

Middle Georgia State University Faculty Senate AY 2020- 2021  
Meeting #1 via Microsoft Teams  
Friday, September 4, 2020

Present:

Ms. Angela Adams, Assistant Professor of Nursing  
Mr. Charlie Agnew, Professor of Art & Art Program Coordinator  
Mr. Richard Binkley, Assistant Professor of Aviation Science and Management  
Dr. Ervin Briones, Associate Professor of Psychology  
Mr. Gerald Buffone, Associate Professor of Chemistry  
Dr. Kathleen Burt, Assistant Professor of English  
Ms. Vanessa "Paige" Crump, Associate Professor of Spanish  
Ms. Shannon Daly, Assistant Professor of Nursing  
Mr. Duane Day, Assistant Professor of Mathematics  
Mr. Paul Donnell, Lecturer of Aviation Maintenance & Structural Technology  
Dr. Stephen Fuller, Professor of English  
Mr. Greg George, Associate Professor of Business  
Dr. John Hall, Assistant Professor of Political Science  
Dr. Joshua Harrelson, Assistant Professor of Mathematics  
Dr. Rebekah Hazlett Knudsen, Assistant Professor of Social Work  
Ms. Kassi Hill, Assistant Professor of Nursing  
Dr. Scott Hinze, Assistant Professor of Psychology  
Dr. Renat Khatmullin, Associate Professor of Chemistry  
Dr. Richard Kilburn, Chair of the Faculty Senate, Associate Professor of Mathematics  
Ms. Tamatha Lambert, Recorder of the Faculty Senate, Director of Library Services  
Mr. Daniel Lin, Lecturer of Mathematics  
Dr. Benita Muth, Professor of English & Coordinator of Graduate Technical Writing Programs  
Dr. Anthony Narsing, Professor of Management  
Dr. John Pattlo, Vice-Chair of the Faculty Senate, Professor of Biology  
Ms. Elisha Plaxico, Assistant Professor of Nursing  
Dr. Vicky Sandoval, Assistant Professor of Information Technology  
Dr. Kara Sonaveç, Senior Lecturer of History  
Mr. Kirby Swenson, Associate Professor of Biology  
Dr. Stephen Taylor, Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate, Professor of History  
Dr. Laura Thomason, Professor of English & Provost Fellow for International Programs  
Ms. Marla Thompson, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies  
Dr. Stephanie Tolliver Epps, Assistant Professor of Nursing  
Mr. Robert Torres, Lecturer of Aviation Maintenance Technology  
Mr. Adam Young, Associate Professor of English

Absent/Excused:

Dr. Charles Matson, Professor of Respiratory Therapy

Guests:

Dr. Lorraine Dubuisson, Chair of the Executive Committee, Associate Professor of English  
Dr. Michael Gibbons, Interim Associate Provost

Swearing in of New Senators

The Executive Committee identified gaps in our membership representation. Dr. Matthews administered the oath of office for new senators. The new senators affirmed the oath by typing, "I swear" into the chat box of Microsoft Teams. The four new senators are: Ms. Plaxico; Mr. Donnell; Ms. Adams; and Ms. Thompson.

Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

Dr. Kilburn called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Dr. Kilburn asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Dr. Patton made the motion; Mr. Agnew seconded. The motion was approved.

The minutes for our August 3, 2020 meeting were approved electronically on August 27, 2020.

Dr. Kilburn asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Senate's April 2020 meeting. Dr. Taylor motioned to approve the April, 2020 minutes. Mr. Swanson seconded. The motion passed.

Report from President Blake

Dr. Blake was not able to attend the meeting. Dr. Kilburn presented Dr. Blake's report. The University has nearly eliminated the budget deficit for FY 21 by growing enrollment and carefully managing vacant positions. Dr. Blake thanked faculty for their help with working with students and focusing on retention during these difficult times.

Our COVID-19 numbers remain low. At the time of this report, we have fewer than sixty positive cases. Dr. Blake expressed gratitude to Dr. Underwood and her team for leading our response efforts.

The Chancellor reminded all USG presidents that in-person learning will continue through the Spring of 2021 unless the State mandates a change.

The Cabinet will address the Spring calendar and Commencement next week. We are considering hosting a virtual Winter Commencement.

Our search for a Provost will be reactivated in September. The Committee is being populated. Deans will submit committee nominations to Dr. Blake. Dr. Brennan and Ms. Lambert will co-chair the committee. We are grateful that Dr. Matthews has agreed to remain as Interim Provost through FY 21.

The Office of Planning & Budget has given the USG permission to request Enrollment Formula Funding be reinstated for FY 22. We do not know the outcome of this request. If approved, returning to formula funding would be beneficial for MGA.

Report from Interim Provost Matthews

Dr. Matthews thanked the Executive Committee for populating the various committees and boards associated with Faculty Senate. She noted that she will be meeting with the chairs of the Faculty Senate Committees

noted that many committees meet frequently and thus they need more flexibility to

Mr. Swenson raised a similar concern, related to COVID-19, about some departments still requiring in-person attendance. Dr. Matthews affirmed the USG's expectations and guidelines related to our reopening. We can alter in-person attendance with dean level or department chair approval, by changing courses to hybrid or online, but we cannot eliminate attendance in face-to-face courses. Dr. Hazlet Knudsen noted that many programs have strict attendance requirement. Dr. Taylor mentioned that some programs will automatically fail students for attendance violations. A conversation ensued about the flexibility associated with attendance requirements during COVID-19. Dr. Taylor noted that we don't have enough information about attendance requirements for programs throughout the schools. He asked if we need to appoint a task force or ad hoc committee to address the issue.