

Faculty Senate Meeting
Tuesday, September 10, 2019

Minutes

Senators Present: M. Baarmand (PSS/1), M. Browning (Aero/1), K. Burke (SAC/1), P. Converse (Psych/1), H. Crawford (CS/1), I. Delgado Perez (COB/1), A. Dutta (COB/1), E. Guisbert (Bio/1), C. Harvey (SOBA/1), A. Huser (Lib/1), M. Kaya (BME/1), V. Kishore (CE/1), S. Kozaitis (Lib/1), M. Lavooy (Psych/1), D. Lelekis (SAC/1), G. Maul (OES/1), R. Mehta (Aero/1), J. Park (DEIS/1), P. Ray (OES/1), R. Reichard (OES/1), R. Rusovici (MAE/1), D. Sandall (COB/1), M. Silaghi (CS/1), E. Subasi (ES/1), N. Suksawang (MAE/1), T. Turgut (COA/1), A. Welters (Math/1), K. Winkelmann (Chem/1), D. Yuran (SAC/1)

Senators Absent: A. Nag (PSS), B. Paulillo (Psych), D. Platt (ESD), S. Snelson (Math), A. Walton (COB), N. Weatherly (SBA)

Proxies: Nasri Nesnas for B. Lail (ECE)

Other Attendees: William Bowman (Lib), Mike Dickinson (Lib), Kastro Hamed (COES), Sherry Jensen (COB), Suzanne Odom (Lib), Lisa Perdigao (Honors College), Chelsea Stripling (Lib), Brooke Wheeler (COA)

Call to Order

Dr. Nesnas, filling in for Pres. Lail, called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. The minutes from the April 2 (no. 146) meeting were approved.

Old Business

Committee Reports:

1. Excellence: Sen. Baarmand had nothing to report
2. AFTC: Dr. Nesnas reported that the committee has 5 members who were elected last April, but there is a need for alternates to serve as proxies in case of a member being on sabbatical or having a conflict of interest with a particular case. Sen. Burke suggested that there be members-elect like we do the president-elect for Senate so that someone is already set in place if they are needed as a proxy. Dr. Nesnas clarified that in cases of conflict of interest, that person would only serve for that particular case or if a member of the committee is gone for a semester or year, then the proxy would fill in for that period of time. A proxy can only be informed about the case they are involved with due to confidentiality concerns. Sen. Burke suggested that people spend one year as proxy before their term and then two years as proxy after their term. Dr. Nesnas said that we would need to vote on 5 more people to do that, so all senators should think about nominating someone from each college. Dr. Nesnas also explained that the while

Associate Professors with tenure had previously been eligible to serve on the committee, that is being changed to only Full Professors with tenure. There will also be a timeline change in handbook because the original wording of 10 days to handle appeals has turned out to be unrealistic. In reality it is taking months, so there will have to be a vote to change that. Dr. Sherry Jensen asked if it should be clarified that of the two committee members from COES, one should be from the Sciences and one should be from Engineering. Sen. Burke agreed that this could minimize the number of conflicts of interest situations. Dr. Nesnas supported this clarification and agreed that it should be formally written into the committee guidelines.

3. Welfare: Sen. Dutta had nothing to report.

4. Administrative Policies: There was nothing to report.

5. Scholarship: There was nothing to report.

6. Academic Policies: There was nothing to report.

7. TRI: Sen. Silaghi asked for feedback for the Dean of Libraries for a new grant program on adapting and creating open educational resources (OER). He asked that senators look over the draft on the senate website (<https://www.fit.edu/media/site-specific/wwwfitedu/faculty-senate/documents/Florida-Tech-Open-Education-Resource-Grant-draft.docx>) and provide feedback on the discussion portal that Sen. Silaghi set up last year: <https://vote.fit.edu/senate/>

8. Task Force for reallocating senators:

Sen. Silaghi said that there is a small set of alternatives that will be presented to the Senate. Half of the members of the task force changed during the summer.

9. Task Force on the composition of the University Promotions Committee: see the discussion under New Business

President's Report

Dr. Nesnas read Senate Pres. Lail's report on the Florida Tech President's Retreat that took place over the summer and updates on other issues that occurred since the last Senate meeting.

Florida Tech President's Retreat:

The 2019 Florida Tech President's Retreat took place June 17-19 at the Center for Aeronautics and Innovation (CAI) in Melbourne. Former senate president, Kurt Winkelmann, and current senate president, Brian Lail, attended. The stated objectives of the retreat were:

- 1) Strategic Plan alignment among FL Tech leadership team
- 2) Agreement on opportunities to collaborate
- 3) Understanding of the need and responsibility for embedding the strategic plan into decision making

4) Identify roles and the people in each area who will be responsible for embedding the strategic plan into everyday activities

In his opening remarks, President McCay emphasized that reason Florida Tech exists is “to educate global citizens so they can change the world.” He stressed that we are in a competitive environment with other universities and that we must all work together to succeed. A stated goal continues to be achieving top 100 ranking as a national university in the US News and World Report. Florida Tech has roughly 1200 employees. About 86% of revenue comes from students (tuition and room/board). The endowment is \$86 million.

The retreat proceeded with presentations from members of the leadership team followed by questions intended to identify the opportunities, areas for collaboration, and the challenges that would affect the goal of having an operating approach to the strategic plan for the coming year. The group set out to identify four areas critical to the strategic plan and through facilitated discussion converged on the following list, with the additional item of *communication* identified as a critical overarching requirement for success.

1. Budgeting
2. Enrollment
3. Student Experience
4. Workday

The remainder of the retreat alternated between break-out group discussions and facilitated discussions as a means of recognizing the challenges, identifying ways to overcome the challenges, specifying role requirements for embedding work plans into everyday activities, and how to best maintain the necessary operating relationships among the leadership team to move forward with the strategic plan in the coming year.

Follow-up to the Sense of the Senate:

In April, a Sense of the Senate expressing faculty concern for Florida Tech having no provost was submitted to President McCay. Subsequently, continued discussions persist with the intent of keeping this issue relevant until a resolution is identified.

Academic Panel:

The Academic Panel bi-weekly meetings continued through the summer. This panel, chaired by Senior Vice President for Academic Administration Monica Baloga, is focused on a data-driven approach to improving student retention and graduation rates. The addition of the second year to the First and Second Year Experience (<https://www.fit.edu/first-and-second-year-experience>) stemmed from this effort. Associate VP for Institutional Research & Effectiveness Jessica Ickes has gathered and analyzed data and identified the first semester/first 8 weeks of academic progress as being significantly impactful to overall retention. Therefore, an early alert system is under development. By collecting data through the Canvas gradebook, risk assessment of students can be conducted and, when warranted, an early alert is triggered that engages the student with ways of receiving additional academic support. Pilot programs in chemistry and

math are planned. Other efforts include an assessment of ongoing initiatives across campus that target retention and graduation rates and working to better consolidate/coordinate these efforts.

Open Educational Initiative Faculty Grants:

Holly Miller, Dean of Libraries, has presented an open educational resource (OER) initiative, a collaboration of eEducation, the Teaching Council, and the Evans Library. A draft of the Open Educational Initiative Faculty Grants Program is available on the Faculty Senate web page (<https://www.fit.edu/faculty-senate/>) This program is intended to support Florida Tech faculty who are interested in adopting, adapting, or creating open educational resources.

Next, Dr. Nesnas opened the floor for discussion on the recently released ranking data from the U.S. News and World Report. Florida Tech's ranking dropped to #202. Some senators expressed concern that this will affect enrollment and that we might lose some international students. Sen. Kozaitis asked if we do exit interviews for students who leave and if we have crunched that data. Sen. Winkelmann responded that yes, that data does exist and is being examined. Dr. Hamed pointed out that faculty salaries is an item in the ranking that is not being looked at.

The three major items that were supposed to help us rise were the merger of two colleges into COES, the implementation of tenure, and the addition of second year advising. Sen. Turgut expressed concern about the second year experience program because it prevents faculty from having time to build relationships with students early on and it could also be a problem with transfer students.

Sen. Yuran asked if anyone from admin will be coming to talk to the Senate about the ranking, and Sen. Winkelmann agreed that it would be a good idea to have Pres. McCay or Dr. Baloga come and talk about what changed, what we did improve on, and what we are still falling short on. It was also suggested that Jessica Ickles could be invited to speak to the Senate.

Sen. Turgut explained that since 85% of Florida Tech's revenue is generated from tuition, we need to focus on keeping students or we won't have enough revenue. The importance of teaching has been less emphasized in terms of promotion and tenure track criteria. Dr. Nesnas said that in previous years there was not a path for promotion for those who taught effectively but did not publish, so at least that has changed. Dr. Jensen pointed out that tenure track faculty are still required to teach, but it doesn't seem like they are being evaluated on the quality of their teaching.

Next, a question was raised about the university's plans to make up days missed from the hurricane at the beginning of September. Sen. Baarmand responded that yes, there would be a make up plan but it hasn't been announced yet.

New Business

Discussion of resolutions on the University Committee on Faculty Promotion and Tenure (UCFPT) and the University Teaching-track Promotion Committee (UTPC)

Dr. Wheeler presented at the April meeting on this topic and reviewed that information again. The committee looked at other schools to make recommendations for the composition of Florida Tech's promotion committee. They looked at 41 other schools. The final recommendation from the committee was for flat distribution with 2 members for each college.

Drafts for both UTPC (teaching track) and UCFPT (tenure track) resolutions were shared during the meeting and later emailed to all senators.

A question was asked about whether people can be on both the promotion committee and the AFTC, and the answer is no. The AFTC policy spells out that you cannot also be on the university promotion committee, but the UTPC and UCFPT resolutions need to be amended to include that. [A sentence was added to the end of each resolution stating that members of the committee cannot serve on the AFTC or college promotion or P&T committees simultaneously. These revised versions are the ones that were emailed to Senators after the meeting.]

Dr. Perdigao raised a concern about the language that has crept into these documents where there are sometimes references to the teaching track and other times the Non-Tenure track. It was agreed that we need to use consistent language and Sen. Winkelmann suggested that this was something that Dr. Baloga needs to clarify.

These resolutions need to be voted on at the October Senate meeting so they can be in place for current Associate Professor faculty who are slated to go through the process this fall. Dr. Nesnas also pointed out that there is a need to consult with Dr. Baloga regarding the different acronyms being used because they are quite similar with 4 out of 5 letters in common (UTPC and UCFPT). There was a motion to revise the two resolutions with the added sentence and it was seconded. The motion to revise was approved.

Evans Library Promotion guidelines and criteria

Sen. Kozaitis explained that a committee of 5 full-time librarians wrote the document after looking at other criteria and the structure closely follows the guidelines from CoPLA. It was presented to library faculty who were happy with it after minor revisions. Then it went to Dean Miller who made some suggestions that were implemented before it was sent to Dr. Baloga. Librarianship, scholarship, service are the three areas that are considered for promotion. When asked how this compares to other universities, it was reiterated that other library criteria from universities in the state of Florida were looked at and they are similar. There was a question about how many years are required before each promotion and it was clarified that it is 5 years before Associate and then 5 years before Librarian. This is also consistent with the guidelines of other universities. Sen. Baarmand asked if the different criteria had equal weight given that a candidate is supposed to satisfy 4 out of 5 in a category. Representatives from the library confirmed that they were considered as having equal weight. Dr. Nesnas asked a question about the library's website and why ranks are not listed on the liaison page under people's names. Sen. Huser agreed that it should and could be added. There is another list on the website that does give that information, but it is not currently on the liaison page.

The approval of these promotion guidelines will be voted on at the next Senate meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Lelekis, Faculty Senate Secretary