

MPMT Department Faculty Meeting
08/16/2024
Minutes of Meeting

1. Call to order and minutes from 04/10

Meeting started at 12:33 p.m.

Faculty Present: Babanikos, Coche, Esterline, Lee, McNealy, Ostroff, Selepak, Shin, Sorel, Xu, Wells.

Absent: Chan-Olmsted, Leslie, Williams, Zawahry.

McNealy moved to approve minutes from 04/10. Seconded by Shin. Motion passed.

2. Department updates

Faculty congratulated McNealy, Selepak, Xu, and Zawahry for their promotions.

Geoff Thompson was approved as graduate faculty and can now serve on Pro M.A. committees, including chair them.

VIC3001 is becoming an MPMT course (from PR) starting Spring 2025.

Students won a few awards/recognitions over the summer:

- *Sweet Nothing* by Luigi Bencosme won 1st place in college feature/short at the 29th Annual Palm Beaches Student Showcase of Films (SSOF), which is Florida's largest student film competition and award show.
- Sophia Abolfathi won in the Feature category of the AEJMC student magazine contest for [her story](#) written in Cynthia Barnett's advanced science journalism course.
- Documentary *A Seat at the Table* was selected for three film festivals: Roxbury International Film Festival (Boston, MA), Full Bloom Film Festival (Statesville, NC), and Better Cities Film Festival (Detroit, MI).

In April, Sorel asked for MPMT faculty volunteers to do interviews so videos could be edited for the website / social media. Three such short videos were played as examples, and another call was made to faculty to sit down with Sorel for a 10-minute chat on camera. Coche noted it would be great to have all faculty featured rather than a select few.

Coche distributed draft of FARs for Fall 2024. Asked faculty members to let her know if anything looked incorrect.

Coche also showed and distributed Spring 2025 schedule. Noted a few minor changes were made to maximize use of Weimer 3020. Asked faculty to let her know ASAP if they had any issues with the schedule.

Tentative plans for Sept. 24-26 advisory council were shared. Wells and Zawahry will take the lead on planning a screening of student work over lunch on Wednesday, Sept. 25. All faculty were asked for student names for a panel that will be moderated by Julie Frey—and tentative panel questions were shown on screen for context. Coche noted she'd love to have faculty presence at both breakfasts (Sept. 25-26).

3. Courtesy appointments

Faculty considered courtesy appointments for two people:

- Former MPMT faculty member Amy Jo Coffey so she could finish her work with her graduate students.
- Professor Rafa Vega from Sevilla, Spain, so he can access Canvas when he teaches the Fall 2024 abroad students in September/October.

McNealy moved to approve a courtesy appointment on the faculty for Coffey for one year. Lee seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Babanikos moved to approve a courtesy appointment on the faculty for Vega for one semester. Wells seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Faculty searches

Coche announced two searches for this year: one for assistant/associate professor and one for assistant professor, both as traditional research lines. The first search committee, chaired by Shin with Ostroff and Selepak as members, will focus on finding a management line. The second search committee will be chaired by Xu with Lee and McNealy as members.

Faculty agreed the management position (chaired by Shin) should be a search at the assistant or associate levels. Faculty also agreed the second position (chaired by Xu, at the assistant level) should be more toward technology / media & society.

Coche presented timelines for these searches and said the charge meeting would happen by the end of August, likely next week.

5. Curriculum

MPMT adviser Thomas Garvey presented about the requirements students must fulfill to graduate (university requirements, college requirements and department requirements) to provide the full context as faculty work toward curriculum revisions this year.

Coche reminded faculty that the production track is testing 8-week courses this Fall. Sorel is teaching a course on lighting the first half of Fall 2024, and adjunct Alyson Larson is teaching a course on freelancing the second half of the semester.

Coche presented the latest Media & Technology track that had been discussed in Spring as a reminder. Beyond the core courses, the curriculum would have three blocks. Students would have to take 9 credits in each of the first two among various courses offered. The third block would consist of students taking a group of 9 credits among 3-4 groups. One would be the UF AI certificate and the others are up for discussion.

Coche said three courses differ between the management track and the Media & Tech track as currently imagined, so perhaps the faculty should consider and discuss the possibility of merging the tracks with a “management group” in block 3 as explained above. She says this would streamline things for the department and students. It would also likely help MPMT define itself better when it comes to branding and identity. Babanikos expressed concerns because he it might put the quality of the management track in jeopardy. Further discussion is necessary and will happen throughout the semester.

6. Welcome

New visiting lecturers came to the room after their new faculty orientation. Kim Fowler, Brandon Shenk, and Carlina Williams were introduced to faculty.

7. Old/New business

Coche reminded faculty that she is going on study abroad until September 14 but is available via text/email as needed.

8. Adjournment

McNealy moved to adjourn. Wells seconded. Adjourned at 2:42 p.m.