

Faculty Senate Report to the Missouri Association of Faculty Senates
Missouri State University
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Important Issues

Important issues on our campus this past Fall:

1. Growing enrollment and distribution of associated new funding. Out of the estimated \$1M in new recurring revenue \$600,000 was committed to the provost's office for new faculty lines in departments that showed positive growth in terms of credit hour production and number of majors. The last \$400,000 evaporated as enrollment stabilized in the downward direction.
2. The passing of the Domestic Partner Benefit Package. This action means that sponsored dependents will be eligible for all benefits currently available to traditional "spouses". This is something that the faculty senate has worked on for many years.
3. Faculty Handbook Septennial Review Process discussed below.
4. Implementation of the Professor Incentive Program. This program was originally suggested by a MSU Faculty Senate Action during the previous administration. At that time no action was taken. Our new administration embraced the idea, set up a committee to determine methods of implementation and fully funded the program. It is designed to supplement the salary of full-professors where in recent years salaries have not kept up with peer institutions. It is a merit based system with an emphasis toward continued research/scholarship excellence. The program is administered through the Office of the Provost and workshops are being offered early this fall to assist interested full professors. To be eligible professors must have held that rank for at least five years. It is anticipated that we will award a minimum of 20 this year.
5. Passing of an additional recreational student fee to fund a number of new athletic and recreational facilities. The Board of Governors approved \$42 million in bonds for new construction on campus. The projects included in the bond package are non-academic in nature and they include: residence hall renovations and improvements in the recreation and athletic facilities. The new student approved fee will be used to make the required bond payments.
6. Passing of a number of new programs. The Faculty Senate approved a number of new degree programs: a Doctor of Nursing Anesthesia Practice (DNAP) (which by statute must be approved by the UM system and was) a Master of Fine Arts (MFA). A Master of Applied Second Language Acquisition, and a MS in Applied Behavior Analysis.

Faculty Handbook

This year our Faculty Handbook is undergoing its septennial review in the Faculty Handbook Review Committee with recommended changes to be brought to Faculty Senate this April. At MSU, this is not a committee of the Faculty Senate, but a “joint” committee of the Provost Office and the Faculty Senate. Operationally, this means that changes that are made are done so with Faculty Senate input, *but not necessarily approval*. The administration reserves the right to make changes to the Faculty Senate Handbook that do not meet with Faculty Senate approval and take those changes directly to the Board of Governors.

The septennial review is mostly involves a process to “clean” up the language and make the Handbook self consistent after seven years of amendments. Therefore, nothing substantial is anticipated at this point. However, there may be some issues with respect to tenure and promotion that stimulate further debate. To date, the committee has been very responsive to Faculty Senate concerns. Additional policy clarification relate to academic “entities” within our organizational structure that are not traditional Colleges and Departments, but Schools and Centers.