

Florida Tech Faculty Senate

March 17, 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), 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 February's meeting; a motion was made by Sen. Marcinkowski and seconded by Sen. Baarmand.

The February Minutes were approved by unanimous vote of voice.

Guest Speaker

Dr. Monica Baloga, Senior Vice President for Academics and Provost

Dr. Baloga met with Pres. Sandall, Sen. Baarmand, and Ms. Karen Gathercole, Director of Human Resources, to discuss the different in language in faculty contracts and letters of appointment, as well as their legal weight. A labor attorney reviewed FIT's appointment letters and contracts and indicated that the letters of appointment were legally binding, as they require the faculty member's signature. The annual contracts will no longer be called "contracts," and will not be legally binding. They will be called assignment letters. The Academic Affairs Office will roll out an efficient process, handled electronically through PAWS. Faculty will receive notice via email, copied to supervisors, and confirm the assignment with options to defer payroll over 12 months in PAWS. 12-month faculty, research faculty, and other faculty not included in this year's digital roll out will get paper assignment letters. By 2018 everyone will go to the electronic faculty assignment process.

Dr. Baloga also informed the Senate that Joni Oglesby, Title IX Coordinator, is speaking to all units across campus to discuss the increase in incident reports.

While student misconduct is handled by a disciplinary committee, the University will create a similar process and committee when faculty are involved.

Pres. Sandall encouraged senators and all faculty to attend the presentations for their respective units.

Dr. Baloga added that everyone needs to hear updates to process and procedures. FIT needs to demonstrate that information is getting to everyone if an incident should occur.

President's Report

Pres. Sandall reported that FIT will begin revising the Faculty Handbook. The Senate's Academic Policies Committee will be involved in the process. Sen. Rusovici will provide an update during his committee report.

The President of the Senate is supposed to receive an annual census of faculty; however, this has not been done in the past. Cathy Irrizary compiled the numbers and according to the data some units will gain additional seats in the Senate to reflect the current distribution of faculty. No units will lose a seat. According to the policy, each unit receives one seat and gain seats for every additional 10 faculty. He will distribute an update to everyone so units that are short can appoint additional senators.

Due to feedback from faculty and senators, Pres. Sandall will discuss a tenure exploration committee under new business later in the meeting.

Committee Reports

Sen. Tenali, **Academic Policies Committee** chair, raised concern over students pulled from classes after week 2 when they are resolving financial issues. It creates a disturbance when students are readmitted into a class after a period of absence. The committee is submitting a request to permit students to attend courses beyond week 2 as they work on resolving the financial issues. Understandably, students will not receive course credit until they are officially enrolled.

Pres. Sandall asked if the Academic Policies Committee would be drafting this policy.

Sen. Tenali responded that with a recommendation from the Faculty Senate the Registrar's Office could create the policy.

Sen. Kozaitis recommended that students provide evidence of their financial situation before receiving permission to remain in class.

Sen. Tenali wasn't sure if this was the faculty's concern.

Sen. Marcinkowski pointed out that faculty do not need to go outside of the Banner system to find this information out, but the inconsistencies in how this situation is treated across units appears to be causing some confusion. He suggested that a deadline should be set so the process does not drag on too far into the semester.

Sen. Baarmand warned of overburdening students with more dates and stress during their time of need to recover and resolve financial situations. While the system could be abused, we should be lenient toward those who need it.

Sen. Brenner pointed out that the current policy puts the burden on the faculty. Faculty are policing this and it takes up faculty time.

Sen. Burke recommended an automated alert.

Sen. Winkelmann added that we are at the mercy of the student informing the faculty member, which may take time. An alert would allow faculty to be proactive in working with the student.

Sen. Baarmand responded that the Student Success Committee is considering an alert mechanism of this type.

Sen. Arrasmith suggested faculty just let these students attend if it's not hurting anything.

Sen. Burke, however, reminded the Senate that the policy has a purpose beyond finances. Undocumented class participants are a liability for the University and could pose a risk to security. An official alert will help faculty tease out appropriate instances for allowing students to continue attending class.

Sen. Marcinkowski affirmed that the Senate has an interest in proposing this change, but that the procedural steps are not clear. Perhaps we should start with the Financial Aid office and Registrar Office. Faculty should be taken out of the process of enforcing this policy.

Dr. Heidi Edwards cautioned an assumption that this affects only international students.

Sen. Rusovici, speaking on behalf of the **Administrative Policies Committee**, announced plans to revise the Faculty Handbook to reflect a modern view of the

relationship between faculty and administration. Some updates will be easy to make, others more complicated: 1) Who owns the faculty handbook? In some universities, it's a living document housed in the Provost office. Both faculty and Board of Trustees can revise the handbook, but not independently. If there are changes, Florida Tech faculty need to understand who has the responsibility. Who makes the changes? A statement of joint governance or the like is warranted. We have process for updating the handbook, but a clear statement of ownership is needed. 2) Faculty grievances need updating. 3) Accreditation standards need to be updated. 4) The step-by-step guide for faculty advising should be removed. 5) Some names are given in the handbook of people who haven't been at the University for several years. 6) Termination and dismissal details need to be clearer. What do the terms like insubordination and moral turpitude mean to the University?

The Academic Policies Committee will put a faculty handbook revision committee together, but will leave promotional criteria until the end. The committee should have representatives from each college/unit.

Sen. Baarmand recommended waiting to see what the Provost's Office does with the pending resolution regarding promotion criteria. The Senate needs to participate in process of revising criteria within units, but not within the Senate until later.

Sen. Arrasmith requested tabling the handbook revision discussion until New Business.

Sen. Marcinkowski suggested putting promotion criteria aside to work on other components of handbook. Then, in the future, there will be a replacement for promotion criteria in handbook. The resolution should not stall the handbook revision committee.

Sen. Brenner, **Administrative Policies Committee** chair, informed the Senate that the administration surveys are not ready.

Sen. Rusovici, Scholarship Committee chair, announced that scholarship recipients were notified and that both confirmed attendance at the award ceremony. Certificates are scheduled to print and will be ready.

Sen. Marcinkowski inquired if the scholarships would be announced at spring convocation, and everyone was informed that they would be.

Sen. Rusovici replied in the affirmative.

Sen. Baarmand, **Faculty Excellence Committee** chair, announced the three excellence award: Dr. Nasri Nesnas (CHEM) for Teaching; Dr. David Wilder

(CoPLA) for Research; and Dr. Ken Lindeman (DEIS) for Service. There were many excellent candidates this year. Faculty will receive awards at the convocation on April 13.

Sen. Baarmand added that the administration recommends naming the Research Award after Pres. Weaver. However, the Lifelong Achievement Award is also named after Pres. Weaver, so the Excellence Committee is asking what the Senate would recommend for the Research and Lifelong Achievement awards.

Discussion ensued regarding the naming of both awards. The idea was brought forward that the Lifelong Achievement Award is a more appropriate honor for a University President whose activity at the University encompassed all areas of teaching, research, and service in addition to administration. A previous faculty member whose research accomplishments specifically would serve as a role model to Florida Tech faculty was suggested. Working with a donor to fund the award was also addressed. The sense of the Senate was to keep the Lifelong Achievement Award as named and propose names for consideration of the Research award.

Sen. Cudmore, **Wellness Committee** chair, reported work on complaint handling process that could be implemented in the faculty handbook revision. Troy Glassmann is also working on a faculty mentorship process proposal as well.

Sen. Rusovici recommended that the complaint handling process should be subsection in faculty handbook.

Sen. Cudmore also reported successful use of a Canvas group to coordinate conversations between Wellness Committee members among the administration and faculty.

Sen. Arrasmith, **Technology, Resources, and Infrastructure (TRI) Committee** chair, stated that the CANVAS page for the TRI Committee is working and being used to conduct virtual meetings of the committee. To date, this mode of meeting has had partial success. Sen. Silaghi and some other committee members have been active in using the page but other committee members need further engagement.

Sen. Silaghi added that the help link is hidden.

Old Business

Proposed Resolution to Revise Promotion Guidelines. 2nd reading.

Sen. Marcinkowski made a motion to open the floor for discussion, seconded by Sen. Rusovici, and approved unanimously by vote of voice.

Sen. Marcinkowski then made a motion to suspend Robert's Rules for the discussion, seconded by Sen. Arrasmith, and approved unanimously by vote of voice.

Sen. Perdigao cautioned the use of two phrases in the second draft: "predominately based on" and "Wish to be evaluated on." She suggested "assignment with heavier weight given to _____ (e.g. teaching, research)."

Dr. Heidi Edwards agreed that the language resembles the Multi-Track Faculty Proposal.

Sen. Marcinkowski, however, read it differently. With the removal of Multi-Track system, we now lack a framework that gives greater attention toward teaching. He read it as trying to provide a framework for diverse faculty appointments and loads apparent in the Multi-Track Faculty Proposal and needed in this resolution.

Sen. Polson suggested "Emphasis on faculty member's role in teaching, research, ..." as an alternative.

Sen. Burke brought attention to the distinction between faculty choice vs. wish in the language.

Sen. Baarmand reminded everyone that faculty are not final say in their assignments.

Sen. Burke added that the assignment for teaching, research, and service should be addressed in the assignment letters as explained by Dr. Baloga.

Sen. Perdigao recommend the language "assigned, outlined duties."

Sen. Arrasmith agreed with the word "assignment," which suggests an agreement between faculty and administrator.

Sensing a consensus to further wordsmith the proposal, Sen. Marcinkowski made a motion to reinstate Robert's Rules, seconded by Sen. Arrasmith, and approved unanimously by vote of voice.

Pres. Sandall asked for a motion to table the proposal for further revision, so made by Sen. Marcinkowski and seconded by Sen. Arrasmith. The Senate approved unanimously by vote of voice.

Pres. Sandall invited senators to submit any additional feedback to Sen. Perdigao for a final revision.

NEW Business:

Election of New Officers

Nominations for Faculty Senate President were presented for Kurt Winkelmann and Darrel Sandall.

Sen. Polson made a motion to close nomination, which was seconded by Sen. von Woesik and approved by unanimous vote of voice.

Following statements by the nominees, Sen. Burke named Dr. Heidi Edwards a non-voting teller for paper ballots.

Sen. Winkelmann was elected by paper ballot.

Sen. Burke was nominated for Faculty Senate Secretary.

Seeing no further nomination from the floor, Sen. Marcinkowski moved to close nominations, which was seconded by Sen. Rusovici and approved by unanimous vote of voice.

Sen. Polson made a motion for vote by acclimation, seconded by Sen. Wheeler and approved by unanimous vote of voice.

Sen. Burke was elected by acclimation.

Policy on Auto-Dropping

In response to discussion that ensued during committee reports, Sen. Arrasmith made a motion to draft a "Sense of Senate" to recommend a revision to the policy on auto-dropping. The motion was seconded by Sen. Rusovici and approved by unanimous vote of voice.

Tenure Exploration Committee

Pres. Sandall asked for a motion to establish an ad hoc committee to continue exploring the option of tenure that was discussed in the Executive Committee's meeting with Dr McCay. The committee would explore 1) steps for

implementation, 2) process of grandfathering, and 3) the makeup of a tenure committee to facilitate the transition.

Sen. Rusovici made the motion, seconded by Sen. Arrasmith.

Sen. Marcinkowski raised a concern that discussion of tenure might, but should not, overshadow the current resolution proposal to revise promotion criteria.

Sen. Baarmand seconded that concern.

Sen. Perdigao pointed out that the preliminary work of the committee would involve researching how tenure is done at other universities; any proposal or motions on behalf of the committee would come later.

Sen. Rusovici added that the committee would need to gather data on faculty who transitioned into tenure after being at FIT.

Sen. Baarmand reminded everyone that Dr. McCay was not in favor of automatic grandfathering. The committee should take time exploring options. Faculty should participate fully in the process.

Sen. Lail argued that tenure should have equal ground with promotion guidelines, but that tenure stands to have greatest impact on the institution. A simple statement from Faculty Senate regarding tenure should be at the forefront while working on the promotion guidelines.

Sen. Baarmand believed the faculty should be cognizant about the relationship between Dr. McCay and the Board of Trustees during the process. The Senate and this committee will be able to provide him with ideas and arguments to make a case.

Sen. Yuran asserted that the research should inform the faculty's decision for tenure, not just to justify tenure with a presumed opinion that all faculty want it.

Sen. Arrasmith suggested that the committee explore both sides of the issue.

Sen. Perdigao noted that the Senate should represent and support the interests of the faculty, not just the measures that the Senate believes will be agreed upon by the administration.

Dr. Nasri Nesnas recommended a mindset of the pros and cons for the institution, not just for individual faculty.

Sen. Lail envisioned the Senate as a proactive rather than a reactive group. The Senate should speak the voice of faculty.

Sen. Welters believed that tenure would create a stronger voice of faculty

Sen. Marcinkowski reminded everyone that the Senate has not had a consistent environment to have a voice in the past. We now have that environment. He asked if Pres. Sandall would chair the committee, recommending that someone who has been involved in discussing faculty issues with the upper administration should be on this committee.

The Senate approved the establishment of the ad hoc Tenure Exploration Committee by unanimous vote of voice.

Pres. Sandall recognized the appropriate charge of the Administrative Policies Committee in overseeing the revision of the Faculty Handbook, so withdrew his initial idea to establish another ad hoc committee.

Sen. Cudmore put forth a recommendation that the Faculty Handbook revisions consider policies that impact benefits, raises, etc. When raises are put on hold, they are never recuperated. Salaries should be recouped when things are better.

Adjournment

President Sandall asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, so made by Sen. Marcinkowski and seconded by Sen. Burke.

Pres. Sandall adjourned the meeting at 5:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin R. Burke, Secretary

