McAdams also anticipated that discussions may develop in areas other than the 6 indicated on the Academic Excellence document and indicated that he was excited about this. Overall Dr. McAdams expects the foundations of the new culture of academic excellence of DSU to be laid by mid-spring 2016.

3. ***Annual faculty evaluations*** – Provost McAdams had set up an ad hoc committee in 2013-2014 to work on a new faculty Annual Evaluation form after FS President Mitchell indicated that faculty disliked the Meritorious Achievement Document (MAD document). In 2014-2015, the FS discussed the draft of a new annual evaluation form proposed by the ad hoc committee. Several departments on campus chose to pilot the new form in spring 2015.

To be able to implement a university-wide faculty annual evaluation form/process, Provost McAdams is charging FS 1) to evaluate the annual evaluation form piloted in spring 2015 and 2) to provide him with its recommendations about a final annual evaluation form/process (pilot form or another, with or without modifications) by December 1st, 2015.

Dr. McAdams anticipates that the FS recommendations will be transmitted to the Chairs and Deans before the end of 2015 and to Academic Council at the beginning

of 2016. The new evaluation form/process, agreeable to both faculty and administrators would then be in spring 2016.

B. Q&A

1. **Supplemental Instructor Program**

- To the questions from Senator Simmons about the logistic of the supplemental instructors program, the level of interaction / supervision expected from the faculty, and the type of checks and balances in place, Provost McAdams answered that the program was managed by the Student Success Center and that it was not designed to be a burden on faculty. Supplemental instructors are students paid for 8 weekly hours to include attendance to weekly course meetings. Supplemental instructors would not be subjected to an academic overload.
- To the question from President Fadiga-Stewart about the list of courses in which the supplemental instructor program was piloted, Provost McAdams answered that he will send her a list of the courses that had volunteered for the pilot.

2. **Annual faculty evaluation from/process**

- To the question from Senator Simmons whether the initial ad hoc committee or the FS should be evaluating the annual faculty evaluation pilot form, Provost McAdams answered that his only expectation was that the pilot was reviewed by the FS. The FS was free to choose the best way to evaluate the form.

3. **Academic Excellence**

- To the questions from Senators Smithpeters and Hebert about Academic Excellence, Provost McAdams answered that the discussions would take place during the academic year 2015-2016. It is on purpose that no benchmarks were set so all ideas can be welcome. Provost McAdams expects many ideas, suggestions, and directions to arise from the process. He also expects departments and divisions to identify short and long-term goals. Ultimately, departments and division efforts would be transmitted to the Academic Success Task Force. The task force would then work to identify what could be developed into DSU-wide short-term initiatives while keeping on the agenda DSU-wide long-term strategies. Provost McAdams insisted that the main goal was to foster continuous faculty brainstorming rather than imposing choices to faculty.
- To the question from Senator Smithpeters about national and international trends that the Provost may like, Provost McAdams answered that an increasing number of faculty were using funding to use technology and social media in their course as tools. Given the national and state-wide efforts to make the two first years of higher education free for students, it would take all of us to think about the best ways to use resources wisely and to thrive as higher education institutions.

4. **Policies on dismissal / termination and rules of conduct in the workplace**

- Senator Smithpeters indicated that changes were made in spring 2015 to the 2007 policies; references to the IHL policies were added to the policies. Senator Smithpeters also indicated that the Academic Affair subcommittee noticed that some of the language used in the 2007 policies was vague and potentially problematic. Senator Smithpeters asked Provost McAdams whether he would be

receptive to a clarification of the language used in these policies so to reaffirm the faculty academic freedom.

Provost McAdams agreed with Senator Smithpeters that the only changes made to the 2007 policies were the additions of the IHL policy references for dismissal and termination of faculty. Provost MacAdams added that these additions were made to clarify these processes for faculty since the policies were worded for staff.

- To the question raised by Senator Webb about the involvement of FS in changes to faculty policy, Provost McAdams answered that changes impacting faculty typically involving discussion with faculty. However, regarding the dismissal / termination policy in which reference to IHL policies were added, no changes impacting faculty were made; thus no discussion took place beyond the meeting of the Cabinet which was attended by the FS president.
- To the concerns raised by Senators Webb and Simmons regarding the possible misinterpretation of the policies, Provost McAdams stressed that adding the references of the IHL policies was actually meant to clarify the dismissal / termination processes for faculty and did absolutely not intent to scare faculty. Dr. McAdams was supportive to wording changes that FS wished to make to clarify these policies. Such changes would first have to be submitted to Human Resources, the owner of these policies, and then to Cabinet.

Motion to revise the language of the termination / dismissal and the rules of Conduct policies by Senators Simmons and Smithpeters is carried. The Academic Affairs Committee, chaired by Senator Smithpeters, will be in charge of working on language revisions.

04) President report

1. **Summer enrollment** – The summer enrollments have been down over the past 2 years. No plan about summer enrollment had been developed. Faculty are encourage to think about ways to market summer classes, such as providing an opportunity for students to graduate faster. The Academic Affairs committee may be interested in working on the following: finding ways to increase enrollment in summer courses while going around the issues of cost for students and summer pay for faculty.
2. **Revisions of the course purge process** - An ad hoc committee was constituted end of spring 2015 to improve the course purge process. A revised purge system was implemented for the fall semester 2015: a first purge occurred on August 6th, prior the start of fall 2015 followed later in August by a second and final purge. Postcards and text messages were sent to students; information was also posted on My DSU and Canvas. President Fadiga-Stewart sought faculty feedback about the pros and cons of the revised purge system. It would appear that the new system is better than the previous system even though many students who did not check their DSU email during the summer were not aware of the changes.
3. **Student attendance** – President Fadiga-Stewart reminded faculty of the need to take attendance and keep any documentation of it. Recording attendance is critical for 1) promoting student retention and student success by being able to address potential academic problems as early as possible in the semester, 2) maintaining our academic

standards, 3) ensuring student safety in case of evacuation, and 4) complying with financial aid rules. On the same token, it is critical to report no-shows, last day of student attendance and midterm grades by the appropriate deadlines.

4. **Conferring degrees in August** – To allow students who complete their degree program during the summer to start employment or post-graduate studies in fall semester, DSU will start to award degrees in August. No graduation ceremony will take place in summer.
5. **Title IX taskforce** – “Title IX protects students from discrimination based on sex in educative programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance (...).” (www2.ed.gov). President Fadiga-Stewart announced that a Title IX taskforce has been constituted on campus to work on policies and training to ensure DSU compliance in matter of safety. The taskforce is composed of Julie Jackson, Dr. Myrtis Tabb, a representative of the campus police, Senator Smithpeters and herself.
6. **Mississippi flag** - DSU came up with a statement to join other institutions supporting the redesign of the Mississippi flag.
7. **Initiatives 42 and 42a** – President Fadiga-Stewart will invite DSU President LaForge to the October FS meeting to discuss the Initiative Measure 42 and the Alternative Measure 42a for Public Education Funding (Initiative Ballot - General Election of 11/3/2015) since these initiatives could take away money from Mississippi Higher Education funding. After request from Senator Simmons, President Fadiga-Stewart agreed to also invite a member of the legislature to help explaining these two initiatives.
8. **Calendar** -
 - a. Colloquia program: First speaker for fall 2015, Joseph Jackson Turner, presented on September 1st.
 - b. DSU 90th birthday - September 16th
 - c. International Conference on the Blues – October 5 and 6
 - d. Grammy museum: its opening is delayed.

05) University Entities

Report from Staff Council - None (representative out of town).

Report from Graduate Council - None. President Fadiga-Stewart is waiting on the answers from the faculty she has contacted to report from Graduate Council.

Report from BPAC - Dr. Ellen Green. The last meeting took place Tuesday 9/8/2015. A new projector has been purchased. Dr. Green presented the highlights of the 2015/2016 season and indicated that the programming committee will meet on 10/8 to decide on the 2016/2017 program and that she should be glad to relay any suggestions to the committee.

06) Faculty Senate Committees

Committee on University Service – A new Chair needs to be elected for 2015/2016.

Committees on University Standing Committees – Senator Eckward McKnight.

The committee will work on the optimal size for each University Standing Committee to promote efficient work. Faculty will be asked to return their preference form by the end of September. The Chairs for each University Standing Committees were elected early September by the 2014/2015 members.

Committee on elections – Senator Debbie Allen.

New senators and proxy. Dr. Amit Verma is the new proxy for Commercial Aviation. Nursing is welcoming a second senator, Lacey Blessit, since the department employs now 15 full-time faculty. Julyn Overstreet is Senator Blessit proxy and Addie Herrod is the new proxy for Senator Debra Allen. A new senator will be elected in Language and Literature. HPER and Couns. Ed. and Psychology need each to elect a new proxy.

Merit Pay Appeals Committee. Some colleges will need to elect new representatives by October 1st.

Committee on Technology – Senator Charles Abraham.

- 1) A new software will be piloted soon to report SOS. The software should be effective next fall.
- 2) The bandwidth will soon double.
- 3) Argos is an application relatively easy to use to generate helpful reports from banner, especially for students' advising. Senator Abraham has asked Dr. Craft to make Argos more visible and has requested the feasibility of a training for faculty.
- 4) Office 365 is free for students, faculty.
- 5) A new version of banner should be in place in spring 2015. This version should include a better module for student registration who could now plan their registration for several years. The version will also include a new module for student advising
- 6) Reminder that we have to change password every 6 months
- 7) New storage on campus
- 8) Dell computer replacement cycle. There is a 5-year replacement cycle for PCs on campus. The new computers will be in all-in-one PCs with touch screen.
- 9) The dates for the CAAP degree audit training will be announced soon.

Committee on General Academic Affairs – Senator Smithpeters indicated that his committee had started examining the termination / dismissal and code on conduct 2007 policies, a point relevant to the motion carried at the beginning of this FS meeting. The committee has been tasked to compile resolutions for tenure and promotion guidelines that need to be changed. Senators are invited to share their thoughts directly with members of the committee. Another goal of the committee is to work this year on a civility resolution. Senator Simmons asked about the feasibility of a system to alert faculty of new policies / policy changes and their rationale and also whether the acting policies could be all available at a single location on DSU website. Sen. Smithpeters answered that the committee could draft a resolution about this so a page with policy updates be available.

07) New Business

1. **Dates changes for October 2015, January 2016 and March 2016 Senate Meetings.**
Motion by Senators Youssef/Groh to approve the schedule of FS meetings for the academic year 2015-2016 carries. The approved schedule for the 2015/2016 FS meeting is attached to the minutes.

2. **Reserved parking for President LaForge.** In contrast to the situation at other higher education institution, DSU president LaForge does not have his own reserved parking place on Kent Wyatt Hall parking. President LaForge has asked approval from both staff council and faculty senate for a reserved parking spot. Faculty of the Academic Affairs Committee sponsored a resolution to indicate that President LaForge “should be designated a reserved parking space of his choice, designated with signage mentioning his position, as soon as possible”. Senator Hebert indicated that while the request was legitimate, Faculty should have the same courtesy with parking regulations being effectively enforced 365 days a year. Motion from Senators Simons and Smithpeters to amend the resolution by adding the sentence “WHEREAS parking rules will be enforced during official business days” is approved. Motion to accept the amended resolution is carried with one abstention (Senator Hebert).

08) Adjournment at 5:13pm.

Next meetings

Executive Committee Meeting Date:

3:30 PM - Thursday, 10/01/2015- Faculty Lounge

October Senate Meeting Date:

3:30 PM – Thursday, 10/15/2015 – 302A Union

| Month | Senate meeting 3:30pm in Union 302A | Executive committee meeting 3:30pm Faculty Lounge |
|----------------|---|--|
| April 2015 | 4/9/15 Double meeting presided by David Hebert Minutes by Debra Allen | |
| May 2015 | 5/7/15 First 2015/2016 meeting | 5/7/15 11am Faculty Lounge |
| June 2015 | Cancelled for lack of quorum Motion approved 5/7/2015 | |
| July 2015 | Cancelled for lack of quorum Motion approved 5/7/2015 | |
| August 2015 | No meeting (no class in session) | |
| September 2015 | 9/10/15 | 9/3/15 |
| October 2015 | 10/15/15 | 10/1/15 |
| November 2015 | 11/12/15 | 11/5/15 |
| December 2015 | 12/10/15 | 12/3/15 |
| January 2016 | 1/21/16 | 1/14/16 |
| February 2016 | 2/11/16 | 2/4/16 |
| March 2016 | 3/17/16 | 3/3/16 |
| April 2016 | 4/14/16 Double meeting presided by Leslie Fadiga-Stewart | 4/7/16 |
| May 2016 | 5/5/16 First 2016/2017 meeting | 4/28/16 |

Delta State University Faculty Senate Constitution, Article III, Section 10

“The regular meeting of the Faculty Senate shall be on the second Thursday of each month, provided classes are in session on that day. An extraordinary meeting of the Faculty Senate shall be called by the Chair under either of the following conditions:

- 1) Upon majority vote of the officers of the Faculty Senate;
- 2) Upon written petition to the Chair by five members of the Faculty Senate.

When an extraordinary meeting is indicated by either of the methods above, the Chair must issue within twenty-four hours, a notice of the meeting including the time and place; the meeting must be held within twenty-four and seventy-two hours (Sundays excepted) from the time at which the notice is issued; extraordinary meetings shall not be called during scheduled University vacation periods; the purpose of the meeting must be stated in the notice issued by the Chair.”