

Faculty Senate Meeting
Minutes of
February 19, 2015

Reid Oetjen, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00pm. The roll was circulated for signatures.

MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes of January 22, 2015 was made and seconded. It was noted on page three of the minutes, the word “paternity” should be changed to “parental” under the Personnel Committee report. The minutes were approved as amended.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Karen Morrison, Chief Diversity Officer, Office of Diversity and Inclusion
Lyman Brodie, Associate Vice Provost, Faculty Relations
Jana Jasinski, Associate Dean, College of Graduate Studies

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introduced interim replacement senator for Manoj Chopra, Quanfang Chen from CECS.
Welcomed Jeff Kaplan’s replacement, Kent Butler from CEDHP.

Robert Cassanello announced a film event and discussion being held February 23.
Distributed flyers for the event.

Textbook legislation is being pushed by the Governor’s office. University will take a united approach, like the concealed weapons bill and develop a response to proposed legislation. Will work with the Advisory Council for Faculty Senates and the faculty representative on the Board of Governors.

REPORT OF THE PROVOST

Diane Chase provided the update in the absence of the Provost due to the Board of Governors meeting.

COACHE

There are 1225 faculty asked to complete the COACHE survey. UCF is part of a group of 37,000 completing the survey. Current response rate for faculty is 15%. Responses are confidential. For problems relating to accessing the survey, contact Paige Borden or Reid Oetjen.

Downtown

Today was a meeting of the Board of Governors. The president, provost, and other partners made presentations. The BOG unanimously approved putting this on the legislative agenda. This is the first step in gaining final approval to move ahead. The provost is committed to faculty consultation throughout the process.

OLD BUSINESS

There is no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Office of Diversity and Inclusion Update—*Karen Morrison*

The head of the office is now called the Chief Diversity Officer (from director of diversity initiatives). Trying to meet as many people as possible to receive feedback and constructive criticism. Hired to facilitate collaboration and communication across campus and in community, and work to create cultural change to make UCF a leader. We are going to brand our message better and engage the campus community in discussion and planning. The office will continue to convene approximately 300 workshops throughout the year. Position works with EEOC to determine if faculty candidates satisfy diversity expectations.

Resolution 2014-2015-2 Parental Leave Policy and Procedures for UCF Faculty

Birth/Adoption

Steering committee asked the Personnel committee to work on this issue. Linda Walters made a presentation to the committee. The University of South Florida has a policy. UCF has no consistent policy regarding parental leave. There were two issues: (1) paid parental leave, and (2) family medical leave. We did not want to confuse the issues; before us now is the paid parental leave policy.

A friendly amendment was made to add “Whereas, having a paid parental leave policy for faculty at UCF is needed for the competitive recruitment, hiring, and retention of faculty; and.” Strike the third “Whereas” statement. Both friendly amendments accepted. The motion to approve the resolution carried. The resolution as approved read:

Resolution 2014-2015-2 Parental Leave Policy and Procedures for UCF Faculty Birth/Adoption

Whereas, it appears that current UCF policies do not provide for parental leave for faculty for birth or adoption; and

Whereas, provision of parental leave for faculty birth or adoption has been inconsistently given and allowed on an ad hoc basis and a variety of options have been used including:

1. Requiring parental leave be given to the mother only; and/or
2. That accrued sick leave be used (which creates additional hardship on recently hired faculty); and/or
3. Modified instructional duties (MID) for faculty are:
 - a. Not allowed; and/or
 - b. Allowed only for faculty who have been employed at UCF for a minimum of one year; and/or
 - c. Required to continue non-instructional duties such as research/grant work and/or service; and

~~Whereas, a precedent was set at the University of Central Florida when in January 2014, the College of Graduate Studies instituted a policy allowing GRA/GTA birth or adoptive mothers up to 6 weeks of paid leave; and~~

Whereas, having a paid parental leave policy for faculty at UCF is needed for the competitive recruitment, hiring, and retention of faculty; and

Whereas, another university in the SUS, the University of South Florida, since 2010, has offered paid parental leave that provides parental leave for birth/adoption; therefore

Be It Resolved that the Faculty Senate of the University of Central Florida encourages administration to work with UFF-UCF to develop equitable, consistent policies and procedures to provide parental leave for birth/adoption by faculty; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Faculty Senate of the University of Central Florida recommends that any development of Parental Leave Policy consider and address the list of examples and conditions identified in Attachment 1: Parental Leave Examples and Conditions.

Attachment 1: Parental Leave Examples and Conditions
Resolution 2014-2015-2 Parental Leave Policy and Procedures for
UCF Faculty Birth/Adoption

Example of types of leave, duration, funding, etc. to be considered as part of Policy on Parental leave for faculty experiencing birth or adoptions:

1. Paid leave be provided for the parental leave for birth/adoption
2. Both partners be allowed parental leave at alternate times
3. The leave duration be a semester (up to 19.5 weeks)
4. Such leave be available to recent and long-term faculty irrespective of length of employment at the university and that
 - a. If the faculty member is lacking sick leave at the time of birth/adoption, leave be provided and later deducted from accrued leave when the faculty member earns it
 - b. Upon separation from the university if the faculty member is to collect any amount of unused sick leave, that paid parental leave be deducted before reimbursing the faculty member

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget and Administrative Committee—Joseph Harrington

Committee provided information on textbook legislation. The committee met and created a list of 14 concerns. Among them: registration will be pushed earlier rather than later and flexibility for professors eliminated if more than one teaching the same class with multiple sections. These are examples.

Suggested the senate give authorization to senate chair to express opinion, also to consult the SGA to express concerns. Joseph Harrington to email the senate the list of 14 concerns.

Motion: It is the sense of the senate to authorize the senate chair of the Faculty Senate to represent the university on this issue, was made and seconded. Motion carried.

Personnel Committee—Ana Leon

The committee met and determined items that will be considered next academic year.

Parking Advisory Committee—Amit Joshi

No report.

Undergraduate Council—William Self

Nearly wrapped up business approving some new programs.

Graduate Council—Annette Khaled

Meeting next week to finalize policy for online defenses.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

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Approved by the Faculty Senate on February 19, 2015.

UCF Faculty Senate

Budget and Administration Committee

Report on Proposed State Legislation Regarding Textbooks

Drafted at the meeting of 18 February 2015, approved by subsequent email.

The Budget and Administration committee of the UCF Faculty Senate raises the following concerns about the proposed legislation to regulate university textbooks and instructional materials:

1. It is rare for new editions of texts to be published more often than every three years. If changes to required texts are made more often than that, it is generally because the faculty member teaching the course, in his or her professional judgement, thinks it will increase the quality of education for our students. The proposed legislation would thus make it much more difficult to improve the quality of education at state universities.
2. Registration opens as much as 2.5 months ahead of the start of a semester and the university is seeking to increase this lead time to help students plan ahead. It would increase the cost of books if the legislature locks students into a purchase without fixing the price 4.5 months in advance of a course, especially if publishers can count on the book not changing for 3 years. They would just raise prices once they see a book on the list, especially for special editions made for UCF, as is common in general education classes.
3. Classes in development are often proposed and opened for registration later than the proposed textbook declaration deadline. They usually need to change or add materials each of the first several times they are taught. The proposed legislation would make such changes administratively difficult.
4. The bill would make changing the textbook in response to student complaints difficult, and would delay a change by at least a semester and perhaps several years.
5. The bill would pressure the university to open registration later, which would be a problem for students.
6. The bill's administrative burden is high and extremely expensive, e.g., to evaluate textbook changes for whether they are sufficiently different and necessary, to register all the educational resources used in every class to ensure that they do not change from one semester to the next, etc.
7. The state of the art in some fields, e.g., computing or genetics, changes faster than every three years.
8. Publishers control when old editions are discontinued, not professors or state legislatures. Legislating that we use a book for three years could create a problem if those books are simply unavailable. Most students do not sell their books.

9. For most textbooks, the cost of a copy is not just the incremental cost of printing and distribution, but an amortization of the high cost of creating and reviewing the manuscript, layout, and developing electronic materials, which are often extensive and in many cases reduce the cost to the university for graders because the electronic exercises are self-grading. Textbook printing runs are often as low as 5000 copies. The legislation attempts to reduce the number of new copies being sold by bolstering the used market. However, if the number of copies sold decreases, it would raise the price of new books because the development cost would be amortized over fewer copies. In the end, students would pay the same, on average, but get lower-quality, used books more of the time.
10. Faculty already have an obligation not to profit from the textbooks they choose, through the conflict-of-interest system. Faculty are on the same side as students.
11. Nearly all books in the College of Medicine are available as e-books, with access fees included in tuition, but 70% of students buy the print. This indicates that students are willing to pay for print editions for the convenience of the format.
12. Different professors use different approaches and emphases when teaching the same subjects. For example, for Modern European History, one professor might emphasize economics and politics, while another could emphasize social and cultural aspects, while both covered the same essential historical events. They would use different texts. Professors are encouraged to bring their own expertise to their subjects in this manner, and this is why the educational level at research universities is so high. If one professor taught the class in the Spring and the other in the Fall, they would have difficulty under the proposed legislation, because it would entail changing the texts every semester, which is more often than every 3 years, as proposed.
13. The definition of instructional materials as “educational materials for use with any course that may be available in printed or digital format” is so broad that it includes links to ephemeral web pages, handouts developed by the professor, etc. This means the professor would be forbidden from updating his or her own handouts more than every three years. One could not use online news items in a class for fear that the web pages would change or be taken down in less than three years.
14. The definition of instructional materials includes anything in printed form, which could be interpreted to include homework sets and exams. Thus, the legislation would require the very poor practice of giving the same exams and homework assignments every time a class is offered. Cheating would be rampant, and would damage the reputation of Florida’s state universities.

Therefore, it is the sense of the Committee that the Faculty Senate, through its Chair, encourage the UCF administration to oppose the proposed legislation. The Committee also encourages the Chair to approach the student body through the Student Government Association, to raise these concerns, and to suggest that they give feedback to the UCF administration.