

Faculty Senate Steering Committee Meeting
Minutes of
August 9, 2012

Ida Cook, Faculty Senate Chair, called the Faculty Senate Steering Committee to order at 4:02 p.m. The roll was circulated for signatures.

MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes of April 5, 2012 was made and seconded. The minutes were approved as recorded with one scrivener's correction.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

All members of the committee introduced themselves.

Cook reminded the committee that the August Senate meeting would be followed immediately by a reception hosted by President Hitt.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Elliot Vitte, Dean of Undergraduate Studies

REPORT OF THE PROVOST

Budget Update: The legislature made a \$300 million one-time cut to the SUS. Of the total cut, \$52.5 million was to UCF. UCF subsequently had an additional \$4 million shortfall in the budget due to lower than projected enrollment growth. Of the \$4 million, \$2.5 million will be covered by funds from another project that has a lower cost than originally budgeted. The remaining \$1.5 million will be taken from the budgets of the administrative units (\$750 thousand) and out of central reserves (\$750 thousand). Waldrop noted that central reserves are extremely low, and budget projections for next year are worrying.

State universities and colleges in Florida have seen a leveling off growth. It appears that the pool of applicants in Florida is decreasing.

UCF has a working group looking at scenarios for dealing with the budget in the event that this year's one-time cut of \$52.5 million is not restored. The group includes faculty, staff, and outside consultants. This includes the possibility of major restructuring.

Waldrop discussed the Operational Efficiencies Group which will be looking at ways to streamline business practices and improve efficiency.

Last year, Academic Affairs piloted the Faculty Fellows program. John Schultz from Anthropology and Blake Scott from Writing and Rhetoric will be this year's fellows.

Waldrop discussed the criteria behind the recent Newsweek ranking that named UCF the least rigorous school in the nation. That ranking was from among the top 200 universities, and was based on student opinions and faculty/student ratio.

Waldrop discussed the recent news articles about a UCF student who was sanctioned for developing a website designed to help students register. In a matter of two weeks, it grew to making 30,000 hits a

day to our system, each of which lasted 30 minutes. It had the potential to damage the system and prevent students from registering. UCF is currently upgrading our system.

NEW BUSINESS

General Education Program Changes

Waldrop distributed the legislation to change the general education program (GEP) requirements and noted that Diane Chase will be one of the ten people serving on the steering committee overseeing the restructuring of the GEP. The legislation reduces the number of credits in the GEP from 36 to 30 and mandates that there will be five common courses that are part of the GEP in every state university and college.

Waldrop turned the discussion over to senators Arlen Chase and Manoj Chopra, who were present at a recent meeting about the changes. Chase explained that the GEP will now have 30 hours, and 15 of those hours will be mandated. The mandated hours will take the form of five classes, one in each of the following five categories: Communication, Math, Social Science, Humanities, and Natural Science.

The GEP as a whole will be made up of 25 courses, five in each of the above categories, and those courses will be the same at every institution. Chopra explained that faculty from each of the five categories will meet to discuss what five courses should constitute the GEP in that category. Chase noted that there seems to be differences between the state universities and the state and community colleges over the difficulty level for the common core.

Cook asked for suggestions for people to contribute to the discussion of what courses should be selected for the GEP. She noted that there was no guarantee that any of those people would be selected for the state-level discussion.

Elliot Vittes noted that they are working on developing learning outcomes for each of the areas of the GEP.

Discussion followed. One senator expressed concerns about the deficiencies of upper level student in areas of writing, basic analysis, and critical thinking. Several committee members agreed that the GEP does need to be reviewed and agreed that this is an opportunity to look at what we are doing at the lowest levels in our university. A question was raised about how the GEP changes will impact the budget. Waldrop explained that it will probably not impact the overall budget, but it will impact the distribution of the budget among units.

Blue Ribbon Task Force

Cook, Chopra, and Chase reported on the governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Higher Education. Many different stakeholders were present, including Workforce Florida, the governor's office, the Board of Governors (BOG), the Council of 100, students, parents, faculty, and SUS trustees. Cook offered a brief synopsis of what occurred at that meeting. Chopra noted that the meeting content is all available at the Blue Ribbon Task Force website.

Promotion Path for Instructors and Lecturers

Waldrop announced that the Board of Trustees approved the creation of a promotion path for instructors and lecturers.

Online Learning

Chopra briefly discussed new legislation that looks at online learning and the possibility of an online university. The chancellor has appointed Chopra to that committee.

Cook noted that Chopra is now chair of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates, and as such is now a member of the BOG. Waldrop added that Cortez Whatley, the UCF SGA president, has also been elected by his peers to serve on the BOG.

Smoke-free Campus

Cook reminded the committee that the smoke-free policy is now in effect and that smoking cessation resources are available to employees. There will be workshops on how to approach those smoking on campus. The committee requested a one-page document on how to approach smokers on campus. Cook will ask Michael Deichen, Director of Health Services, for such a document.

Ad Hoc TIP Committee

The ad hoc Teaching Incentive Program (TIP) committee met to discuss what role department chairs should have in the TIP selection process. The committee recommended that no department or unit head should be eligible to serve on the TIP criteria or selections committees. The Steering committee agreed to forward those recommendations to the Personnel Committee for further action. Other TIP issues that will go to Personnel are the College of Medicine's eligibility for at-large awards, the eligibility of teaching librarians, and whether colleges should calculate to the decimal when determining the partial award stored for a future year.

A suggestion was made that the department chairs should also be ineligible to serve on Research Incentive Award (RIA) committees, and that the rules should be uniform for both programs. The committee agreed to forward that to Personnel.

Grading System

The College of Medicine (COM) is proposing a change to the grading system to add Pass/Fail/Honors. Currently, it is just Pass/Fail. Cook suggested that the Graduate or Undergraduate Council should review the proposal and make a recommendation to the Senate.

Committee Assignment Update

Reid Oetjen, Faculty Senate Vice Chair, reported on the status of the committee staffing process. The Master Planning Committee has two seats for senators, and Oetjen asked the committee to recommend senators for that committee.

Senate Committee Liaisons

Cook briefly explained the role of the Senate Committee liaisons and called for volunteers to serve. The following people will serve:

- Graduate Council – Jim Moharam
- Undergraduate Council – Kelly Allred
- Personnel Committee – Rob Folger
- Budget and Administrative Committee – Arlen Chase
- Parking Advisory Committee – Aaron Liberman

Call for Topics for Senate Committee Action

Cook asked for suggestions for topics that should be referred to the Senate committees for action. The

following items were suggested:

Personnel Committee:

- Promotion pathways. A question was raised about whether we now have promotion pathways for all UCF faculty.
- Post tenure review. A suggestion was made that the process incorporates rewards, as is done at UF.

Budget and Administrative Committee:

- Sabbatical allocation, especially as pertaining to small colleges.

OTHER BUSINESS

Rich Gause, senator from the Libraries, briefly discussed the planned robotic retrieval storage facility that will be built behind the library. He noted that whether collections rely on browsability varies from discipline to discipline, and would like to bring this to the Senate in September for discussion.

The committee set the agenda for the upcoming Senate meeting. Athletics Director Todd Stansbury will be invited to speak. There will be an update on the GEP changes. Suggestions for Senate committee business will be solicited.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.