

Approved: March 20, 2018

2017-2018: Meeting # 5

**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE APPROVED MINUTES
FEBRUARY 20, 2018 3:45 PM
115 INTERNATIONAL CENTER**

Present: Provost Youatt, R. Abramovitch, E. Appiagyei-Dankah, Y. Bolumole, A. Borcila, N. Bunge, L. Cloud, J. Liard (for S. Counts), M. Debase, J. Dulebohn, B. Dutton, K. Foley, J. Francis, J. Goddeeris, J. Goldbort, A. Smith (for D. Gould), D. Ewoldsen (for K. Hampton), C. Hogan, G. Hoppenstand, M. Johnson, I. Kovar-Gough, L. Lapidus, Y. Liu, G. Lourens, L. Mansfield, L. McCabe, M. Mechtel, J. Meier, M. Miklavcic, G. Miksicek, K. Miller, D. Miner, D. Moriarty, J. Morningstar, K. Sedatole (for K. Noe), R. Ofoli, A. Olomu, A. Weber (for N. Parameswaran), A. Pegler-Gordon, R. Quispe-Agnoli, D. Rivera, S. Safferman, A. Sanders-Jackson, J. Schwartz, R. Bowles (for L. Skibbe), S. Gasteyer (for J. Smith), R. Spiro, G. Stone, E. Strangas, G. Swain, R. Edwards (for R. Sweeder), R. Tegtmeier, L. Tortorelli, J. Vargas, E. Watts, D. Wilson, B. Zandstra, R. Zegers

Absent: Interim President Engler, G. Breitzer, S.H. Choi, R. Cichy, M. Floer, L. Harris, R. LaDuca, V. Mandrekar, B. Mavis, R. Pratt, A. Ross, E. Rosser, R. Schwab, J. Seita, P. Soranno, J. Tang, T. Tomlinson, E. Torrez, P. White

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:45 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda for February 20, 2018

The agenda for February 20, 2018 was approved as presented.

3. Approval of Draft Minutes for January 16, 2018

The minutes for January 16, 2018 were approved as distributed.

4. President's Remarks: Interim John Engler (out of town)

5. Provost's Remarks: Dr. June Youatt

Provost Youatt reported that she had a conversation with the Deans, Directors, and Chairs from across campus (all of MSU's academic leadership). She said that this conversation was not about the Provost sharing information, but that it was really about the assembled group deciding on some of the key issues and how they would define the challenges facing MSU, offering their recommendations, but also suggesting what could be done in the next 30 days. The topics covered included such issues as financial transparency, cultural change, fostering and advancing leadership, effective governance, survivor support, and delivery of behavioral health services to our students.

6. Chairperson's Remarks: Dr. Laura McCabe

Dr. McCabe reported that efforts are underway to streamline communication between the Steering Committee and the faculty At-Large. She said that a listserv has just been developed so that the Steering Committee can now directly communicate to the entire MSU community, which will help us to enhance more timely communication. She noted that interim President Engler asked for specific examples of top down administration at MSU that has resulted in the absence of faculty input. Thus, a survey will be distributed to the Academic Congress where input can be provided and feedback about specific situations.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1. Slate of Nominees for The Steering Committee At-Large, for Endorsement, Dr. Laura McCabe

The Slate of Nominees for The Steering Committee At-Large was presented to Faculty Senate members for Endorsement. A motion to approve the Slate was made and first and seconded. **The motion carried.**

7.2. Slate of Nominees for the Athletic Council, for Endorsement, Dr. Laura McCabe

The Slate for the Athletic Council was present to Faculty Senate members. A motion to approve the Slate was made and first and seconded. **The motion carried.**

7.3. University Committee on Curriculum (UCC) Report, Professor Marci Mechtel, UCC Chairperson ([Long Report](#), [click on Link](#))

The UCC Report was presented to Faculty Senate Members.

Professor Mechtel reported that on February 1st, 2018 the Full Committee of UCC met and approved the following: Four new programs: a Journalism Minor effective fall of 2018; a Clinical Medicine Master of Arts effective Summer Semester of 2018, a Legal Studies Masters effective Fall Semester of 2018; and a Sports Journalism Minor effective Fall Semester of 2018. She added that UCC approved 13 program changes, and three program deletions. She said that 19 new courses were approved, 111 course changes were approved, and that 9 course deletions were approved.

Regarding moratoriums, Professor Mechtel stated that a moratorium in Quantitative Biology was approved. She added that a moratorium in Latin as a disciplinary teaching Minor was approved, effective Fall Semester of 2018 (through Spring Semester) to Fall Semester of 2018, as well as a discontinuation in the American Studies Ph.D., a Russian Disciplinary Teaching Minor, and a History Disciplinary Teaching Minor, both effective either Summer Semester or Spring Semester of 2018.

A motion to approve the Report was made and first and seconded. **The motion carried.**

7.4. Next Steps Following the Vote of No Confidence in the Board of Trustees – Discussion (and University Committee on Academic Governance (UCAG) and Faculty Comments)

Dr. McCabe said that she wanted to discuss two items regarding the vote of no confidence. The first item involves the brief discussion of interactions that the At-Large members of the Steering Committee had with the Board of Trustees. The second item involves the faculty input that has been received through the MSU Academic

Governance website. She noted that the Steering Committee and the At-Large Members of the Steering Committee developed a structure of conversation based on this input. She said that the one thing that needed to be addressed about the MSU Board of Trustees involves the function of the Board of Trustees and shared Academic Governance regarding including MSU community members in decision making.

Dr. McCabe said that the Board of Trustees is responsible for the effectiveness of institutional policies, and they should hold themselves accountable to ensuring shared governance that reflects core academic values and supports institutional progress. She noted the response from Board of Trustee member Dianne Byrum. Byrum's reply is as follows: "I completely understand the anger and frustration amongst students, faculty, and staff whose trust and confidence in MSU has been understandably shaken. For too long, MSU has failed to be transparent, accountable and compassionate and we need to change that. I'm committed to doing my part to increase transparency, promote accountability and improve communications so this tragic situation never happens again."

Dr. McCabe also reported that discussions were held with Trustee Brian Breslin, who has taken a no pay leave to focus on MSU and facilitate MSU faculty input moving forward. She added that Trustee Brian Breslin met with the At-Large Members of the Steering Committee, and following his apology discussed ways to move forward. Trustees Mitch Lyons and Dan Kelly also offered apologies.

Dr. McCabe said that she desired to receive ideas from faculty regarding what next steps should be taken. One of the steps that she offered was the establishment of a performance plan for the MSU Board of Trustees, noting that faculty are constantly being reviewed for their performance, but that there are no reviews for the Board of Trustees in place. She added that a performance plan should be for the MSU faculty to review the Board of Trustees. Discussion ensued.

Professor Andaluna Borcila stated:

"My name is Andaluna Borcila and I'm from James Madison College and this is my colleague Anna Pegler-Gordon. You've probably seen us stand up here a few times in the last month or so.

... I think we should ask the Board to step down in no uncertain terms, because this was the process outlined in the letter of the Steering Committee, and the faculty at this University and in the Senate voted no confidence. We voted no confidence, and I was very surprised that this vote of no confidence was not made clear to this Board, and I assumed that when we made the vote of no confidence that we will be asking them to step down.

... The Board's response, which I find patronizing but I also think there's a problem with how the message was communicated to them. The Board's response is not the only reason or the first reason we should ask them to do that, but it's symptomatic. They basically are confident they can restore our trust in them. How can they be so confident when we tell them we have no confidence in them? Are they taking us seriously? I really don't think they are. It seems very important at this juncture we just found our voice. We have a mandate to take a strong stance. Resign. Let's see what they will do, because

we got our voice and then we're like oh yeah, maybe we can review and I agree we have reviewed them.

... Additionally, as they resign, that's my personal opinion that we should ask them to resign and that they should resign. That's my opinion. Speaking of what we need to do, I think we should ask them to resign and as we do that we should ask them to also adapt a few changes in Bylaws and a process for electing the President that we can write into these Bylaws.

... I ask us to ask them this not as a way for us to regain our confidence in them but so that they can undo some of the wrong that they've done and be accountable for that. In the spirit, we propose some changes. We have tried to pull this rather quickly. We've worked with a couple of different student groups and basically, Anna will go into this to distribute them. They're not many. They're in fact two. One has to do with, I was saying, the process of electing the President, and the other one has to do with a more inclusive representation of faculty and student voice. They're modest changes. We realize they need to be vetted but we felt a sense of urgency and wanting to bring something concrete to the table. As we ask them to resign, we ask them to adapt these so that whatever happens next we are protected and have a voice.

... Finally, I just want to say this that I appreciate the ... well, I don't, President Engler wanting us to tell him specific instances of top down government at this institution, but we as a faculty have a voice and we are aware that we need to really look at Academic Governance both in terms of its structure and the culture. I think we have to work on these changes and bylaws and in culture, which fractured our voices and made it really weak. We do not need President Engler to tell us this and to ask us for specific examples. We need to own our voice as faculty at this institution.”

Professor Anna Pegler-Gordon also made a statement, as follows:

“The reason we suggested these specific changes is because we think it is a matter of urgency that we move on proposing specific changes to the Board of Trustees' Bylaws. We realize there are larger issues that need to be addressed, but this is a matter of great urgency. The two that we are proposing that you can see, and I apologize that we didn't print out enough for every single person, but the two that we are proposing are: the first one is to make a board that surrounds the Board of Trustees that is more inclusive that includes ... we could call it obviously, this is a proposal, we could call it the ‘University Board’ that would not only include the Board of Trustees but two faculty members, a representative of the ASMSU undergraduate student body and representative of COGS graduate student body. That would not be like participatory, advisory, or “we'll listen to you”. That will be a full voting body to actually take full decisions on all of the important matters that concern the University.

... Now, constitutionally we understand that the Board of Trustees is responsible for electing the President. What we have said, the second major proposal that we have put here is that the Board of Trustees' Bylaws affirms that the search for the President shall be conducted with faculty students and staff playing a central role throughout the process including on the Search Committee and defining the criteria for the President, but also very critically that the University Board would have a vote on this. I think this

is absolutely critical that there should be a mechanism for this decision to go before Academic Governance.

... If two thirds of the Academic Congress ...two thirds of the MSU community oppose the decision that the University Board makes, the Board should not be able to ram down the community's throat a really bad choice for our next President. We really honestly believe these are modest changes that it just seems completely unreasonable that a body that is not elected by us should then be able to force us to take a terrible choice. We think that a two thirds majority not of the voting members, but of the entire Academic Congress, is a reasonable limit to say that you should not be able to force a substantial majority of the university to accept the President that they find unacceptable.

... At that point, the Board of Trustees would elect, if at least one third approve, which is a low bar, but at least one third approved then the Board of Trustees shall elect the President. We think that this is modest, it's urgent and as best we can tell; it's constitutional acceptable.”

Vigorous discussion ensued where it was recommended that faculty concerns about the Board of Trustees' Bylaws be sent to the University Committee on Academic Governance for their review and recommendations.

A motion was made and seconded to vote for a vote for the resignation of the MSU Board of Trustees, and to send this recommendation to the Steering Committee as an action item. **The motion carried.**

FINAL WORDING FOR FACULTY SENATE VOTES:

VOTE #1: Vote to have a vote for Board of Trustees resignation

1. A = yes, B = no

Voting took place and 85 % in attendance voted for a vote on the Board of Trustees resignation.

VOTE #2: Vote to ask board of trustees to resign

2. A = yes, B = no, and C = Abstain;

Voting took place and 83% in attendance voted “yes” to ask the Board of Trustees to resign.

FINAL VOTE #3: after much discussion on wording:

Vote on if there is only one specific reason for the BOT resignation

3. A = Yes, B = No and C = Abstain

77% in attendance voted “no” on a specific reason on the resignation request.

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn and was first and seconded. **The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.**