

Faculty Senate Steering Committee Meeting
October 9, 2008

Dr. Manoj Chopra, Faculty Senate Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. The roll was circulated for signatures. The minutes of September 18, 2008 were approved as recorded by unanimous vote.

Steering Officers Present: Drs. Chopra, Cook, Jewett, and Chase.

Steering Committee Members Present: Drs. Belfield, Carson, Covelli, Daniell, Gause, Kaufman, Koons, Kovach, Leigh, LiKamWa, Lynxwiler, and Nutta.

Administrators Present: Dr. Diane Chase.

Steering Committee Members Not Present: Drs. Gunter, Kamrath, Kassab, Pennington and Quigley.

Recognition of Guests: None present.

Announcements

There is a discussion on the latest Provost's Update memo about reserves and the letter UFF recently sent out. Dr. Chopra read the text of the update.

Provost's Update – *Dr. Diane Chase reporting*

Pay increases were implemented effective October 3rd and will show up in the October 24th paycheck, prorated to October 3rd. There was a discussion on the raise percentage amount by merit evaluation. Faculty are encouraged to check MyUCF to confirm the amount of their own raise and note any discrepancies to their department chairs.

Further Announcements

The Chancellor of the State University System is stepping down as of February 1, 2009. A search is currently taking place for his replacement.

There was a discussion on the distribution of information from Steering and Senate to the faculty. Steering members can forward information to their colleagues in their units. Dr. Chopra discussed the establishment of a regular newsletter for the senate.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Promotion and Tenure Policies

There was a request from the Personnel committee to remove the Promotion and Tenure policy revisions from the agenda for this meeting and send it for further discussion at the committee level along with further review and study by the administration. Motion was made to remove this item from the agenda. Motion seconded and unanimously approved.

Webcourses

Dr. Chopra opened a discussion on issues with Webcourses and the migration from WebCT to the new Webcourses. The new version of Webcourses is still not stable and there is concern about the upcoming transition from WebCT. The transition cannot be rescheduled because WebCT will not be supported for much longer by the company that makes it. Faculty are greatly concerned, and feel that the administration does not seem to understand the depth of those concerns as the time for transition is fast approaching. It is suggested that this issue should be discussed at a full Faculty Senate meeting to make sure problems and concerns are addressed. In addition to those teaching online classes, the transition will impact faculty using Webcourses as a supplement to face-to-face instruction. All faculty must migrate to the new system before the new year, even if they will not be using Webcourses until summer 2009. In addition to Course Development and Web Services, the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning and Instructional Resources may be able to provide assistance to faculty. There are some issues regarding responsibilities and staff lines, and concern that FCTL and OIR may not be permitted to do as much as they are able because Webcourses issues are supposed to be funneled to CDWS. Freeware software may be an alternative to Webcourses for some faculty.

ACTION: Gather specific examples of problems from faculty. Steering members should email Dr. Cook with specific problems, their own and from faculty in their units. Dr. Chopra will ask Dr. Joel Hartman to come to the next Faculty Senate meeting with appropriate staff to identify some of the problems faculty are having, the solutions to those problems, and plans for dealing with the crush at the beginning of the year. The committee also wished to inquire from Dr. Hartman if any other units can offer support to the faculty.

Academic Calendar Committee Recommendations

Two recommendations were forwarded by the Academic Calendar Committee to the Steering Committee:

1) The Committee agrees that a formal policy be created for limiting the number of exams a student may take in a day to two. If a third exam is scheduled for the same day, it should be rescheduled with the instructor. We ask that the appropriate Faculty Senate committee review and discuss this recommendation.

2) The Committee agrees that the faculty senate should review the current policy on the length of final exams and change it from a minimum of three hours to a minimum of two hours. By reducing the final exam time periods, we can more efficiently schedule the exams and reduce issues related to overlapping M and other unique courses. We could also build into the calendar specific times for three hours exams if faculty wanted the longer exam periods. We ask that the appropriate Faculty Senate committee review and discuss this recommendation.

ACTION: After a brief discussion, the motion was made to refer these to the Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee. Motion was seconded and approved.

Text Book Affordability Discussion

Book orders are due by November 14. The early deadline for receiving the incentive is October 24. Questions remain about how some situations should be handled, including faculty not meeting the order deadline, courses being added after the deadline, and new faculty being hired after the order deadline. Dr. Cook is serving on the state-wide Textbook Affordability Committee, which has a teleconference on October 14 to devise recommendations about these and other related issues. The recommendations will be available in November. The rationale for the text book legislation is that books must be publicly announced to allow students the chance to attain them in the least expensive fashion. The list of books must be published in a centralized place at least 30 days before the start of the semester. President Hitt is interested in a joint faculty/student/administration initiative on book availability and cost.

ACTION: Motion was made to refer this to the Budget and Administrative Committee, with the possibility of developing resolutions on how UCF might deal with issues arising from the early book deadline, including late hires or late adjuncts hired, recalcitrant faculty, book selection for courses without faculty assigned by the deadline, and last minute faculty replacements. Motion seconded and approved.

Standing Committee Reports

Budget and Administrative Committee

No report.

Graduate Council

No report.

Personnel – Dr. Leigh reporting

Dr. Debopam Chakrabarti was elected Chair. The committee worked on revisions to promotion and tenure policies and to *Resolution 2007-2008-5 Appointment and Evaluation of School Directors and Department Chairs*, which had been returned by the Provost without approval. Dr. Belfield offered concerns to be passed onto the committee regarding potential problems with granting faculty tenure in two units, an issue which is being addressed in the tenure policy revisions.

Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee

No report.

Other Business

Resolutions *2007-2008-6 Budget Management*, *2007-2008-7 Funding of the Library Materials and Subscriptions in Support of Faculty Research*, and *2007-2008-8 Endorsement of Student Government Green Fee* have been approved by the Provost.

A follow-up was presented on the issue raised at the September steering meetings regarding a department attempting to prohibit married couples from serving together on thesis and dissertation committees. The department in question has resolved the issue this is no longer being enforced as policy.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.