

Chair's Report

Senate

November 3, 2011

Good afternoon everyone and welcome to today's Faculty Senate.

I do not have a great deal to report on today that varies much from what you already know, so I will begin my comments by addressing yesterday's President's Forum.

I attended the afternoon session until about 3:45, at which time, I had another meeting to make. Nothing the President had to say caught me by surprise, as he spent much time explaining how enrollment and budget concerns factor into salary increases, benefits, and capital projects. I guess I was hoping to hear more definitively whether staff and faculty would experience another salary increase come January due to our record – breaking fall enrollment, but as it looks right now, I heard the president intimate that July 1 would be more viable a time to execute salary adjustments. The president emphasized that his staff are looking at “prudent, fiscally – responsible” ways to allocate resources for employee salary increases. Insofar as Faculty are concerned, he mentioned the Salary Model Study Group, and that it will be organized to examine the “Rank – Discipline – and Performance” model that human resources developed to guide salary adjustment decisions. Dual – Enrollment, residence hall renovations, the wellness center, and benefits were also among the President's comments yesterday.

On Wednesday October 26th, Senator Rathbun and I met with Provost Hughes and Gerald Demoss, the Chair of the PACs Reconciliation Committee, to discuss the handling of PAC 7 and 27 now that they're returning to Senate for your review. It is important that you, the Senators, are made aware that a precedent does not exist at this institution concerning “conference committees” as the Reconciliation Cme was convened to be. There are no UARs or PACs assigning direction in what to do when a revision of a PAC is approved by the Senate then rejected by the President. What has previously happened in these cases are: tabling the actions, re-writing in committee and bringing back to the floor of the senate for more deliberate and debate, or as a last resort: stalemate. The president is trying to avoid a stalemate with regard to Pac 7 and 27. The President views them as vital components of a fair and equitable evaluation and promotion process for all faculty. Connected to this, and you may disagree with the president's thinking on this, but his thinking regarding the PACS has implications on our work: the president believes that getting Pac 7 passed in Senate is in the right direction toward his agenda that salary decisions be made in a “prudent and fiscally responsible” manner. Thus, a stalemate on Pac 7 would stall the departments in re-vising their FEPs and therefore delay the “performance” variable in the new salary model that the university is going to implement. It is therefore incumbent upon you to consider the revised PAC 7 that we're having a first – reading of today in the spirit of shared governance. It contains the spirit of what the senators approved on February 17, 2011 and contains some language that the administration considers important from their end. Again, keep in mind, the President didn't have to act in a conciliatory manner on this; he chose to do so for the benefit and improvement of the faculty.

On a less sensitive note, but equally important with regard to our programs here at MSU, the College of Education underwent its Accreditation Review last week. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education programs (NCATE) visited our campus for the final round of interviews, document checks, and high – level scrutiny. Thanks to the hard work of the CoE and its faculty liaisons in multiple departments across campus, the College met ALL standards at the Initial and Advanced Levels! I'm sure our Dean, Cathy Gunn, is very appreciative of all of your efforts and cooperation.