DAFVM Senate Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2026
1:30 p.m. Bost 205

Recording:
https://vimeo.com/1194742759/a1afc35266?share=copy&fl=sv&fe=ci

DAFVM Faculty Senate Member Attendees: Brookshire, Cooper; Chesser, Daniel; Han, SaMin; Harvey, Kelsey; Hilbun-Benoit, Anne-Howard; Howell, George; Knight, Tricia; Labrin, Sophia Egana; McGee, Marcus; Mills, Devon; Morrison, Carley; Rios, Leyla; Ruiz, Manuel; Towles, Tyler;

Excused: Badial, Peres; Boltz, Tim; Jaffe, Michael; Li, Tongyin; Poudel, Krishna.

Absent: Burk, Benjamin; Etheredge, Cole; Franca, Fred; Karunakaran, Ganesh Kumar; Liu, Chang; Mathews, Rahel; Pechan, Tibor; Petrie-Hanson, Lora; Sparks, Bekah; Temple, Al; Vance, Carrie; VanderSchaaf, Curtis; Williams, Matthew.

Call to Order-Meeting called to order by Dr. Leyla Rios.

Roll Call-Recorded by Dr. Leyla Rios and Kelsey Harvey

Approval of Minutes

*Correction to September minutes: Dr. Temple seconded motion to approve May minutes.

Minutes from September approved as amended. Motion to approve by Dr. Marcus McGee, seconded by Dr. Tricia Knight

STANDING REPORTS

Office of the Vice President: Dr. Keith Coble

Congressional staffers visited this past week. Visited biochar facility, largest in the country. Staffers came to campus, discussed the One Health and Extension Health Program, tasted products developed at MSU, and heard presentations from faculty and department heads. Staffers toured farms and had a great trip.

Trying to prepare for the legislative session next spring. Thinking about requests for facilities. Research facilities act allows for funding from federal level, require a 1:1 state match.

Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences & MAFES: in representation Dr. Darrell Sparks

Ag and Bio Engineering Department Head position open, committee is preparing to invite candidates to interview.

Dr. Catchot and Dr. Sparks are preparing materials to begin the School of Human Sciences Department Head Search.

Director for Southern Rural Development Center interviews took place, thank you for the participation.

VP for ORED search is underway.

CALS Discovery Day 9/11/2026 hosted over 400 students with hands-on activities.

University had career expo week of 9/16/2026, CALS specific section had 24 employers participate.

Enrollment looking good, likely will set another record. Expected to exceed previous benchmarks.

ORED hosted its annual awards last week, all 3 emerging scholar finalists were from DAVFM. Division was represented well.

URSP banquet last week, Dr. Lorin Harvey was keynote speaker. About 80 students participating in the program.

Dorman is still on track to complete on schedule. Faculty move in could start spring 2027.

Alabama Feed and Grain Association provided funds to support new poultry science feed mill. Making good progress.

CALS alumni social is November 13 at Animal Industries Annex.

Dean, College of Forest Resources (CFR) & Forest and Wildlife Research Center (FWRC): in representation Dr. Steve Bullard

Good participation in the URSP program, very positive program and recruiting tool.

Students and faculty at the Society of American Foresters meeting in Tacoma, WA. Our chapter to receive award for most outstanding chapter.

New faculty lunch and learn meets with administration once monthly, next meeting is October 14, topic is undergraduate advising.

Advising and retaining students is critical to future success.

Library deadline for theses and dissertations is approaching, deadline for the college to review is next Friday (CALS 10/23).

October 21-23 MS Forestry Association meeting in Flowood, college alumni breakfast is a fundraising opportunity.

October 26-30 Wood Magic Science Fair ™scheduled

November 6, rib cook and presentations, head of Timberland Acquisitions giving a talk.

Early November college and department level advisory board meetings and faculty/staff awards luncheon on November 13.

November 14 before Auburn game is the alumni tailgate, 8:30 brunch activity.

Search committee underway for Sustainable Bioproducts Department Head.

Director, Extension Service: in representation Dr. Trent Irby

About to launch second iteration of Magnolia Moves Challenge. Encourage you to join this statewide endeavor. Starts October 12, 6 week challenge.

Program leadership groups, we have 14 about a variety of topics and subject areas. Comprised of extension faculty and agents from each region. Goal is to increase communication between county level and faculty specialists to enhance program development and information dissemination. Not limited to faculty with extension appointment, all expertise and collaboration welcome.

Faculty Housing Appeals Committee: Dr. Leyla Rios

Two faculty submitted extensions, both approved.

Holland Faculty Senate Updates: No report.

Vice Chair Report: No Report

Library: No report.

Old Business: No report.

New Business: Coastal Pathway set up on the coast, about 7,000 students. Participation form faculty on campus is appreciated and welcome. If you'd like to participate please reach out to Dr. Tricia Knight. Set up is November 17, actual event is November 18-19.

Next meeting in November, look for reminder email from Dr. Rios each Monday before meetings.

Motion to adjourn: Dr. McGee made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Dr. Tricia Knight.