

Faculty Senate Meeting
Minutes of
February 21, 2019

William Self, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. The roll was circulated for signatures.

MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes of January 24, 2019 was made and seconded. The minutes were approved as recorded.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Joe Adams, Senior Communications Director, Office of the Provost
Allison Hurtado, Assistant Director of Marking and Communications, Faculty Excellence
Jana Jasinski, Vice Provost for Faculty Excellence

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Approved Resolution

Resolution 2018-2019-8 Student Perception of Instruction Processing was approved by the Provost on February 8. This resolution requested that UCF IT process and distribute Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI) reports for abbreviated or customized courses based on the course end date, regardless of when the semester ends.

Advisory Council of Faculty Senates (ACFS) Meeting

The ACFS met in Tallahassee in January. The group received updates from Board of Governors (BOG) staff including Dr. Christy England on some of the governor's issues. The board will be developing training for mental health. A goal of the board is to have faculty better trained to identify a student in distress and know what to do. We had a robust discussion with Christy England and Chancellor Criser of UCF's 2+2 articulation. These conversations will continue. Modifications to the BOG Strategic Plan are forthcoming with a possible new metric on student transfer success. Discussed finance with Chancellor Tim Jones and the decline in Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funds. Dr. Self noted that PECO funds result from a tax on landlines. The total is less than \$50 million this year. This is a real crisis for the State University System. Discussed UCF and carryforward funds.

Florida Board of Governors Meeting

The BOG met in Miami. Most of the discussions surrounded UCF, the controversy, and carryforward funding in the State of Florida.

Board of Trustees Meeting

The BOT had an emergency meeting yesterday. We heard heartfelt public comments by the students, alumni, donors, and boards nearly unanimously supporting Dr. Whittaker. Although the conversations the day before in the emergency Senate meeting were mixed, I voted not to accept the resignation as did the student representative and Trustee Sprouls. We have now accepted President Whittaker's resignation and appointed Thad Seymour

as the interim president. The Association of Governing Boards has a search firm called AGB Search. Chairman Garvy will probably reach out to AGB Search to initiate a search for an interim president through retired senior academic leaders with experience. Given the role that a president plays in the community, alumni, and being outward facing, Dr. Seymour was a good choice.

Question: Was the Constellation Fund frozen by the BOG?

Answer: The BOG wanted to see the details approved by the BOT.

Question: Are other investigations being conducted?

Answer: We don't have an update on any other investigations.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

REPORT OF THE PROVOST

Dr. Dooley indicated that she needs to leave the meeting early and indicated that any questions can be sent to Jana Jasinski for follow-up.

Dr. Dooley indicated that since her hiring as Provost in October, UCF has been in crisis mode. UCF has strong advocates for its faculty and students. We must continue to be advocates for faculty excellence, student success, research, and the trajectory UCF started. This will not cease just because someone else sees UCF differently. We together have to lead. Dr. Dooley indicated that UCF would not graduate 16,000 students, be the top university with FIU in awarding degrees to underrepresented students, or be in the top 26 -50 research universities without this faculty. We also would not be in the top 10 innovative universities. The faculty is the core of the university.

Today, Thad Seymour was announced as the interim president. The president nor the provost can lead alone. Dr. Dooley indicated that she will partner with the Senate chair to communicate academic needs. We have to stand strong and stand together. The Provost announced that she will be hosting sessions to provide more listening opportunities.

Question: Is the Constellation Fund still alive?

Answer: Yes. The types of scholarships in the Constellation Fund is ready for the BOT to review and approve.

Question: In moving forward, has there been a discussion on finding ways to regulate student growth? Our department's students have grown from 2,200 to 4,000 with only net faculty hiring of seven tenure track positions. Because of budget constraints, the department was asked to change two tenure track positions to lecturers due to the lack of start-up funding.

Answer: The change from a tenure track to lecturer positions was a college decision. We have convened a group and are discussing pausing on growth. For years, academics was

not involved in enrollment management. Dr. Self has volunteered to be on the enrollment management committee.

Comment: A top-down management style or culture has grown over the past 25 years that isn't limited to one area. We need to move away from this culture quickly. The structure needs to include faculty and be open and transparent. I would love to hear in your next report how we are going to change this.

Response: We heard this today from the deans and discussions in the Insights group. In one of the first Insights group meetings, the conversation focused on leadership not being transparent. This is why new leadership is always refreshing.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2018-2019-7 Faculty Senate Bylaw Change – Graduate Council Membership

This resolution is brought forward by the Ad Hoc Committee on Bylaw Revisions. The membership requirements in the Bylaws do not currently match the requirements of Graduate Faculty in the Graduate Catalog. This change eliminates specific titles and refers to a qualified Graduate Faculty for eligibility to serve on Graduate committees. This resolution is up for discussion only today. Open for discussion.

A senator recommended changing line 29 & 30 as follows:

“All members of the Graduate Council must meet the qualifications for participating in graduate education as Graduate Faculty, as specified ~~and published~~ in the Graduate Catalog as Graduate Faculty.”

Recommendation noted for the March meeting. No other discussion.

Resolution 2018-2019-10 Faculty Senate Bylaw Change - Research Council

This resolution elevates the Research Council from a Joint Committee or Council to a Senate Operational Committee. This means the council will meet at least monthly and regularly report to both the Steering Committee and Senate. This issue was on the Senate topic list two years ago but was delayed to the arrival of the newly hired vice president. The issue is raised again due to the critical nature of research to UCF's mission. A senator asked if other committees exist that report to the vice president that are outside of the Senate. Dr. Self noted that there are other committees outside of the Senate. Absorbing the other committees within the Research Council has been discussed but not decided. No other discussion.

Resolution 2018-2019-12 Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI)

Accessibility and Improvements

A Steering Ad Hoc Committee was formed based on a topic list issue from last year in addition to an SGA resolution passed two years in a row to make the SPoI more accessible. The Steering Committee accepted the Ad Hoc Committee report and presents this resolution based on the recommendations.

Since the Ad Hoc Committee has completed its work, the committee is formally discharged. Dr. Self thanked Kevin Coffey, Reshawna Chapple, Zhongzhou Chen, Eric Main, Silvana Sidhom, and Jesse Slomowitz for their work.

Motion and second to approve Resolution 2018-2019-12 Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI) Accessibility and Improvements. Open for discussion.

Question: Are the students seeking all of the written comments or just the scores?

Answer: At this point, the Faculty Senate has only approved the release of the scores. The primary reason the students passed the resolution was to move the scores out of one 15,000 page PDF file buried on the CS&T website to a more prominent location which does not include the comments. If the University of Florida allows access to the comments, it's only because it is secured requiring a log-in. The task force in the resolution would address this issue.

Question: Is the technology fee grant going to be paid by students?

Answer: The technology fee is a fee paid by the students. The grant can only cover the initial acquisition of the software, not the recurring costs. The grant process is a competitive process.

Question: Any idea how much that would be?

Answer: About \$157,000 for the acquisition and the same cost annually. This is an estimate by one vendor.

Question: What is the information being provided to students to interpret the data in 1b? Are grades included?

Answer: Grades are not included.

Comment: Seems odd that the recommendation to the provost is for the provost to apply for the technology fee grant.

Motion and second to amend line 39:

~~“Submit a Technology Fee grant to p~~urchase a software package to easily capture and report SPoI data.”

Vote: All in favor; amendment passes.

Motion and second to approve Resolution 2018-2019-12 Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI) Accessibility and Improvements.

Vote: All in favor; motion passes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget and Administrative Committee – Qian Hu for Kimi Sugaya

Meeting scheduled for February 20 was canceled due to the emergency Senate meeting.

Information Technology Committee – Barbara Sharanowski

The committee is working with UCF IT on the capabilities of the campus map application. Also working with the security office to make a recommendation to the State Auditor to reduce the number of times a password has to be reset since the university uses multi-factor authentication.

Parking, Transportation and Safety Committee – Heath Martin

The committee has not met since the last report.

Personnel Committee – Stephen King

The committee passed a resolution for non-tenure earning faculty to bypass the University Promotion and Tenure Committee. Right now, some non-tenure earning faculty have their application sent to the committee where others already bypass the committee. The committee is also discussing the rationale and best way to go forward with TIP, RIA, and SoTL awards.

Graduate Council –Jim Moharam

Committees are completing normal business.

Undergraduate Council – Nina Orlovskaya

Both committees have been very active with course revisions and approval of new courses.

OTHER BUSINESS

Question: What was the issue with the carryforward funds?

Answer: The BOG asked each university to present a detailed plan on how to bring their unencumbered carryforward balances to zero. The BOG provided a preferred top ten areas to focus the spending.

Question: Back in November, the balances were swept from the colleges. Are they now recommitting that money?

Answer: I don't have the details of what money is going where in particular departments or colleges. We just know that the construction accounts were replaced with non-educational and general (E&G) funds.

Comment: We have heard that our balance accounts will be reduced by 8%. I use the balance account to help pay for student presentations. If they take this away, it will hurt the students.

Response: Perfect reason to elevate the Research Council.

Question: Has the Constellation Fund every been passed through the Senate? With the constrained funds in the colleges, and double and tripling of class sizes, I would hope that the BOT would bring the Constellation Fund to the Senate for critical thinking.

Comment: A senator thanked Dr. Self for all of his hard work and voting his conscience at the BOT meeting and respected the decision.

Comment: We need to make sure we continue to ask for faculty representation on committees formed by the administration.

Question: Is there now an understanding between the BOG and UCF regarding give and take, or is more to come? Faculty will be in the dark now that President Whittaker has stepped down. Can you keep us updated?

Answer: We need to be vocal as faculty and with the BOG and hold them accountable.

Comment: This is the best opportunity for faculty to voice indirectly how this institution moves forward and ensuring the administration is transparent. All of us need to do some brainstorming to determine what we want to happen to improve transparency.

Response: We are in a significant crisis right now. Every crisis has benefits, and one benefit may be increased faculty governance. We need the details of what faculty want. Real change to improve the university for faculty and students.

Comment: With the sudden degeneration of trust, there is an urgency to restore trust. Some actions of the university seem to be moving in the wrong direction. Bargaining with the union is dragging longer than in prior years. The administration has put forward a number of requirements that are difficult to understand. It seems to be making the lives of faculty more difficult than better. Maybe the Senate can be informed as to the rationale administration is taking.

Response: An Ad Hoc Committee on Bylaw changes will be discussing a possible regular update from the union. The Advisory Council of Faculty Senates used to have the president of the United Faculty of Florida provide an annual update. Florida State University provides for a campus climate update at every meeting to provide an information update from several areas including the union. Also suggesting a needed chairs update, provost update, and president update to build trust.

Comment: Observed several bargaining sessions. Observed weakness in negotiating on both sides. The president nor the provost attend resulting in those at the table unable to make decisions. It doesn't need to be a slow and drawn out process. Only about 30% of faculty are members of the union and don't get involved.

Comment: We need a level of mutual understanding. Seems the strategy is to deliberately aggravate.

Response: The next bargaining session in tomorrow from 9:30 a.m. – noon in Trevor Colbourn Hall. The sessions are open to all faculty.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Resolution 2018-2019-12 Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI) Accessibility and Improvements

Whereas, The Student Perception of Instruction (SPoI) survey is primarily used to provide feedback to faculty in order to continually improve courses and teaching methods and is the primary data used by administrators to evaluate faculty teaching; and

Whereas, the revised online SPoI survey was approved by the Faculty Senate and Provost Waldrop in 2012. In 2013, the Faculty Senate approved publishing the average responses for all nine questions on the university website; and

Whereas, in 2017 and 2018, the Student Government Association made several requests to make the SPoI data available in a transparent manner and in a format easier to locate course and instructor information with information to make the data understandable; and to allow students the possibility to affect, reflect upon, and take responsibility for their own learning while providing important information for course enhancements; and

Whereas, many faculty believe the SPoI data does not relate to learning, is subjected to bias, and is provided to students without context which can skew a student's impression of a course; and

Whereas, many faculty believe the SPoI data contains data errors due to multiple instructors or teaching assistants, and due to other faculty members teaching a course designed by a different faculty member; therefore

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate recommends the administration carry out the following:

1. Short-Term
 - a. Make the SPoI results easily accessible to students and faculty on myUCF.
 - b. Provide students with information to interpret the data and a disclaimer regarding bias.
 - c. Pilot making the evaluations optional to complete with active reminders.
 - d. Add a link to the email sent to students to the SPoI results so students have a purpose to complete the survey.
2. Long-Term
 - a. Form a Task Force to include the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, students from SGA, administration, Center for Distributed Learning, faculty senators, and faculty to review questions, validity, recommend better methods to evaluate teaching, and define the role of SPoI in the evaluation.
 - b. Purchase a software package to easily capture and report SPoI data.

Approved by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee on February 7, 2019.

Approved by the Faculty Senate on February 21, 2019.