

### Voting members present:

Charly Abraham	Lacey Blessitt	Jana Donahue
Leslie Fadiga-Stewart	Severine Groh	David Hebert
Addie Herrod	Christopher Jurgenson	Jesse Kelley
Eckward McKnight	Gwendolyn Meador	Lekeitha Morris
Bret Pimentel	Arlene Sanders	Jeff Smithpeters
Sam Washington	Eyad Youssef	Virginia Webb

### 01) Meeting called to order @ 3:38pm by President Fadiga-Stewart

### 02) Agenda: Approved

Minutes of 10/15/15 FS meeting approved. Motion by Senators McKnight and Hebert.

### 03) President's report:

1. Academic Excellence taskforce - Senator Jurgenson is the faculty representative at the taskforce. The taskforce met on November 11, 2015 to review the comments received by the Colleges. Three main ideas were summarized. An open faculty forum will be held on November 17, 2015 at 3:00pm in the Jacob Conference Center.
2. Title IX Taskforce - This taskforce was chaired by Myrtis Tabb who recently retired. The taskforce includes Julie Jackson (coordinator of Title IX), Dana George (Athletic), Mark Kimbell (Captain of Investigations), Senator Smithpeters, and President Fadiga-Stewart. The goal of the taskforce is to set policies regarding sexual misconducts on campus. A draft of policies has been read once. The policies will be read once more before being submitted to Cabinet. President Fadiga-Stewart will let FS know as soon as Cabinet has approved the new policies.
3. President Fadiga-Stewart thanked everyone who participated in the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration during the first week of November. The turnout was good. More anniversary activities should take place throughout the academic year.

### 04) University Entities:

**Report from Staff Council** – Christie Rocconi indicated that Staff Council is working on a food drive to collect non-perishable food for Thanksgiving. To serve the DSU community first, faculty are encouraged to let Rhonda Loper know of any family on campus who would benefit from donations. A toy drive will be organized in December. Finally the door-decorating contest organized by Staff Council on November 12, 2015 was a success!

**Report from BPAC** - Ellen Green reported that the BPAC advisory committee met during the first week of November. The two next events are 1) a matinee event for elementary schools on Friday November 13<sup>th</sup>, and 2) "A very electric Christmas" on November 19<sup>th</sup>. While this later is suitable for young children, parents of the youngest children are cautioned since the show requires a darkened room for best rendering of the special effects. President LaForge will take the Schmidt family to the show on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

### 05) Faculty Senate Committees:

**Committee on University Services** – President Fadiga-Stewart reminded FS that the chair position for this committee, previously held by Senator Lamb, was still vacant. She also

expressed her desire for this committee to reaffirm the concept of service from the faculty to the DSU community, somehow in line with the service routinely provided by the Staff Council and the SGA. Senators interested in strengthening this committee are invited to contact President Fadiga-Stewart or Senator Groh. The committee anticipates electing a chair as soon as possible and starting regular meetings in January 2016.

**Committee on University Standing Committees** - Senator McKnight indicated each committee had elected a chair and that the committees had started their work.

**Committee on Elections** – Senator Groh indicated that the committee was preparing the elections to fill the senator and/or proxy vacancy in Couns. Ed and Psychology, Social Sciences and History, HPER, and Languages and Literature so the new senators / proxy could start attending the meetings in January. The new representatives for the Merit Pay Appeals Committee should be known by the start of the spring semester.

**Committee on Technology** – Senator Abraham indicated that the bandwidth upgrade from 500 Mb to 1 GB would probably be implemented in spring semester. Banner should also be upgraded to allow faculty grade entry, student registration, and advising. Finally, changes will take place during the Thanksgiving break to the mechanism of logging onto campus Wi-Fi. CISCO will be discontinued and a new version should be in place with a unique combination username/password, allowing one login to all the web services that require user authentication.

**Committee on General Academic Affairs** – Senator Smithpeters presented two of the resolutions read at the October FS meeting (Appendices [A](#) and [B](#)).

1. Resolution pertaining to Virtual Office Hours ([Appendix A](#)) - In brief, the resolution proposed that a faculty member should be able to hold up to 5 of the 10 weekly office hours virtually, as long as 1) virtual office hours allow instructional interactions between students and faculty, 2) permission is granted by the chair or dean, and 3) the times for virtual office hours are communicated to students at least 1 week in advance.
  - Concern was raised about the possibility of abuse by some faculty. (Senators Webb and Youssef). Senator Hebert indicated that approval from the chair or dean to hold virtual office hours should provide the means to prevent abuse. Senator Morris added that the behavior of a few individuals should not penalize the faculty-at-large. Finally, Senator Blessitt indicated that often, holding face-to-face office hours did not guarantee students were making or could make use of these set times.
  - Whether virtual office hours would also apply to adjuncts should be addressed separately when examining the question of the office hours for adjuncts (number of hours and means to hold them). (President Fadiga-Stewart and Senator Morris).
  - The resolution was called for a vote by President Fadiga-Stewart and approved unanimously.
2. Resolution pertaining to DSU policies “Termination / Dismissal” and “Work Performance and Code of Conduct” ([Appendix B](#)) – In brief, this resolution was meant to clarify confusion regarding the policies that apply to faculty in matter of termination / dismissal and hearing and grievance procedures. The resolution specifically calls for renaming the

two current DSU policies, excluding faculty from the category of employee to whom the policies apply, and creating new distinct policies for faculty.

- Senator Groh asked about the rationale of tackling these policies since Mississippi was an at-will employment state. Senator Smithpeters reminded FS that DSU supported Academic Freedom as it is defined in the *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* by the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors. In this context, DSU's right to terminate faculty employment at will is limited and faculty termination / dismissal as well as work performance and code of conduct were governed by IHL policies and bylaws.
- The resolution was called for vote by President Fadiga-Stewart and approved (in favor, 8; against, 5; abstention 2).

#### **06) New Business:**

1. Graduation ceremony updates – Two graduation ceremonies will take place, one for graduate and one for undergraduate students. Both will take place in the BPAC this fall. The hope is to elevate the decorum of the graduate ceremony that will take place Friday December 11, 2015 at 7:30pm. The graduation ceremony for undergraduates will start at 10am on Saturday December 12, 2015. Senator Hebert will help Ms. Finley, Registrar and Coordinator of Commencement/graduation. Faculty should arrive at 7 pm to Friday's ceremony and at 9:30 am to Saturday's ceremony and line in the hallway that is the closest to the quadrangle for the processional. There will not be banner bearers. Faculty will recess after the students.
2. Evaluation of the annual evaluation pilot forms – Senator Hebert reminded the context that led to the design of a new annual evaluation form for faculty. Senator Hebert is compiling the feedback from the three departments (DMI, Biological Sciences, and Math) that piloted the new form in spring 2015 and will write a white paper for dissemination to the FS at December FS meeting.
3. Special meeting – The confederate battle emblem on the Mississippi's flag has raised issues. Several Mississippi institutions of higher education have stopped flying the state's flag; others have chosen to leave it. To appreciate the DSU faculty position on rallying the institutions which chose to remove the state's flag and/or on redesigning the state's flag, a FS special meeting will be held on December 3, 2015 at 3:30pm. The special meeting will serve as an open faculty forum. Location of the special meeting / open faculty meeting will be communicated by email.  
Christie Rocconi will let President Fadiga-Stewart know about staff position on these issues. Senator Sanders had talked with SGA President Sykes who reported a lack of consensus among the member of the SGA cabinet. The SGA is thinking about polling the students. President Fadiga-Stewart will forward to FS the statement that DSU President LaForge issued this summer on the Mississippi's flag.
4. Academic calendar - President Fadiga-Stewart indicated that we were missing some class time to meet IHL standards for 2016-2017 academic calendar and that SGA President Sykes reported that starting the fall semester on Monday did not allow enough time for students to register.
  - Academic council is examining several options 1) to meet IHL standards in term of semester class time and 2) to facilitate students' registration. One of these options is to

start fall classes on Tuesday and to remove fall break. President Fadiga-Stewart will send to FS the different options that the academic council is examining. **Since next AC meeting will take place before the regular December FS meeting, President Fadiga-Stewart would like Senators to discuss the various options with their department so to provide her with feedback before the AC meeting of 12/10/15.**

- DSU spring break 2016 is not synchronized with spring break for K12 children. It usually is.
- Pre-registration week will start 2 weeks later than initially scheduled (November 16 versus November 4<sup>th</sup>) but the alternate pins were available for academic advisers on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Christie Rocconi confirms that this is the model that will be used from now on.
- Several points were raised by senators and some ideas could be compatible with the implementation of a new model for the academic calendar:
  - Effect of student registration a day or few days before class start on the new purge process?
  - Difficulty for students who move in the dorms on Sunday afternoon with class starting on Monday morning.
  - In many universities including Texas Tech (as mentioned by President Fadiga-Stewart and Senator Hebert), faculty and new students arrive on campus a few days (for students) to a week (for faculty only) before class starts.
    - For faculty, this allows splitting meetings (convocation, college meeting and departmental meeting) over a few days instead of attending all 3 meetings the Friday before classes start.
    - It would facilitate student advising.
    - It could also serve as an incoming freshmen student days/week during which special activities would be organized to promote out of the classroom student-faculty interactions.
    - This would require the dorms and OIT to be ready to accommodate students and the bookstore to be open the weekend before classes start.
    - An unknown factor is the overall willingness for faculty to resume the semester earlier than usual and the compatibility of such a model with departments that take advantage of the week before classes to organize camps.

**07) Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned @ 5:14pm. Motion by Senators Hebert and Herrod.

#### **Next meetings**

Executive Committee Meeting Date:

Special Meeting

December Senate Meeting Date:

TBA - Faculty Lounge  
 December 3, 2015 – 3:30pm - TBD  
 December 10, 2015 – Union

## Appendix A

Year: 2015      Number:

### RESOLUTION BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY OF CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI CALLING FOR

The addition of a Virtual Office Hours provision to University Policy Manual's page entitled "Rights and Responsibilities—Faculty," available on line at <http://www.deltastate.edu/policies/policy/university-policies/employment/employee-responsibilities-and-standards/rights-and-responsibilities-faculty/>

WHEREAS, current faculty duties include the requirement that faculty members maintain ten office hours per week from the start of semester classes to the end of Finals Week;

WHEREAS, the trend toward increased expectations at Delta State of faculty participation in scholarship and service to the University and the community can make maintenance of the ten-hour requirement difficult to reconcile with these expectations;

WHEREAS, current technology allows faculty to be responsive to student requests for information and guidance without being in their assigned offices at the time;

WHEREAS, faculty are already using technological means to interact with students at times outside of their ten announced office hours;

WHEREAS, students today increasingly rely on electronic means of contacting faculty to the exclusion of visits to faculty offices;

WHEREAS, current technology allows for faculty-student collaboration in the drafting of documents and other educational endeavors by electronic means;

WHEREAS, faculty has been asked by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost to study the possibility of virtual office hours;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY OF CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI

That:

SECTION 1. A new paragraph be added to University Policy Manual's page "Rights and Responsibilities—Faculty" after paragraph 4 of subsection "Faculty Office Hours" to read as follows:

At the discretion of the faculty member's respective division chair or Dean, the faculty member may choose to serve a maximum of five of the ten required office hours as Virtual Office Hours. During Virtual Office Hours the faculty member is available to students through electronic means, which can be accomplished through the use of various software inclusive of Canvas' "chat" function, Skype or any other way in which students and faculty can engage in instructional interactions. The faculty member can be on or off campus during the service of Virtual Office Hours, but must post notice of these hours in advance by at least one week and notify divisional leadership of these hours. During electronic interactions, all parties are subject to all relevant University policies

regarding confidentiality and conduct (see University Policy pages entitled “Release of Information,” “Student Affairs<<Rights and Responsibilities,” and “Employment » Employee Responsibilities and Standards”)

SECTION 2. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be presented to Academic Council immediately,

SPONSORS: Faculty Academic Affairs Committee (Senators Smithpeters, Groh, Jurgenson, Merryday, Pimentel, Verma)

ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_

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President, Faculty Senate

## Appendix B

Year: 2015      Number:

### RESOLUTION BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY OF CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI CALLING FOR

The clarification of University policy documents so that the application of IHL policy to faculty is affirmed and ambiguity about that application is eliminated.

WHEREAS, the current University policy documents entitled "Termination/Dismissal," "Work Performance and Code of Conduct" have caused confusion in faculty as to which portions, if any, apply to them;

WHEREAS, the application of portions of these two documents to faculty would severely compromise Academic Freedom as it is defined in the *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* by the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors, which Delta State supports, as stated on the "Rights and Responsibilities" document in University Policies;

WHEREAS, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost Charles McAdams affirmed in the Faculty Senate meeting of September 10, 2015 his intent, in introducing a new paragraph to the "Termination/Dismissal" and "Work Performance and Code of Conduct" pages to state the supremacy of the Institutions of Higher Learning's policies regarding the areas covered by these documents;

WHEREAS, Provost McAdams has kindly stated his openness to suggestions from the Faculty Senate about new language on these two policy documents;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY OF CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI

That:

SECTION 1. The policy documents entitled "Termination/Dismissal" and "Work Performance and Code of Conduct" should be renamed.

SECTION 2. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the titles be changed to "Termination/Dismissal of Staff Employees and Administrators" and "Work Performance and Code of Conduct for Staff Employees and Administrators."

SECTION 3. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that changes should be made to the portions of the "Termination/Dismissal" and "Work Performance and Code of Conduct," which currently read as follows:

Employee: This generally includes faculty and staff employees who are working on paid appointments by the University. It generally excludes students or temporary employees. For specific information on who is considered an employee, contact the Human Resources Department.

SECTION 4. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this wording be changed to:

Employee: This generally includes ~~faculty and~~ staff employees and administrators who are working on paid appointments by the University. It generally excludes students or temporary employees. For specific information on who is considered an employee, contact the Human Resources Department.

SECTION 5. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the sections of these two documents entitled **“Dismissal of Tenured Faculty, Tenure-Track Faculty and Non-Tenure Track Faculty”** and **“Hearing and Grievance Procedures for Tenured Faculty and Tenure-Track Faculty”** be removed.

SECTION 6. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a new policy document be created, entitled **“Termination/Dismissal, Work Performance, and Code of Conduct for Faculty.”**

SECTION 7. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this new document consist of the following text:

**Dismissal of Tenured Faculty, Tenure-Track Faculty and Non-Tenure Track Faculty**

Dismissal policies and procedures for faculty are governed by the Institutions of Higher Learning Policies and Bylaws, Sections 403, 403.0104 and 404.02

**Hearing and Grievance Procedures for Tenured Faculty and Tenure-Track Faculty**

For procedures on filing a hearing or grievance, please see the Faculty Grievance Process and Procedures Policy and the Institutions of Higher Learnings Policies and Bylaws, Sections 403 and 404.

SPONSORS: Faculty Academic Affairs Committee (Senators Smithpeters, Groh, Jurgenson, Merryday, Pimentel, Verma)

ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_

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President, Faculty Senate