

Approved: March 20, 2018

2017-2018: Emergency Meeting

**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE APPROVED MINUTES
FEBRUARY 13, 2018 3:15 PM
115 INTERNATIONAL CENTER**

Present: Provost Youatt, R. Abramovitch, E. Appiagyei-Dankah, S. Vickery (for Y. Bolumole), A. Borcila, G. Breitzer, N. Bunge, R. Cichy, L. Cloud, J. Ilardo (for S. Counts), M. Dease, J. Dulebohn, B. Dutton, M. Floer, K. Foley, J. Goddeeris, J. Goldbort, D. Gould, K. Hampton, L. Harris, C. Hogan, G. Hoppenstand, M. Johnson, I. Kovar-Gough, R. LaDuca, L. Lapidus, Y. Liu, G. Lourens, L. Mansfield, L. McCabe, M. Mechtel, J. Meier, M. Miklavcic, G. Miksicek, K. Miller, D. Sheridan (for D. Miner), D. Moriarty, J. Morningstar, K. Noe, R. Ofoli, A. Olomu, G. Francis (for S. Pager), N. Parameswaran, A. Pegler-Gordon, R. Quispe-Agnoli, D. Rivera, A. Ross, E. Rosser, S. Safferman, A. Sanders-Jackson, R. Schwab, J. Schwartz, J. Seita, R. Bowles (for L. Skibbe), S. Gasteyer (for J. Smith), G. Roloff (for P. Soranno), W. Spielman, R. Spiro, G. Stone, G. Swain, R. Sweeder, R. Tegtmeier, T. Tomlinson, E. Torrez, L. Totorelli, E. Watts, P. White, D. Wilson, H. Melakeberhan (for B. Zandstra), R. Zegers

Absent: President Engler, S.H. Choi, I. Lee, V. Mandrekar, R. Pratt, J. Tang, J. Vargas

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:15pm.

2. Approval of Agenda for February 13, 2018

The **agenda for February 13, 2018** was **approved** with an amendment requested, as listed below:

Professor Shawnee Vickery requested that her statement be transcribed as stated below:

“My name is Shawnee Vickery and I request that the agenda be amended to change the wording of 6.1 so that 6.2 does not occur, at least not in its current form, for the following reason. The current motion on this agenda is a vote of No Confidence in the Board of Trustees. But the devil is in the details. In their January 31st memo to the faculty, the At—Large Faculty Members of the MSU Steering Committee stated “...should the Board indeed appoint ex—Governor Engler [as MSU President] we will sadly be forced to bring a motion to hold a vote of No Confidence in the Board of Trustees to Academic Congress via electronic ballot.” The At-Large Members of the Steering Committee brought a No Confidence Motion before the faculty on that same date. This email with the link for voting referred to the immediacy of recent events involving the selection (and selection process) of the Interim President as the rationale for the vote of No Confidence.

I am not sure if the At-Large Members of the Steering Committee realize how insensitive and tone deaf this motion makes them appear. For months, the Steering Committee and the faculty have been aware of the failure of MSU administrators over the years to stop

and prevent the rape and sexual molestation of young women and little girls at the hands of Larry Nasser. During this time, both before and after the resignation of President Lou Anna Simon, there was no call for a vote of No Confidence in the Board due to this egregious lapse in leadership and accountability. Casting a vote of No Confidence because you object to the selection and selection process for the Interim President sends the message that you did not have a problem with the Board of Trustees staying in place UNTIL the Board had the audacity to ignore your input and appoint former Governor John Engler as Interim President. THEN, and ONLY THEN, did the Steering Committee call for a vote of No Confidence in the Board.

This action by the At-Large Members of the Steering Committee is outrageous on several levels. First, the At-Large Members' promise at the beginning of their email to the faculty to "to change the culture of Michigan State University so that this [by which they meant the horrific sexual abuse of girls and young women at the hands of Larry Nasser] will never happen again" made it seem to faculty reading the email that the vote of No Confidence in the Board of Trustees was about MSU's egregious failure to stop and prevent this criminal behavior. Only a careful reading of the email reveals that the vote of No Confidence is NOT about these little girls and young women and what they suffered. Instead, it is about the Board's process for appointing and its selection of former Governor Engler as Interim President. In essence, the At-Large Members of the Steering Committee used these brave women to achieve their political aims. How low can you go to further a political agenda? The At-Large Members of the Steering Committee should be ashamed.

In their email, the At-Large Members of the Steering Committee stated that they demanded that the Board appoint a woman with extensive academic leadership experience and experience devising and implementing programs to mitigate sexual harassment and sexual abuse. If someone demanded that a man be appointed, the At-Large Members would no doubt call him or her a sexist. But make no mistake. Those who blatantly call for gender discrimination are the real sexists. Furthermore, what happened to these women and children is not about sexual harassment. It is about sexual abuse which includes rape and child molestation. Let's not confuse sexual harassment and sexual abuse. Sexual abuse is a criminal offense. When there is an allegation of sexual abuse – the police need to be called, and called IMMEDIATELY.

Because of their deceptive email to the faculty, some faculty thought they were voting "YES" on a vote of No Confidence in the Board of Trustees based on MSU's egregious failure to stop and prevent Larry Nasser's criminal behavior. But it is actually a vote of No Confidence in the Board because of their appointment of Governor Engler as Interim President. (This is exactly what the At-Large Members' email states. I have a copy here for anyone who would like one).

It is laughable that the one action the Board of Trustees took that is truly in MSU's best interests, namely, the appointment of an external, experienced administrator with sterling character is the one action the At-Large Members of the Steering Committee are upset about. President Engler has many talents including the financial and budgeting experience to ensure that MSU will be able to meet the legitimate claims of these brave women and girls against the university so their healing can progress uninterrupted. But unfortunately, the vote of No Confidence that was planned for today is not about the

failure of MSU's leadership team to prevent rape and child molestation, rather it is about the appointment (and process of appointment) of former Governor Engler. Shame on us if we vote for this!

To avoid public embarrassment for the Steering Committee and the Faculty Senate, I make a motion to amend the agenda to place a new vote of No Confidence before the faculty, and then, the Faculty Senate that is based on MSU's failure, and ultimately the Board's failure, to prevent and stop the criminal behavior of Larry Nasser. This is a vote of No Confidence that I and many others will support for the right reason.

THE NEW VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE READS AS FOLLOWS:

We vote No Confidence in the Board of Trustees of MSU due to MSU's failure, and ultimately the Board's failure, to prevent and stop the criminal behavior of Larry Nasser.

I ask that the agenda be amended to replace the current vote of No Confidence with this one. It is the least we can do to show our support for the brave women and girls who suffered so horrifically at the hands of Larry Nasser."

The Faculty Senate recommended that Professor Vickery bring this statement and request to The Steering Committee.

Professor Greg Swain then requested that a motion be made that allows open discussion that normally takes place at the end of this meeting, moving it up to the beginning of the meeting.

The motion was first and seconded. **The motion carried.**

3. **Interim President's Remarks:** John Engler – out of town
4. **Provost's Remarks:** Dr. June Youatt
Dr. Youatt forewent her comments.
5. **Chairperson's Remarks:** Dr. Laura McCabe

Dr. McCabe thanked everyone for attending today's emergency Faculty Senate meeting. She also thanked those who have been sending comments, and providing important feedback. She noted that the Steering Committee reads these comments, and that sometimes it is difficult to reply to everybody, adding that the Steering Committee incorporates these comments in the Steering Committee's thinking.

Dr. McCabe reported that Faculty voice is very critical in the Governance of Higher Education, and that obtaining this kind of input from a variety of stakeholders is very important. It allows for better decision making; it helps institutions to make and meet their strategic goals.

Dr. McCabe discussed the background of the situation: the At-Large Steering Committee met with the Board of Trustees on the 29th of January, providing feedback about the selection of the interim President. She stated the position that faculty has a voice in such an important decision as the selection of an interim President of MSU, and though faculty does not have a vote on the selection, it does have the right to provide essential input.

Dr. McCabe noted that the Board of Trustees did not listen to faculty input, and only found about the selection of the interim President the following day in the media, adding that the

Board of Trustees made their selection without appropriate consultation from the MSU community.

As a consequence, Dr. McCabe stated that the Steering Committee spent time discussing this issue, and the At-Large Members had made a statement to the Board of Trustees. She said that given the magnitude of this issue, the At-Large Members of the Steering Committee had sent that email to all the Academic Congress, asking if they would agree that a vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees should be put on the Faculty Senate agenda here today.

Dr. McCabe reported that of the 2,776 voting MSU faculty, 1907 votes were received. And of those, the “yes” votes totaled 1,653, which is approximately 60% of the total voting faculty, thus providing a voting majority for faculty to move forward. Faculty voting “no” was approximately 7% of the total vote, and 2% abstained.

Dr. McCabe stated that the purpose of this special Faculty Senate meeting was to discuss and move on a vote of no confidence of the MSU Board of Trustees. Dr. McCabe made clear that the proposed vote of no confidence stands alone, without additions, as was mandated by the vote of Academic Congress.

Dr. McCabe requested discussion of the no confidence vote, and extensive discussion ensued. The question was called regarding the faculty vote of no confidence and a vote was made by the Faculty Senate.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Action to take a vote of Faculty Senate Members regarding a vote of no confidence in the MSU Board of Trustees.

6.2 There were 70 voting Faculty Senate Members who voted (a near perfect attendance), plus five Non-Voting Members:

The vote was 94% “yes” (61 votes) for no confidence in the MSU Board of Trustees, and 4% “no” (4 votes) against the vote of no confidence.

7. Comments from the Floor

It was recommended that the next step for The Steering Committee is to communicate the Faculty Senate vote of no confidence to the MSU Board of Trustees.

Lorenzo Santavicca, President of ASMSU, commended the MSU faculty for this action. He added that he would also like to correct the fact that ASMSU was, in fact, the first governing organization at MSU to make a statement of no confidence with the Administration and with the Board of Trustees, as far as the latter’s handling of sexual assault on the MSU campus, and especially regarding the case of Larry Nassar on our campus.

He noted that the students at MSU have been at the forefront of this situation, and ASMSU commends their student peers for their efforts.

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn and was first and seconded. **The motion carried.** The meeting adjourned at 4:21pm.