

DAFVM Senate Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2025

Recording:

<https://msstate.webex.com/msstate/ldr.php?RCID=5c28244e3acaf290f3a0cde0dc0392dc>

DAFVM Faculty Senate Member Attendees:

Jaffe, Michael (Chair); Correa, Sandra (Co-Chair); Rios, Leyla; Franca, Fred; Han, Samin; Wilson, Jeff; Burke, Benjamin; Mills, Devon; Morrison Carley; Nanduri, Bindu; Mathews, Rahel; Marcus McGee; Grissett-Hartwick, Gretchen; Coker, Christine; Manginsay, Natalie; Yu, Fei

Excused: Adhikari, Pratima (Secretary); Woolums, Amelia; Ganapathi, Shankar; ; Liu, Chang; Lee, Alison; Li, Tongyin; Poudel, Krishna; Vance, Carrie; Zurweller, Brendan

Absent: Gholson, Drew; Hilbun-Benoit, Anne-Howard; Howell, Trey; Karunakaran, Ganesh Kumar; Lloyd, Debra; VanderSchaaf, Curtis; Sparks, Bekah;

Call to Order-Meeting called to order by Dr. Michael Jaffe.

Roll Call-Recorded by Dr. Michael Jaffe

Approval of Minutes

STANDING REPORTS

Office of the Vice President: Dr. Keith Coble

Dr. Coble mentioned that the fish innovation lab has been told to stop spending money. And NIH has said that they are going to cap funding at 15 % overhead. The division and campus do not know if these are temporary; just there are lots of different speculations. He compared this to COVID where we were making decisions today, not knowing what's going to happen next week. Forestry and wildlife funding was withdrawn today. That funding that came through, it was a great million dollars of worth which is no longer available (Dr. Wes Burger). This 15% OH camp may spread to other agencies, which may hurt the University badly. He mentioned that Dr. Ashli Brown and he are going to DC for a meeting on Monday, Feb 24 where they are going to have most of their congressional staffers represented at an event. They are also taking some students with them and advocates for the division.

Regarding the state legislature, they are they're going through the process like a three-month session, so we will kind of know where we ended up at on April 1st. The House of

Representatives came out with a permanent elimination of the state income tax right after the session started, Josh Hardnett, who is in the Senate, proposed an alternative like yesterday. Their group will be running down to Jackson to talk more and make our case with State Legislature.

The faculty recruitment survey and document will be interesting to look at once it comes out

Dr. Ashli Brown: She invited all the DAFVM senators and department to participate in the event on March 21st from 9 am to 4 pm. The event is called Food and Ag as National Security. The goal will be to highlight the capabilities that we have not only in the division but across campus, and a lot of outside speakers. Hopefully we will have video by Senator Wicker, from the security and Ag world. It is also an event for students. There is a course developed, and there will be an opportunity for them to hear about the course. It's gonna be team talk from faculty all over campus. And so there will be a lightning round about the course and then also a study broad opportunity. When we register for the event, there is an opportunity to click if you want to attend virtually as well, so there'll be a virtual option. However, face to face is encouraged for the networking speaker and to meet the keynote speaker.

Dean, College of Forest Resources (CFR) & Forest and Wildlife Research Center (FWRC): Dr. Wes Burger

Three or four years ago, the college had a task force on student evaluations. And as part of that, we switched student evaluation from a paper version to a digital version. And when we did that, our response rate from the in-class delivered course or evaluation went from about 70 % down to about 30 % because of the challenge of just telling students to go to the website and do their evaluations. At that time, we were doing class climate. This year we have changed to smart evals. It's the same evaluation we used last year, but it's a new platform and it's a good platform. And there's a lot of things right now campus wide, we're at 42 % response rate on this. Faculty are encouraged to go to this website, it's their smart evals, and this is their instructor training. Instructor has access to the evaluations that are delivered in your class. Faculty can use the core evaluation that is accepted by the university widely, so they can add up to three questions of their own, and can add those to the same questions to all your courses if you want, and to all future evaluations. Dr. Burger encouraged faculty to use those 3 training videos that were in the <https://info.smartevals.com/instructortraining/>

There are a lot of uncertainty about the federal grants that are unknown. Unless we get a stop work order, our guidance is to continue to proceed with the activities that are under the program of work, but be conservative in your spending. When we get guidance from our program officer, though, whether it's just we're working on it or especially if you get a stop work order, the OSP and administration office needs to know. We might be able to find a way to manage those graduate students or staff that are already in that grant. Might need

to talk to our department head, dean, or director and come up with a path forward for that student.

CFR, every year hosts the Carlton Owen, the lecture seminar series. This is around Earth Day because it's focused on conservation. This year they are having Katie Fernbolts as their Carlton Owen speakers. They work with the US endowment. This time it is on April 9th at 2 pm in Thompson auditorium.

May 19th and 20th will be the dates for the workshop for the project management essential skills for PIs. ORED is working with the office and is gonna host one that's focused on PIs. There were a lot of project managers and staff level positions and centers and institutes at the previous one. In the 20th, they have gotten seats for 24 faculty in it. There's NO cost to your unit, but there is limited seating in it.

Past year, CFR was up 7.6 %; up 29 % for new freshmen admits relative to where they were this time last year.

Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine: Dr. Nicholas Frank

Dr. Frank emphasized that the DVM program does not use Smart Evals in their programs yet. It's a great time of year for the CVM because it is right in the middle of student interviews. They usually have about 118 new veterinary school students every year, and they recently interviewed about 350 applicants; they had about 1600 applicants. The interview is a 5-day process.

They have been designing a new farm animal hospital and outpatient cattle handling facility that they got funding from the state for last year. So a group of faculty is working on that. They are through that initial design phase that goes now on to bidding for a construction company, so it is good news to have passed that milestone. They are also engaging in trying to put together a masters in one health program. This program will be the lead college on, but other colleges in DAFVM will also participate. They are also in a process of hiring a faculty member who has actually shown a strong interest in the program. They are expecting to launch this in Fall 2026.

Director Extension Service: Dr. Angus Catchot

No Report

Holland Faculty Senate Updates: Dr. Michael Jaffe

The faculty senate from January was very brief with no significant issues. Just a few Q and A sessions. He announced that his office was searching for a new ombudsperson. Dr. Gary Jackson, the associate vice president of outreach and engagement, gave an interesting discussion on how engagement, outreach and extension to the group. The recording of the senate meeting is online if anyone is interested in hearing.

Faculty Housing Appeals Committee. Dr. Michael Jaffe

No New Appeals, no discussions or petitions

Report from Dr. Sandra Correa.

They were asked by Dr. Coble to come up with a task force and create some guidelines for best practices for having new faculty. The approach was to take questionnaires and send them to Dr. Coble for final approval and then to all faculty hires within the last 5 years, Chairs of Search Committees, and Department Heads. They basically developed the draft of the questionnaires, in the November meeting, several people submitted names of the reviewers who were external to the task force. Out of six different people, they received feedback from four different people. So, after refining the questionnaire, the last one was sent to Dr. Coble and got approval to move forward. There is a section on recent hires and it has highlighted what they liked about MS State. Once Dr. Coble's office approves these questionnaires, they will circulate and ask the survey to be returned by the end of March. Answers will be compiled in April, and then developing the best practices report before the spring semester ends.

Motion to adjourn: Dr. Jaffe