

Florida Tech Faculty Senate
October 7, 2016

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), H. Edwards (SAC), C. Harvey (CoPLA), A. Huser (Lib), S. Jensen (COB), U. Jones (Aero), S. Kozaitis (Lib), B. Lail (ECE), T. Marcinkowski (DEIS), S. Murshid (ECE), L. Perdigao (SAC), C. Polson (Bio), P. Ray (DMES), D. Sandall (COB), M. Silaghi (Sch. of Computing), N. Suksawang (CIV), G. Tenali (Math), R. van Woesik (Bio), R. Wehmschulte (Chem), K. Winkelmann (Chem), F. Yumiceva (PSS)

Other Attendees: Dr. Monica Baloga, Senior Vice President for Accreditation, Academic and Student Affairs/Chief Academic Officer; Dr. Annie Becker, Vice President for Research; R. Menezes (Sch. of Computing); N. Nesnas (Chem); Mr. Robert L. Phebus, Board of Trustees – Academic Affairs Chair

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 September's meeting; a motion was made and seconded, and the vote to accept was unanimous.

President's Report

President Sandall asked for a moment of silence in memory of Dr. Robert Shearer. Due to Hurricane Matthew, the October 7th memorial service will be re-scheduled. [*The memorial service will be on Friday, October 14 at 3:30 p.m. in the All Faiths Center chapel.*] President McCay has approved a Lifetime Achievement Award for Dr. Shearer, which will be presented to his widow, Dr. Wende J. Anderson, at the memorial service.

President Sandall introduced Dr. Kevin R. Burke, Assoc. Professor of Music and Director of Music Programs, who was appointed by the School of Arts and Communication to fill Dr. Shearer's position on the Faculty Senate. Sen. Burke will serve as interim secretary until the senate votes for a permanent replacement at the November meeting. Senators interested in running for secretary should contact President Sandall.

The Executive Committee is close to completing a draft the Multi-Track Faculty proposal, which they will then share with Dr. McCay, Dr. Baloga, and the academic deans before presenting to the faculty. President Sandall expects senators to receive a draft by email before the November senate meeting. The

recent draft includes graphics to explain the promotion and transition process for both new and existing faculty, as well as an introductory section that summarizes the background and purpose of the proposal.

Two updates to the Faculty Senate website include reversing the order of Faculty Senate meeting minutes so the most recent are at the top and posting a .PDF of the Faculty Survey results, including graphs, available for download.

Sen. Bernhard asked when faculty will be able to raise questions about the Multi-Track Faculty proposal.

President Sandall indicated that the Multi-Track Faculty proposal would be the main topic for the next Faculty Senate meeting (11/1) and that faculty are invited to bring questions to the discussion.

The meeting proceeded with committee reports before the guest speakers arrived.

Committee Reports

Sen. Tenali, **Academic Policies Committee** chair, met with Mr. Gary Hamme, Vice President for Enrollment Management, to discuss FIT's adoption of the WES (World Education Standard) credential evaluation for international graduate applicants. Mr. Hamme clarified that FIT continues to accept credentials from multiple agencies, not just WES, and fully vets applications to avoid any discrepancies in the reports. As VPAA, Dr. Semen Koksai approved the adoption of the WES evaluation, but communication did not reach the faculty. Sen. Tenali reported that FIT has adopted WES on a trial basis and that a review is underway to evaluate its effectiveness and to determine its renewal. The \$3,000.00-\$4,000.00 scholarship granted to students admitted with a minimum 3.5 GPA will compensate the WES application fee of \$160.00. According to Mr. Hamme, the number of qualified students who are admitted to FIT is growing; any drop in the number of applications is due to multiple factors, including new restrictions on visas. Mr. Hamme intends to visit a future Faculty Senate meeting to address questions about the WES evaluation.

President Sandall indicated that visas would not be granted if the TOEFL score was too low. He also asked the Academic Policies Committee to look into the future possibility of FIT syncing its spring break with the local public school calendar to determine what barriers exist.

In light of concerns expressed by and anecdotal evidence offered by a number of academic units, Sen. Marcinkowski suggested that it might be useful if

academic units were asked to review documents available to them as part of an investigation of the apparent impact of WES on applications and admissions.

Sen. Yumiceva asked if the online application tool specified that alternatives to WES could be submitted, since applications marked “pending WES” were unavailable for faculty to review. The three reports he examined did not compare grades with other institutions; the reports only rescaled the grades to the US 0–4 system and translated them to English. He questioned the value of a service that offers a translation without comparing it to a standard metric like the GRE.

Sen. Tenali restated Mr. Hamme’s assurance that reports from other credential agencies were still accepted, but Sen. Tenali also raised concern over complaints he read online that WES accepted only original documents and was slow to respond despite the 2-week turnaround that is advertised.

Dr. Ronaldo Menezes announced that Computer Science had already met informally with Admissions regarding WES, but did not receive any information regarding its impact on the number of applications. Their unit experienced a drop in applications, but it was unclear if WES or another factor like visas had caused the decline. Other institutions may have that data, including records of any experiences with fraud. The company may have statistics as well. He wondered if FIT sought and considered this information before deciding to adopt WES.

Sen. Tenali reported that some other universities he had contacted, including University of Miami and Carnegie Mellon, were using WES as well as other agencies.

Sen. van Woesik pointed out that the company’s product is about institutions getting the right students, not about institutions receiving a high number of applications. There is no reason WES would know its impact on the number of applications that institutions are receiving.

Sen. Arrasmith reported a favorable experience with WES, that it accounted for inconsistencies across institutions and that grades showing up as lower than before meant that FIT was denying applications from students who are not good students. He agreed with Sen. Marcinkowski’s suggestion for independent investigations within each unit.

Sen. Edwards also reported a favorable experience with WES in Communication. She asked how long WES had been in use and if units only experienced a drop in applications this past year.

Sen. Tenali specified that FIT has requested WES reports since January 16.

In an attempt to summarize points that had been offered during this discussion, Sen. Marcinkowski suggested that any investigation into these concerns should consider the multiple sources of data that had been put forward, including 1) experiences from individual academic units, 2) reports from the Admissions Office that account for additional factors, and 3) a small sample from other institutions using WES.

The meeting continued with the guest speaker presentation after the Academic Policies Committee report.

Guest Speakers

Dr. Monica Baloga, Senior Vice President for Accreditation, Academic and Student Affairs/Chief Academic Officer

Dr. Annie Becker, Vice President for Research

Topic: New Process for Faculty Time and Effort Reporting

Dr. Baloga opened by explaining that the administration was currently running a report on WES. Mr. Hamme and the Faculty Senate will receive the report after it is completed and Dr. McCay has the opportunity to review it. At that point, Mr. Hamme will be available to visit the Faculty Senate to answer questions.

After Dr. Baloga reported that her Office had been conducting an investigation into concerns about WES, Sen. Marcinkowski suggested that any additional steps that might be taken by the Senate should be placed on hold until Dr. Baloga's investigation had been completed and her report had been reviewed by Dr. Tenali and other member of the Senate.

Moving on to the main topic, Dr. Baloga indicated that the new Time and Effort Reporting process was initially contemplated for all faculty, but now is intended to comply with guidelines for federally-funded research.

Dr. Becker summarized the purpose of the Time and Effort Reporting form: The Uniform Guidance federal regulation, issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), is mandated to universities and other non-profit institutions, impacting FIT's Office of Research as well as Human Resources and other organizational units. The guidance allows the U.S. Government to track projects funded by taxpayer dollars that are carried out by faculty, staff, and both graduate and undergraduate students. While the Office of Research can acquire data from HR regarding college roll hours, a central process is needed to account for hours completed by graduate students, post docs, and visiting scholars as well. The Time and Effort Reporting form is structured by the 9 standards and guidelines mandated by the federal government. Time and effort

distribution must add up to 100% to demonstrate how much is allocated toward the grant, which differs from how faculty members usually report workloads. Other institutions are having to comply with these guidelines in the same manner. While the guidelines apply only to federally-funded research, the system may prove useful for tracking work toward other grants in the future. The Office of Research has identified 99 individuals working on a federal grant and needs to track work on those grants in the fall and spring semesters. At this time, reports are not required for the summer.

Sen. Yumiceva asked if post docs need to fill it out for the entire year.

Dr. Becker stated that students should be tracking their time even if they are not in the payroll system. The Office of Research can put into policy how work would apply for summer hours as long as the form encapsulates the Federal Government standards.

Sen. van Woesik asked if summer work should be included on the fall report. Why would a percentage of effort in the fall and spring semesters be reported if the Federal Government is paying faculty only in the summer?

Sen. Baarmand added that this applied to 9-month faculty receiving a summer salary.

Sen. Tenali inquired about the implications for faculty who are paid in the summer directly from the funding agency (e.g. NSF) for work done over the entire year. Would they still need to report time and effort during the semester if they are not using the green carding option?

Dr. Becker clarified that the OMB guidance is only for when you are under contract. The form needs to document the percentage you're allocating toward the grant during the semester.

President Sandall asked if there was a liability issue for the University and faculty who are deferring payments.

Dr. Baloga did not have an answer, but offered that they could wordsmith the form to reflect how contracts and appointments are made so faculty could demonstrate percentages that are part of the normal faculty workload.

Sen. Baarmand explained that the funding agency understands that faculty are receiving a summer salary for work conducted over the entire year and that faculty are balancing work toward the grant with other responsibilities during the fall and spring semesters. Any deferred salary payments through green carding is a separate issue.

Dr. Becker indicated that the office used a template from other universities and that it is possible, whether you are green carding or not, to show how much of the 100% is applied toward the federally-funded grant. The form allows you to separate funded and non-funded research in terms of percentage points and that the total time allocated toward research will work with the expectations of the department heads and deans who will sign off on it. She recommended filling it out at the beginning of the semester as a projection and reviewing with supervisors. At the end of the semester, the time and effort are verified and submitted to the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) to comply with the guidelines.

Dr. Baloga added that if your contract and appointment carry a normal faculty workload of teaching, research, and service, you would still need to allocate the percentage of the research that goes toward the NSF grant even if it is paid out over summer.

Sen. Cudmore questioned the term “normal faculty workload.” What if you work 50+ hours a week? To account for time needed for the grant, the percentages would go down.

Dr. Baloga instructed faculty to think of the report not as total hours, but as a percentage of their workload allocated toward the grant. The forms are not a substitution for the faculty load forms in each college; they are formatted to comply with the federal Uniform Guidance. Even if you are not charging funding toward the grant during the semester, you need to demonstrate the time worked on it during the semester.

Dr. Becker added that the 100% does not include supplemental pay, online courses, consulting, or any other activities that are not specified on the appointment letter and contract. Compliance with the government using their guidelines will protect the University if (when) it is audited.

Sen. Marcinkowski reminded Dr. Becker and others present that some faculty on campus serve as outside or external evaluators for federal grants, and that it was not clear that the agency restrictions on academic year green carding by faculty (e.g., PIs and Co-PIs) also applied to faculty serving in these grant evaluator roles.

Dr. Baloga assured faculty that tables on the forms are not submitted to the funding agencies, just kept for internal records if audited.

Sen. Baarmand questioned the purpose of monetary figures on the form, since there would be no direct correlation to effort based on the way faculty salaries are paid out from the grants.

Dr. Becker specified that the monetary part of the form is a tool to help faculty calculate their percentages and acknowledged that there would be different correlations depending on the funding agency. She offered to provide a third form for the summer if that would assist faculty.

Dr. Baloga concluded the discussion by inviting faculty to contact Dr. Becker with any questions about the Time and Effort Reporting form. Dr. Baloga is currently reviewing how to quantify teaching load units with the university deans, so those questions can be directed to her when the review is complete.

[[*After the meeting, Dr. Becker clarified that summer salary support from a grant is compensation for effort on the project during the summer session; it is not compensation for past effort during the fall or spring semester. The form demonstrates time and effort when the faculty member is under contract, not the compensation. A faculty member may work on a funded research project during the fall or spring semester, whereby salary is not directly charged to the grant, as a part of the research activity specified in the appointment letter and supported by the institutional base salary. Training sessions will be held on November 2nd at 2:00 p.m. and on November 3rd at 10:00 a.m. in the second floor conference room in the Keuper building. Instructions and a simplified form (.PDF) are available at <http://www.fit.edu/research/osp/index.php#uniform-guidance.>]]

Dr. Baloga took the time at the end of the presentation to address faculty concerns over a 2-year period without raises, citing a cost of living adjustment (COLA) last year and the administration's plan to discuss merit raises for next year at some point soon.

[[**In private communication after the meeting, Dr. Baloga acknowledged her mistake in reporting that COLA was added last year.]]

The Committee Reports resumed after the guest speakers' presentation.

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

There was no **Scholarship Committee** report.

There was no **Faculty Excellence Committee** report.

There was no **Welfare Committee** report.

Sen. Arrasmith, **Technology, Resources, and Infrastructure Committee** chair, reported that there were plans to update the website over the summer and that FIT would be upgrading the website engine; however, the new website engine is not up and running yet, so a ticket was issued to upgrade the old engine by October 31. The Technology, Resources, and Infrastructure Committee will be meeting soon; it has been delayed due to work on the Multi-Track Faculty proposal.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjournment

President Sandall adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin R. Burke, Interim Secretary