

## Florida Tech Faculty Senate

April 4, 2017

### Minutes

**Senators Present:** W. Arrasmith (DES), M. Baarmand (PSS), P. Bernhard (Sch. of Computing), J. Brenner (Chem. Eng./Biomed. Eng.), K. Burke (SAC), P. Converse (CoPLA), A. Cudmore (COB), C. Harvey (CoPLA), A. Huser (Lib), M. Kaya (BME), S. Kozaitis (Lib), B. Lail (ECE), T. Marcinkowski (DEIS), A. Nnolim (ESD), J. Patel (COB), L. Perdigao (SAC), C. Polson (Bio), P. Ray (OES), R. Rusovici (MAE), D. Sandall (COB), M. Silaghi (Sch. of Computing), N. Suksawang (CIVIL), B. Tenali (Math), R. van Woesik (Bio), R. Wehmschulte (Chem), A. Welters (MTH), B. Wheeler (Aero), K. Winkelmann (Chem), F. Yumiceva (PSS), D. Yuran (SAC)

**Other Attendees:** Heidi Edwards (SAC), Kastro Hamed (EIS), Nasri Nesnas (Chem), Chao Wang (Lib)

### Call to Order

President Sandall called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of March's meeting; a motion was made by Sen. Marcinkowski and seconded by Sen. Harvey.

The March Minutes were approved by unanimous vote of voice.

### Guest Speakers

Dr. Monica Baloga, Senior Vice President for Academics and Provost  
Dr. Mary Bonhomme, University Professor, eEducation

Dr. Baloga reported that electronic assignment letters were sent to unit heads and deans for 9-month faculty. Cathy Irrizary will copy and distribute signed letters after May 1. The notification process will be streamlined in the future, as the digital renewal format continues to roll out to include all types of faculty.

Pres. Sandall asked if faculty were notified through PAWS?

Dr. Baloga replied that 9-month faculty received an electronic assignment letter, but if up for multi-year renewal received a paper letter of appointment to sign.

Dr. Nasri Nesnas asked why appointment letters were not in PAWS.

Dr. Baloga responded that hard copies of appointment letters went out if faculty were promoted.

Dr. Baloga then moved to the next topic. Dr. McCay promotes good teaching and asked for a council to explore the best practices currently done on campus as well as areas that could stand for improvement. A Teaching Council was formed in similar structure to the Research Council to recommend good policies and create incentives for scholarly activities in teaching. Dr. Mary Bonhomme is chairing this council.

Dr. Bonhomme reported that representatives from each school and college were appointed by their deans. Faculty members from Online Programs and the Extended Studies Division, as well as representatives from Instructional Technology, were also appointed. The council began meeting in November to identify its main focus and came up with three main themes, each to be addressed by a subcommittee: 1) teaching improvement, 2) events and resources, 3) and evaluation. Dr. Baloga has challenged the council to come up with some recommendations. The group will collect feedback from faculty, investigate similar groups at other institutions, and intends to adjust the institution's mission statement to identify teaching excellence as a core principle. Additionally, the council will recognize excellent teaching in addition to the award made by the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Bonhomme recommends that the teaching improvement subcommittee video faculty who have a reputation for outstanding teaching and develop short vignettes. Jared Campbell and Jason Griggs will be facilitating those videos.

Sen. Jensen, who is serving in a subcommittee for the council, added that faculty can observe teaching demonstrations given by faculty from other colleges on Discovery Days.

Sen. Baarmand asked if the council would be making recommendations for evaluating good teachers as part of the promotion criteria.

Dr. Baloga responded that the council will be making recommendations and will need to work with the Faculty Senate, who own the student course evaluations.

Sen. Brenner announced that the next subcommittee meeting will discuss a future electronic evaluation process and that he was asked to attend to give the Senate a report. Previous attempts at electronic evaluations did not go well, but the subcommittee would like to see them implemented.

Dr. Bonhomme suggested that the council have a mind meld with all the faculty who had a bad experience with previous attempts at electronic evaluations.

*The guest presentation then shifted to other topics of concern to faculty.*

Sen. Lail asked for clarification between 9-month teaching requirements and the summer teaching opportunities. Faculty are concerned about the perception of the changes taking place.

Dr. Baloga specified that 9-month teaching is the contractual obligation. Summer teaching is something faculty can be contractually assigned to do once the courses are available. The change in the maximum number of summer courses faculty can teach is a response to projected revenues in the next academic year. The University needs to maximize its opportunities for revenue in the summer. The deans can propose exceptions to these changes for consideration.

Sen. Perdigao asked for clarification on the number of students that are needed in summer courses to generate revenue for the University. Pro-rating suggested that fewer are needed than are required. She is concerned that having fewer known faculty offering summer courses will detract students from taking summer courses at all.

Dr. Baloga offered to consider that feedback, but acknowledged that there was not a perfect solution.

Sen. Baarmand raised concern that students will have difficulty planning for summer without knowing what courses are consistently offered and which faculty will be available to teach them. Some students who fail spring courses will want to take them in the summer, but course availability will be unknown until just before the summer term begins. This uncertainty is unhealthy for both faculty and students.

Dr. Baloga responded that a mechanism is in place to automatically cancel classes with insufficient enrollment numbers by a certain date.

Sen. Arrasmith added that a Senate Resolution was made in the past for pro-rating faculty in summer courses.

Dr. Baloga assured that the pro-rating policy was still in place, but that the cap had been adjusted. From an accounting standpoint, the summer revenue always exceeds summer expenses; however, that revenue is needed to support many facets of the university, not just the faculty member's summer salary.

Sen. Baarmand asked if summer accounting was still a separated fixed model.

Dr. Baloga replied that the Chief Financial Officer wants to move away from that model.

Sen. Brenner asked if the summer enrollment minimums of 16 for undergraduate courses and 12 for graduate courses will apply to the regular school year.

Dr. Baloga assured that these enrollment minimums will not apply to the regular school year. The University views summer courses as a revenue generator like online programs.

Dr. Nasri Nesnas asked how the University is doing with online enrollment.

Dr. Baloga reported that online enrollment is declining. Competition is more fierce than when the University first began offering online programs. The administration's strategy is to look at programs that target the workforce in order to maximize revenue.

Dr. Bonhomme reported that while she is no longer affiliated with online learning, she is still connected with state authorization. If a unit wants to launch an online program that has a physical presence outside of Florida, it should speak with her first, since each state has specific rules about how a school outside of state can operate within that state.

Dr. Baloga emphasized that state authorization is serious business.

*The guest presentation then moved to the topic of Evaluation Kit, an online course evaluation system.*

Mr. Eric Kledzik, Vice President for Information Technology, reported data from the previous attempts at online evaluations: 2000 responses in first term, 1000 responses in second term, and 500 in third term. Evaluation Kit integrates with CANVAS. Students are alerted on their dashboard and through email and the alert does not go away until the surveys are completed. Instructors can also coordinate students to complete evaluations in class and in computer labs, so responses rates can be seen in real time. A QR code is provided for instructors to validate that students have completed an evaluation.

Mr. Eric Donath, Instructional Programmer/Analyst, added that instructors can monitor feedback completion in real time, though the feedback won't be released to faculty until after final grade entry (a concern for students). Courses can be set up in a hierarchy so units can evaluate data across multiple classes. The University is already using other programs that integrated with CANVAS using the same technology, so there isn't a concern about the technical integration. Other institutions such as Embry Riddle Aeronautical University are using Evaluation Kit. Streamlining the delivery and reporting process of evaluations will provide a faster turnaround so faculty can act on the feedback.

Sen. Baarmand asked if evaluations could be assigned through CANVAS.

Sen. van Woesik asked what the incentive would be for students to complete the evaluations.

Mr. Donath indicated that it would be up to the instructor.

Dr. Baloga recommended using classtime, when there is a captive audience, so students do not get all of the alerts.

Sen. Arrasmith asked if survey completion could be built into grade reporting?

Dr. Baloga responded that grades cannot be withheld for evaluations, but providing advance grade notification to students has been discussed. In online learning, however, students cannot complete the course until they finish the online survey. Those students are used to doing evaluations to progress in the course.

Sen. Baarmand recommended against implementing a blanket policy, especially if a penalty is involved. Allow the instructor to adopt the evaluations in their own best way. We don't want to do anything centrally that could negatively impact the evaluation for the faculty member.

Sen. Rusovici warned against implementing any grade withholding with the risk of upsetting students, especially with the dismal response rate in the past.

Sen. Marcinkowski asked if there was a way to circumvent this or an approval process. Results could mean two different things, depending how the evaluations are implemented. If you use negative reinforcement to get students to take a survey, will that psychologically impact their responses? We should be careful if this will be used to evaluate faculty.

Dr. Baloga indicated that there will be more acceptance once students get used to the idea of the change.

Sen. Marcinkowski urged that the adoption methods be piloted, giving paper and online versions simultaneously to see if there will be an impact on the results.

Pres. Sandall indicated that he had volunteered to do this, since he had two sections of the same class. We're going to do paper evaluation in one section and electronic evaluation in the other section.

Sen. Marcinkowski clarified doing both formats in the same section to see if the results are the same.

Dr. Bonhomme suggested gathering experience data from other universities that have already rolled out online evaluations successfully.

Dr. Heidi Edwards asked if the online surveys would be mobile friendly.

Mr. Kledzik responded that Evaluation Kit was mobile friendly, although not a part of the CANVAS mobile app.

Mr. Donath indicated that there was an option for students to opt out of the evaluation. This hurts the response rate, but could alleviate negative attitudes toward being forced. There are also options to group questions in courses with multiple instructors, so that each instructor is evaluated separately, and for students to dismiss the alerts. Evaluation Kit provides some best practices for student experience with the tool, which might smooth over the concerns faculty are raising.

Sen. Brenner asked if Evaluation Kit could be implemented in summer. Since summer evaluations are not part of the process for faculty going up for promotion, it's the ideal time to see if there are any bumps that can be fixed for fall so faculty are not negatively impacted.

Dr. Baloga recommend that faculty still be permitted to voluntarily pilot Evaluation Kit in spring, even if it is done in the summer as well.

Mr. Kledzik announced that he would be soliciting a volunteer group to determine what we want to test.

Sen. Barmaand asked if flexibility for changing questions was built into the system? This could be an advantage over the current system.

Mr. Donath responded that there is a core set of questions that the institution implements and can change, but individual instructors can supplement the survey with their own questions as well.

Mr. Kledzik added that making changes to the institution's core questions is a huge process for scantron, but much easier with the online tool.

Sen. Marcinkowski suggested that summer faculty with large classes that reoccur in multiple years provide data in large numbers.

Dr. Nesnas asked who would have access to the survey results and when they would be available to faculty.

Mr. Kledzik replied that faculty can print off analytics once they are available. The way the analytics are set up, faculty can see the results in their own cours-

es and deans can see the results for all faculty in their unit. The analytics can be set up so individual faculty can compare their individual results with those of other faculty.

Sen. Brenner asked if summer term would be possible within the pilot window.

Mr. Kledzik responded that they could push for an extension.

Dr. Kastro Hamed shared concern for faculty comparisons in the analytics if each faculty member can draft individual questions.

Dr. Baloga replied that the institution would have a core set of questions for cross comparisons and that individual units could make decisions regarding a set of core questions for its faculty.

Sen. Marcinkowski suggested that a database system could provide further benefit so faculty can identify components of course to tailor to the survey. This could reduce human labor.

Mr. Donath specified that the software can handle much of this dynamically, based on Canvas enrollments. Evaluation kit has an Application Program Interface that would make other customizations possible.

Mr. Kledzik added that faculty could pull out components of the syllabus and put them into the survey.

Sen. Brenner suggested keeping courses such as independent studies and dissertation out of the online survey mechanism in order to provide anonymity.

Mr. Donath indicated that the reporting can be set up to filter results based on number of enrollments, so a number could be set where instructors would not get the report. There also may be a way to exclude some courses by course level.

Sen. Rusovici, in searching online, reported that Evaluation Kit data shows a 50-70% response rate without grade withholding.

Mr. Donath offered some additional benefits: many incoming students are not familiar with Scantron and there are opportunities for students to abuse the security of the system in collecting and delivering paper evaluations.

Dr. Nesnas asked if there is a code to validate the correcting student? Is that available on the mobile app as well?

Mr. Donath responded that students can get the code through email on the phone, but still have to authenticate the process by logging into Canvas.

Sen. Arrasmith added that online evaluations would save time and money. Many staff spend time filling in scantrons and correcting markings.

Pres. Sandall asked what the Senate's role would be with the pilot.

Dr. Baloga responded that they want to solicit volunteers and inform the Senate. No approval or endorsement is needed.

Mr. Kledzik stated that he would distribute an email outlining the pilot program. They will also be speaking to Student Government.

### **President's Report**

Pres. Sandall shared the results of the faculty census, as specified in the Faculty Handbook, to determine the allocation of senators from each unit. Some units will gain additional seats, due to the results of the census. Pres. Sandall had already contacted those units and distributed the Senate Roster to ensure accurate information.

### **Committee Reports**

There was no **Academic Policies Committee** report.

Sen. Rusovici, **Administrative Policies Committee** chair, reported that a Faculty Handbook committee was assembled, but will wait until after finals to meet. Sen. Brenner sent the Administrator Evaluation Survey 8-10 days ago and resent today. A dean suggested sending through Dr. Baloga. Some faculty got it through her, but it is unclear how many faculty have seen it. The deadline is April 7.

Sen. Baarmand suggested considering an extension.

Sen. Rusovici also reported that certificates for the student awards were printed and ready for the ceremony on Thursday, April 13 in Gleason Auditorium.

Sen. Baarmand, **Faculty Excellence Committee** chair, reported that the faculty awards will be given on the 13th and will hopefully give the check with the plaque.

Sen. Brenner asked if there will be press at the event.



Sen. Baarmand replied that we usually do not have press and usually do not have a check to give.

Sen. Perdigao recommended that someone take photos. This used to be done and published news until 2012. But it is no longer done.

Sen. Polson asked if there was an update on the naming of the Faculty Excellence Award in Research.

Sen. Baarmand, **Faculty Excellence Committee** chair, reported that the Lifelong Achievement Award would remain named after Pres. Weaver. The committee will be soliciting names for the Research Award from both the faculty and administration in the fall semester.

Sen. Cudmore, **Welfare Committee** chair, reported that Sen. Walton would be succeeding him as chair in the next school year.

Sen. Arrasmith, **TRI Committee** chair, reported the new ADITC chair, Dominique Lombardi. The Academic Committee for Teaching, Research, and Technology travel grants are going around. Eric Kledzik found some funds to fund these grants. Sen. Arrasmith will now be a voting member on ITEC. Web content management being moved to terminal 4; we have 40,000 objects, 5,000 public pages, and 20,000 pages in total. Office 365 is available online on Sharepoint. We are changing from Adobe Connect to Zoom for official University conferencing. The pilot program was successful. Zoom is very intuitive and is now online. Jared Campbell will be making training videos. We are still in the process of rolling out the CISCO VOIP phones. There will be a petting zoo for new computers this fall, as part of a computer refresh program. Banner upgrades will be rolling out, including a new interface on the test server to alleviate complaints. The Library has VIVO research portal interface, which is an open source software from Virginia Tech. DocuSign is being studied and considered as a method for doing online signing of documents. There is now a workaround for the webpage access denial that occurred for certain websites resulting from a hack of FIT systems.

Sen. Rusovici asked the TRI Committee for assistance in putting hyperlinks to procedural resources into the Faculty Handbook, so it will be more streamline and resistant to obsolete content in its future edition.

Sen. Burke requested that the TRI Committee find out which computers on campus—staff, faculty, and lab—would be included in the centralized refresh program.

Pres. Sandall, chair of the ad hoc **Tenure Exploration Committee**, announced that 17 faculty members had expressed interest in serving on the committee so far. He will send a request to everyone who expressed interest to meet once before finals and then the committee will begin meeting regularly in the fall semester. Pres. Sandall will create a CANVAS site and wants at least 1 representative from each unit.

## **OLD Business**

### *Resolution to Revise Promotion Criteria—Second Revision and Final Reading*

Sen. Perdigao distributed a second revision to the Senate, reflecting edits that were suggested at the March Senate meeting.

Sen. Jones recommended clarifying the resulting action of the resolution, as stated in the final sentence. After discussion, the second revision was further edited by replacing the words “next regular meeting” in the final sentence with “following general meeting.”

Sen. Arrasmith made a motion to accept the revised resolution, which was seconded by Sen. Rusovici and approved by unanimous vote of hand.

The Resolution to Revise Promotion Criteria will be submitted to Dr. Baloga.

## **Adjournment**

Pres. Sandall, in his final act as 2016–2017 Faculty Senate President, thanked everyone for a productive year.

Pres. Baarmand, in his first act as 2017–2018 Faculty Senate President, announced that there would be no general meeting until September, although the Executive Committee may meet over the summer to set the agenda for the fall. He will accept suggestions by email for topics to raise in the general meetings.

Pres. Baarmand asked for a motion to adjourn, so made by Sen. Marcinkowski and seconded by Sen. Brenner.

Pres. Baarmand adjourned the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin R. Burke, Secretary