

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All Faculty  
**FROM:** Richard D. Tucker  
Chair, Faculty Senate  
**DATE:** March 2, 1998  
**SUBJECT:** Faculty Senate Meeting - February 19, 1998

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The meeting was called to order by Dr. Richard D. Tucker, Chair, at 4:04 p.m. The roll was circulated for signatures. The minutes of January 22, 1998 were unanimously approved.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**

Dr. Tucker welcomed guests: Drs. Diane Jacobs, Patricia Bishop, and Mary Gianakis. Ms. Gianakis represented the Victim Advocate Program at UCF and distributed brochures describing the services, which are available to students, staff, and faculty 24 hours a day on campus. It is a victim services unit of the UCF Police Department. To make a police report, the victim advocate pager number is 823-5555.

Dr. Tucker announced that he had discussed safety concerns with Mr. William Merck. He also distributed a progress report from Dick Paradise, Physical Plant Director, regarding lighting repairs enhancements on campus.

Dr. Tucker stated that the Provost's 5 Year Evaluation Committee is in progress. Mr. William Merck will chair the committee. Other members include faculty: Drs. Charles Dziuban, John Salter, and George Stegeman.

Dr. Tucker also announced that Spring Commencement will be held on Saturday, May 9, 1998. Nominees or volunteers are needed for Grand Marshals and Senate representatives.

Provost Gary Whitehouse announced that the Promotion and Tenure process is underway with 40 candidates this year who are now being reviewed by the Provost.

Dr. Whitehouse reported that the second of two open meetings was held this week on the budget. There was a good showing of attendance by faculty. A letter has been sent to the Budget Review Committee with faculty comments. There will be more information in the "FYI Newsletter" coming out shortly. Also in process is the final report from the Student Affairs Committee.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### Plus/Minus Grading Proposal

Dr. Fine reported on the progress she has made on the Plus/Minus proposal. She spoke to the Student Government Senate on January 22, 1998. The SGA Senate appeared to be interested in the proposed changes. She stated that she had distributed copies of the policy and answered questions. She gave them resolutions and alternatives, but to date she has not heard from them. The SGA Senate meeting was reported in both campus newspapers. Dr. Fine suggested that a student government member be identified to serve on the Plus/Minus Committee. Dr. Tucker agreed, but reiterated that we needed to move forward on the implementation.

### **Standing Committee Reports:**

Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee - Dr. Mullens, Chair, reported that the Committee has approved a BS in Health Sciences. They have also approved two resolutions: electronic submission of grades, and grade inflation. A special meeting will be held on March 3, 1998 to review eleven unapproved minor programs which are in the Undergraduate Catalog. None of these minors have been formally approved. These programs were recently brought to the attention of Dr. Richard Tucker, Chair of the Faculty Senate. He stated that he had talked to Dr. Denise Young and Dr. Dan Coleman about the unapproved minor programs. He suggested that Dr. Mullens contact them to discuss possible new reporting procedures. Other agenda items for that meeting will include proposed resolutions on grade forgiveness and cumulative GPA.

Budget and Administrative Procedures Committee - Dr. Kelliher distributed a report which summarized the activities related to the Provost's Task Force on Budget Processes. Issues which have been identified for study include: better budget reporting methods; additional reports that compare budget numbers with actual expenditures to increase accountability; better documentation/description of the results of activities funded by "specials;" assure that fall, spring and summer semesters receive equal emphasis in the colleges' budget process; "hold harmless" in funding to avoid problems with peaks and valleys in enrollment (possibly 3-year moving average). Dr. Kelliher recommended that the Faculty Senate Budget Committee be included in the process. An overall concern is to increase accountability in allocating "specials." Dr. Rosie Joels asked for the current definition of "specials." Dr. Whitehouse explained that there are different types of specials. He chairs the committee which solicits requests at the university level.

Personnel Committee - Dr. Glenn Boreman stated that there has not been a meeting held since the last Senate meeting. He requested that issues and concerns should be forwarded to him. Dr. Tucker mentioned the ongoing payroll problems. Some adjuncts and GTAs have not received paychecks for sometime. Dr. Tucker met with Mark Roberts and he is aware of the problem and it is being attacked aggressively. He stated that PAF forms were not processed on time. Dr. Joels announced that there are 79 employees in the College of Education who are having payroll problems. Dr. Tucker stated that a memo from Mark Roberts with procedural changes will be sent to all colleges and budget managers.

Dr. James McBrayer reported on his recent conversation with the university attorney. He had learned from State Farm Insurance Company that university employees are not covered when renting a state vehicle. Apparently, AVIS will cover university employees because they have a state contract. The latest information on this subject will be placed in the UCF Homepage.

Graduate Policy and Curriculum Committee - Dr. Linda Malone reported the committee has approved a Ph.D. in Education and a 3+2 M.S. program in Physical Therapy, College of Health and Public Affairs.

A proposal for a resolution to offer graduate certificate programs was submitted. The rationale for this proposal is that these graduate certificate programs will be in focused areas and will offer graduate level education in highly specialized areas of knowledge. Such programs would provide working professionals updated or new skills. Many employees who have advanced graduate degrees would like to enhance their education with specialized courses without obtaining another degree.

A package of specialized courses that form a certificate program would enhance employment credentials. The regular graduate courses and carry graduate credit. A lengthy discussion followed on the need for the certificate programs; impact on current staff, funding, and programs. Several questions included procedures, policies, and standards. Several spoke in favor of the certificate programs. Other universities are offering successful programs and have been a positive service for the community. Several UCF departments or programs - sociology, engineering, biology, gerontology – have an interest in offering such programs.

After much discussion, Dr. Phillip Taylor moved to postpone a decision until the next Senate meeting because many senators did not receive the distribution in time to study the proposal. Dr. Joels seconded the motion to be continued at the March 19 Senate meeting. It was unanimously approved.

Dr. Malone also submitted a proposed resolution to change the name of the Graduate Policies and Curriculum Committee to Graduate Council. The overall functions of the committee will remain the same. The Graduate Council will consist of three subcommittees; policy and procedures; appeals; and course review and new programs. The new name will better fit the usual understanding within academia of the functions of the GPCC. The new structure will also make the workload more efficient because a smaller number of individuals will be working in smaller groups. If the Senate approves this resolution, the matter will be submitted for approval by the Faculty Assembly in the fall, 1998, since it involves a revision of the Faculty Constitution. This resolution will also be considered at the March 19 Faculty Senate meeting.

Dr. James Gilkeson suggested that the Faculty Senate agenda be versed so that substantive issues could be addressed first, while announcements and other non-action items could be presented last. Dr. Tucker indicated that this would be addressed by the Steering Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

## **GRADUATE POLICY AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

### **Resolution 1997-1998-5 Acceptance of 9 Graduate Hours**

**Be It Resolved**, That at the discretion of each college and program within a college, graduate programs will be permitted to accept up to 9 graduate hours taken at UCF by undergraduate students as part of their undergraduate program of study. Oversight of the appropriateness of and discretion for accepting such courses into a graduate student's program of study, and decisions regarding the acceptance of any such hours, will be provided by the instructor, program coordinator, and college graduate coordinator.

#### **EXPLANATION**

Undergraduate students may currently take 5000 level courses as electives in their undergraduate program and have the hours count toward their Bachelor's degree. This proposal is to allow these hours to count in their Master's degree as well subject to the approval of individual programs, their respective graduate coordinators, and the graduate deans in the respective colleges. This should not alter the requirements, character, or quality of any existing program, undergraduate or graduate. This is not an attempt to reduce the minimum of 120 hours for a baccalaureate degree nor to reduce the minimum of 30/36 hours for a masters degree. This should strengthen undergraduate programs while not affecting the competency level attained by masters students under the present system.

This is intended to be a mechanism to encourage UCF's better undergraduates to continue into the graduate program. As a by-product, it should also increase graduate SCH's, both directly and indirectly because students will continue in graduate school who might not have otherwise.

#### **BENEFITS**

1. Retention of our better undergraduate students as graduate students.
2. Increased enrollment in graduate classes both in the short term and the long term.

#### **POSSIBLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

1. Will programs become weaker?

ANSWER: The requirements of existing programs, both undergraduate and graduate, will be unaffected. It would seem that a student substituting 5000 level courses for 4000 level courses (which they can currently do) would only strengthen their undergraduate plan of study. Similarly no requirements for the current masters programs would change. The programs of study for both degrees would look exactly as they do now.

2. Will graduate courses become weaker?

ANSWER: In order for undergraduates to register for 5000 level courses, they must obtain an override. Therefore, students deemed unqualified would not be permitted to take advantage of this opportunity.

3. Should only students within "X" hours of their undergraduate degree be allowed to participate?

ANSWER: It seems the proper question is whether the student has the prerequisite knowledge and can handle the concepts at that level.

4. Is there precedent at UCF for this?

ANSWER:

(a) At the undergraduate level, we allow credit for students who successfully complete AP exams and we also allow high school students who come to UCF and take a class during their senior year to count that class toward their High School Diploma as well as toward their BS/BA degree.

(b) To some extent this proposal is in keeping with the spirit of 5 year Master's degrees. In the present case, the programs are in place and are not being changed. But the spirit of moving students through more quickly, with less expense, and with the same level of quality is still there.

(c) Students pursuing two masters degrees may have 9 hours in common between the two programs of study.

5. Do other schools allow this?

ANSWER: Yes, University of Florida is one.

6. Won't there be an overall loss of revenue?

ANSWER: A substitution of graduate courses for undergraduate courses in the BS/BA degree results in an increase revenue for the state. Since more of our best students will remain for a MS/MA degree, the net result will be an increase in SCH at the graduate level.

## **UNDERGRADUATE POLICY AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS**

### **Resolution 1997-1998-6 Grade Forgiveness**

**Whereas**, The overall UCF GPA is a primary indicator of academic performance; and

**Whereas**, UCF's current grade forgiveness policy is biased in favor of academically weak students; and

**Whereas**, UCF's current grade forgiveness policy allows weaker students to mislead potential employers and graduate programs by claiming GPA's that do not accurately reflect their academic performance; and

**Whereas**, UCF's current grade forgiveness policy allows an arbitrary number (two) of grade forgiveness; and

**Whereas**, UCF should adopt academic policies that are appropriate for students at a major metropolitan University who aspire to successful careers in their chosen fields;

**Be It Resolved**, That UCF's current grade forgiveness policy is abolished. Effective fall, 1999, all grades earned in courses taken at UCF shall be included in the calculation of the overall UCF GPA.

### **Resolution 1997-1998-7 Grade Roll Submission**

**Whereas**, Electronic submission of grades is more efficient and timely,

**Be It Resolved**, That once the software capability is available, UCF faculty have the option of submitting grades electronically.

### **Resolution 1997-1998-8 Grade Distribution**

**Whereas**, One of the functions of a UCF faculty member, in their joint roles as an educator and as an employee of the State University System, is to assess the relative abilities, efforts, and academic achievements of their students; and

**Whereas**, The distribution of letter grades in all colleges and at all course levels at UCF has experienced a steady upward shift over the past fifteen years; and

**Whereas**, If present trends continue, grades will become meaningless, to the detriment of UCF students, UCF faculty, potential employers, and graduate programs;

**Be It Resolved**, That the distribution of grades assigned in each course section shall be made publicly available in a timely manner by the university, with summaries for each faculty member, for each course, for each course level, for each department, for each college, and for the University as a whole.

**Resolution 1997-1998-9 Undergraduate GPA**

**Whereas**, UCF currently requires at least a 2.0 GPA for both UCF and cumulative course work for graduation; and

**Whereas**, The cumulative GPA requirement requires the calculation of a transfer GPA based on all previous course work; and

**Whereas**, The transfer GPA often conflicts with transcripts from previous institutions (due to loss of grade forgiveness and +/- grades) and, more importantly, is not calculated consistently for all transfer students; and

**Whereas**, The transfer GPA is not used to determine admission (it is calculated after admission and is only used for reporting and to allow calculation of accumulative GPA); and

**Whereas**, GPAs from all previous institutions are included on student transcripts;

**Be It Resolved**, That UCF no longer compute a cumulative GPA and that UCF require only the UCF GPA of at least 2.0 for graduation.

**Resolution 1997-1998-10 Baccalaureate Honors**

**Whereas**, UCF currently confers Baccalaureate Honors recognition based on cumulative GPA; and

**Whereas**, The cumulative GPA requirement requires the calculation of a transfer GPA based on all previous course work; and

**Whereas**, The transfer GPA often conflicts with transcripts from previous institutions (due to loss of grade forgiveness and plus/minus grades) and, more importantly, is not calculated consistently for all transfer students; and

**Whereas**, Most Florida community colleges confer honors recognition; and

**Whereas**, There is an inequity in honors calculations between UCF native students versus transfer students;

**Be It Resolved**, That all UCF graduates with at least 48 hours of UCF course credit be considered for honors recognition based on the GPA from all semesters that include their last 48 hours of UCF course work.