

December 8, 2009 Faculty Senate Agenda
Holloway Hall, Room 119
(3:30-5:00 p.m.)

1. Approval of minutes from the Faculty Senate Meetings of November 10, 2009.
2. Remarks from the Provost, Dr. Diane Allen.
3. Announcements from the Senate President.
Senate Structure
Departments vs. Disciplines
4. Committee Reports:
CUSF report – Sen. Rieck
Faculty Financial Affairs Committee (See below)
Ad hoc Honors Convocation Committee
5. Unfinished Business:
6. New Business:
Dr. Neufeldt and Chief Lashley on campus security
Sen. Khazeh – Motion concerning FWC membership
8. Adjournment.

Report to Faculty Senate from Faculty Financial Affairs Committee, Dec. 8, 2009

We recognize the daunting task of making budget decisions during a time of crises. Indeed, the administration at Salisbury University has gone to great lengths to provide timely information to faculty and staff as well as making tough decisions without implementing job cuts. However, many tough budget cuts have been made by policy makers, and the University System of Maryland has gone to great lengths to insulate students from the negative consequences of the budget crisis. Instead, much of the burden of the crisis has fallen on state of Maryland employees, including the faculty and staff at Salisbury University.

Because the students have been protected from the budget cuts that have been used to fill budget gaps, there is a growing concern among faculty that the budget cuts are being perceived as having no negative effects on life at Salisbury University. This is clearly not the case. The cuts have not been painless or without consequences for students as well as faculty. Academic life at the university has been negatively affected as follows: not filling vacant faculty positions causes students to be placed in classrooms with larger student/faculty ratios, negatively impacting the quality of instruction. Students are finding it more difficult to enroll in required classes, which can delay their graduation date, impose a financial burden and negatively impact retention.

The professional development of faculty members has been damaged because of budget cuts. Money for travel has been reduced while professional expectations have remained the same. Personal finances must be used if professional development is to be continued. Some faculty members are delaying retirements because of fear that a position will not be replaced and/or because their personal finances have been depleted by the economic downturn. Morale among faculty is extremely low. The pay cuts taken by SU faculty have made paying bills and loans difficult as well. Pay cuts by university faculty have worsened revenue collections of the state government as faculty earn less and spend less.

In summary, the budget cuts have not been undertaken with a result of “business as usual” at SU. Much of the burden of filling budget gaps that has been absorbed by the faculty is trickling down to Salisbury University’s students. Any future pay cuts directed toward faculty will only continue to exacerbate the problems that have resulted from pay cuts to date.

Below, we have included a brief list of the ways that the decreased operating budget has negatively impacted Salisbury University.

- a. Faculty have delayed retirements because of fear that position will not be replaced or because defined benefit plans have been negatively affected by pay cuts.
- b. Students are finding it more difficult to enroll in classes and when they get in classes, they are finding increased student/faculty ratios.
- c. The frequency of upper level course offerings has been reduced, which may impact the ability of students to graduate in a timely manner.
- d. Faculty funds for travel have been reduced even though professional expectations have not been reduced. Thus, faculty members have to use personal finances to maintain appropriate professional development levels.
- e. Pay cuts have made paying bills and loans more difficult.

- f. The university's attempt at eliminating salary inequities has been stopped.
- g. Faculty morale is low as we are being asked to do more with less, with no end in sight.
- h. As facilities are closed because of furloughs, academic activities are affected. For example, during Spring Break 2009, the library was used 493 times. It will be closed for Spring Break 2010. During the days for which the library will be closed this December, the library had 128 visits for the same period in 2008.