

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
University of Missouri-St. Louis  
Faculty Senate  
September 22, 2020  
Zoom Meeting**

Senate Chair Alice Hall called the Faculty Senate Zoom meeting to order at 4:25 p.m. following the University Assembly meeting. Dr. Hall asked for approval of the Senate minutes from the meeting on April 28, 2020 and the minutes from the Special Senate meeting on June 3, 2020. Both sets of minutes were approved as written.

**Report of the Chairperson (Dr. Alice Hall):**

- Dr. Hall reported that the deadline for the junior faculty travel grant competition is October 12, 2020.
- Dr. Hall reminded the senators to share Senate information with their department. She asked them to watch for the Senate Snapshot which will be e-mailed to them the Friday after a Senate meeting. The Senate Snapshot was created in order to help senators share information with their colleagues.

**Report of the Chancellor (Dr. Kristin Sobolik):**

Chancellor Sobolik had no additional information to report to the Faculty Senate.

**Committee on Committees Report (Dr. Sanjiv Bhatia):**

Dr. Bhatia explained that due to some retirements and changes in committee members, the following nominees were presented to the Senate for committee replacements:

- Committee on Committees – Dr. Pamela Stuerke is the nominee to replace Ms. Mimi Duncan as the Business representative due to Ms. Duncan's retirement at the end of this semester.
- ATP Committee – Dr. Gualtiero Piccinini is the nominee to replace Dr. Laura Miller as the Humanities representative.
- Physical Facilities Committee – Dr. Brandon Ofem is the nominee to replace Ms. Mimi Duncan as the Business representative.
- Research Misconduct Committee – Dr. Minsoo Kang is the nominee to replace Dr. Joe Carroll as the Humanities representative due to Dr. Carroll's retirement.
- Spring Research Panel has two nominees as follows:
  - Dr. Billy Dunaway is the nominee to replace Dr. Carroll as the Humanities representative.
  - Dr. Yan Tian is the nominee to replace Dr. Marisa Omori as a Social Sciences representative.

**The Faculty Senate unanimously approved all of the above nominations.**

**Intercampus Faculty Cabinet (IFC) Report (Dr. Pamela Stuerke):**

Dr. Stuerke reported that the IFC retreat was held by Zoom on August 4 and 5, 2020. Some of the topics discussed were as follows:

- An Information Technology report was provided with updates on software transitions, email security, and strategic planning.
- The members of IFC received a briefing on eLearning with details about online teaching certification and course quality standards (federal regulations and HLC accreditation).

Proctoring options were also discussed with the suggestion that alternative assessment be made when possible.

- A financial update was provided. It was noted that the financial planning horizon is now 60-90 days.
- President Choi briefed the IFC on the implementation of the Council of Chancellors and the UM System governing structure.

Dr. Stuerke reported that the IFC also met by Zoom on September 4, 2020. At this meeting, they received information on the following topics:

- The IFC were briefed on government relations and their meetings with legislators.
- Information was provided on the role of the UM System General Counsel.
- Human Resources representatives updated the IFC. The IFC was informed that Fidelity would be the only investment choice in the employee benefit package. TIAA-CREF was no longer available as an option. Open enrollment for benefits will be held late Oct/early Nov.

Dr. Stuerke also noted that the IFC met by Zoom last summer with members of the Intercampus Student Council. They had a productive conversation.

### **Executive Session:**

The Faculty Senate met in Executive Session to review nominations for honorary degrees.

The Faculty Senate also discussed the following proposal and rationale regarding honorary degrees:

#### **Proposal:**

The Faculty Senate of the University of Missouri-St. Louis recommends that the UM President and Curators grant permission for the conferral of honorary degrees during the 2020-2021 academic year "in absentia," for any degree candidates who have already been approved by the Curators for degrees or who may be approved during this academic year.

#### **Rationale:**

Current guidelines on honorary degrees do not allow for them to be conferred at virtual ceremonies unless the faculty requests and is granted permission by the curators. The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to make in-person ceremonies impossible or inadvisable in many parts of the state for much of the academic year. This request for permission is being coordinated across all four Universities. If granted, it would allow each University the option of conferring honorary degrees at virtual ceremonies, if recommended by a University's commencement planning team, during the pandemic.

**The Faculty Senate unanimously approved the above proposal.**

Dr. Hall asked if there was any other business. Hearing none, the meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erika Gibb  
Senate/Assembly Secretary

(Minutes written by Loyola Harvey, Faculty Senate/University Assembly Office)