

Faculty Senate End of Year President's Report

First, it has been an honor and privilege to serve as the Faculty Senate President and have an opportunity to work with an outstanding group of Faculty over the past year to further the vision and mission of the University of South Alabama through the work of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Faculty Senate in particular.

As I reflect on the past senate year, it has been very busy, yet productive. Shortly after my election in May I was invited or appointed to a half a dozen new committees in addition to the FS president responsibilities:

- Institutional Planning and Assessment Committee
- AI Exploratory and Advisory Committee
- Adhoc Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness Committee
- Athletics Council
- Process Improvement Council
- Chief of Police Search Committee

From a FS perspective, this was a well-received invitation that showed genuine interest in encouraging regular and transparent communications between our faculty and administration.

Establishing an Agenda:

The first thing we did in September was to identify our top three priorities for the Faculty Senate year 2023-2024:

- Salaries
- Workload
- Faculty Engagement

The following table will provide more detail about each of the overarching priorities, how they were broken down into various activities, and the progress/results associated with each activity.

2023-2024 Faculty Senate Priorities

Priority	Result(s)
Faculty Salaries:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Increase faculty salaries to least the 50th percentile of peer institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Annual Faculty Salary Surveys to begin Fall 2024 with gained commitment from University to

	raise faculty salaries to the 50th percentile - no timeline given
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual budget plan for cost-of-living adjustments for faculty and staff salaries (based on the annual inflation rate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolution sent to the President & Provost to budget for COLAs annually - President/Provost response is that they want to raise salaries to 50% percentile
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salary increases, COLAs, and number of tenured faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AAUP faculty salary survey data, including salary comparisons among rank, number of tenured faculty, COLA, & average administrative salaries shared with President Bonner, Dr. Kent & the president's council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor salary comparison with peer institutions (because they were not included in the last faculty salary survey) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor Salary Survey in process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paid parental leave benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented administration with data of how many institutions nationwide provide parental leave and how much time they allow.
Workload	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published workload policies for colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still in data gathering phase Assessment process using HERD data report as well as internal institutional data is in process
Faculty Engagement & Recognition	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight exceptional educators around campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership established with ILC to create the Faculty Spotlight
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration among faculty researchers around campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership established with the Department of Research & Economic Development to host a Research Mixer in the spring and fall semesters

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunity to meet and network with colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bi-weekly Faculty/Staff Huddles in Spring and Fall semesters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● University Strategic Priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Asked administration to add a pillar to the existing pillars that supports faculty and invited to have FS representative on the committee for strategic planning priorities in the upcoming year ● Invited to sit on the Institutional Planning & Assessment Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Celebrate faculty senators and their service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● End-of-year FS party
Additional FS initiatives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SB 129 Input and Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Met with stakeholders for input and information dissemination related to impact for SB 129 both pre and post bill signing. ● Are continuing to work with the administration to assess impact of SB 129 and faculty related to courses and research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● R1, from current status of R2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continued to meet with various components of administration on R1 transition, to assess impact on workload, salary and resource needs if transition is made ● Survey was sent to all faculty to assess sentiments for transition as well as general knowledge of impact ● Discussions with administration to ensure all scholarship and research is valued at the university
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bookstore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gathered information to assess impact of new bookstore process on course materials in both Fall 23 and Spring 24 ● Participated in process improvement discussions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor/Guest Parking Pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each college has designated person that can order parking passes to provide their visiting guests
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Other collective efforts of the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate committees over the past year include, but are not limited to:

Problem or Need	Result
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method for onboarding faculty to have access to Canvas courses prior to the first day of classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR, ILC, and FS provided information and tested a new process to ensure the onboarding of newly hired faculty is efficient and they have access to Canvas prior to the first day of class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method to identify processes that need improvement or to be more efficient and/or effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Improvement Council established
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More communication and information sharing among administration, faculty & staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Hall Meetings scheduled with administration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the contributions of past presidents to the university and establish a consultative body for the Faculty Senate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FS Past President Council established
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the creation of a forum by which staff have a voice in shared governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Assembly (Council) in process of being launched
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published procedure on how and when faculty salary reviews are conducted to correct for inversion/compression & equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Faculty Salary Inversion/Compression & Equity Procedure revised and awaiting approval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent concerns for non-sabbatical leave resetting the sabbatical clock, length of required service to the university after returning from sabbatical, adding more feedback to the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sabbatical Policy Revisions in progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow non-tenured faculty to be evaluated on a different set of criteria than that of tenured research faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTT Faculty Promotion Policy & Revisions in progress

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a track for primarily teaching faculty to be evaluated for promotion that is different from the set of criteria used for primarily research faculty 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To add a second Ombudsperson for the university to provide assistance/backup to the existing Ombudsperson given the number of faculty and volume of reports annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ombudsperson policy in progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To have a voice in hiring top positions across campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participated in search committees and interviews for multiple searches, including: Dean of Honor College, Dean of Education & Professional Studies, Dean of the Mitchell College of Business, Chief of Police, VP of Research & Economic Development

Additionally, there are too many things that the Faculty Senate and representative committees have done to list. I hope everyone is satisfied with the work done and will continue under our new leadership through the next senate year.

Lastly, please join me in thanking all of our Faculty Senate leadership for their hard work and dedication, showing up for all of the meetings, leading their committees, and relentlessly advocating for the chief concerns of our Faculty Senators and the Faculty at large.

Thanks,

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