**Florida Tech Faculty Senate**

November 7, 2017

**Minutes**

**Senators Present:** W. Arrasmith (DES), M. Baarmand (PSS), J. Brenner (CE), K. Burke (SAC), P. Converse (Psych), H. Crawford (CS), C. Harvey (SBA), A. Huser (Lib), M. Jensen (MAE), S. Jensen (COB), U. Jones (Aero), M. Kaya (BME), S. Kozaitis (Lib), B. Lail (ECE), D. Lelekis (SAC), D. LeVan (CS), T. Marcinkowski (DEIS), B. Morkos (MAE), S. Murshid (ECE), A. Nag (PSS), A. Nnolim (ExSt), L. Perdigao (SAC), C. Polson (Bio), P. Sahoo (OES), D. Sandall (COB), M. Silaghi (CS), N. Suksawang (CCM), G. Tenali (Math), A. Walton (COB), N. Weatherly (SBA), R. Wehmschulte (Chem), A. Welters (Math), B. Wheeler (Aero), K. Winkelmann (Chem), D. Yuran (SAC), Z. Zhou (Psych)

**Senators Absent:** I. Delgado-Perez (COB), O. Doule (HCDIA)**,** K. Johnson (OES), R. Menezes (CS), B. Paulillo (Psych), R. Rusovici (MAE), R. van Woesik (Bio)

**Other Attendees:** Troy Glassman (COB), Michael Grace (Bio), Jose Martinez-Diaz (SBA), Nasri Nesnas (Chem), Jignya Patel (COB), Ken Revay (BOT)

**Call to Order**

President Baarmand called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

***[[\*\*Note: The October Minutes approval occurred after the discussion of summer pay, to allow Dr. Baloga time to get to another meeting.\*\*]]***

**Guest Speaker**

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

*Topic: Changes to Summer Salary*

Sen. Burke reported that over 120 faculty responded to the survey on changes to summer pay, with all colleges represented. At this point it is too early to share any other numbers until the responses are grouped and tallied and the comments are summarized.

In the interest of time, Dr. Baloga opened by inviting questions from the floor.

Sen. Marcinkowski asked if the $350 rate for dissertation advising was consistent with the past?

Dr. Baloga responded that the rate was a reduction from the past, as a large percentage of summer faculty salary has been paid for dissertation credits. The emphasis in the summer should be on undergraduate courses to help students get caught up and graduate in time.

Sen. Marcinkowski understood the rationale for the university, but pointed out that it would impact units that do not offer undergraduate courses in the summer differently. The rationale does not apply to everyone.

Dr. Baloga stated that the policy had to be university wide.

Sen. Winkelmann inquired about Pres. McCay’s announcement at the Town Hall Meeting of a 1.7 million loss in revenue from the 2017 summer term.

Dr. Baloga clarified that the figure was due to not meeting projected summer revenue, explained by a drop in graduate student and online learning enrollments.

Sen. Matt Jensen asked if lower graduate enrollment was due to fewer graduate students or fewer graduate course offerings.

Dr. Baloga confirmed that there were fewer graduate students, but that colleges had also trimmed graduate course offerings to stay within the summer salary budget.

Sen. Matt Jensen speculated that the high enrollment minimum resulted in fewer course offerings and enrollments.

Dr. Baloga, however, noted the impact budget management had on the number of course offerings, citing that more than 50% of the College of Engineering and Computing summer salary budget went to thesis and dissertation advising.

Sen. Matt Jensen returned to the projection shortfall, asking if thesis and dissertation advising was actually losing money for FIT or just falling short of projections.

Dr. Baloga stressed that the accounting system was incremental, not performance based. Each college is given a set amount for summer faculty salary. Any revenue that comes in above that number is not added to that budget. Accounting had not been aligned properly in past years, so the university was overspending. Now that we’ve had financial difficulties, the Finance Office is rigidly staying within budget.

Pres. Baarmand asked if summer term accounting could be separate, not the first term of the fiscal year

Dr. Baloga responded that the deans are not quite ready to separate summer from the academic year budget.

Sen Arrasmith encouraged moving to a cost-revenue based model, which would identify profit for the university whenever summer course revenues exceed expenses. When this model was previously discussed, only 2.5 students were needed to break even on summer course expenditures.

Dr. Baloga offered to discuss with the summer and finance staff.

Sen. Kaya asked if WES, as part of the graduate admissions process, had an effect on summer enrollments.

Dr. Baloga acknowledged that WES and other factors pertaining to international, graduate students had an effect last summer. She cited the Homeland Security ruling that students seeking I-20’s had to meet all admissions standards, including English proficiency. In the past students were admitted into academic programs prior to taking the ESL courses. The ruling was an abrupt decision and it really impacted FIT in ways we did not anticipate. Now that we allow transcript evaluation by other foreign credential evaluators, we do not believe the evaluation will remain a factor. Electrical Engineering’s GRE requirements had an initial impact on admission planning, but has now normalized.

Sen. Welters asked if 31% of salary would remain the maximum with combined summer teaching and research grant funding.

Dr. Baloga assured the room that the administration would consider approval beyond that minimum as recommended by the deans. She had not seen a situation when part of salary is supplemented that would prevent being able to reach 31%.

Sen. Sherry Jensen asked how the new summer salary rates were selected.

Dr. Baloga indicated that the Office of Finance considered the minimum number of students needed to average a 25% expense ratio for the faculty salary budget. The number turned out to be 6 undergraduate students and 4 graduate students. In some cases the expense ratio may be up to 60% for the 6 student minimum; however, other courses will have more than 6 students and will balance out those higher percentages.

Sen. Matt Jensen asked what the administration will do if faculty choose not to teach in summer 2018, to which Dr. Baloga replied that adjuncts would have to be used to ensure enough revenue is generated in summer for the entire institutional budget. FIT depends on summer revenue to cover other expenses and avoid making cuts to budgets and staff positions.

Sen. Harvey asked if the offsite, practical training courses in the School of Behavior Analysis would fall under the category of professional programs, since instructors are required to observe students at the training sites 75 minutes per week. Would the 3-student load for these instructors satisfy the minimum requirement?

Dr. Baloga indicated that Dean Mary Beth Kenkel had already made the inquiry, clarifying that accreditation required a 12-month program. While that level of detail has not been defined yet, such programs are precisely why the professional program category was defined in the summer plan. She will discuss the specific details with Dean Kenkel.

***[[\*Dr. Baloga left for another meeting at this time.\*]]***

Sen. Matt Jensen continued the discussion by asking if the plan will be adjusted again if Summer 2018 falls short of projections and if the CFO would consider moving to a performance based model.

Pres. Baarmand responded that the plan will certainly be changed if it fails and the faculty should make a preference for a performance based model known to the CFO.

Sen. Winkelmann asked if other staff are receiving cuts in summer. Profitability has not kept FIT from owning museums, starting football teams, and going into debt with these new ventures. Why does profitability come up when we’re dealing with faculty?

Pres. Baarmand reported that there are serious considerations for closing the museum, so the administration is looking at other ways to make cuts.

Mr. Ken Revay shared that the Board of Trustees had created three committees to look at this issue, one each for museums, athletics, aviation. The committees will be reporting their findings to Pres. McCay.

Dr. Nasri Nesnas asked what plans were in place to improve enrollments? There have been declines in several areas. Faculty do not understand where the budget stands.

Pres. Baarmand reported discussions of enrollment trends from the administrative retreat and that the panels are currently exploring ways to respond to changes in enrollment. He will report what he learns to the senate.

Sen. Sandall clarified that Summer 2017 was not a loss of money. The revenue was just short of the projections, so the phrase $1.7 million loss is misleading. He recalled that summer projections and credit hours were not addressed by the budget committee last year when tuition was discussed in preparation for the Board of Trustees meeting. Although last summer’s policy was problematic, the new plan leaves no incentive for growing class sizes above the minimum. He asked if there was any consideration to incentivize enrollments beyond the minimum to maximize summer profits.

Pres. Baarmand admitted that the summer financial model has some deficiencies. Although the faculty can make recommendations, it is outside the senate’s purview and, ultimately, CFO Wood has the final word. Although he attends the Finance Panel and can contribute to the discussion, he cannot dictate the agenda for the meetings. So far there has been not discussion of summer, just the budget for the next fiscal year based on enrollment projections.

**Approval of Minutes**

Following the summer pay discussion, President Baarmand asked for a motion to approve the minutes of October’s meeting; a motion was made by Senator Marcinkowski and seconded by Senator Arrasmith.

The October Minutes were approved by unanimous vote of voice.

**Evaluation Kit Questions**

The meeting then turned to the topic of Revising Course Evaluation Questions with Evaluation Kit.

Dr. Bonhomme shared that the Teaching Council can be tasked to research and suggest changes in the core group of questions that will be brought to the Senate for review and input. Once approved, the Teaching Council will work with Instructional Technology in implementing the changes.

Pres. Baarmand asked if the Senate would endorse the Teaching Council being the driver of these revisions to the evaluation questions.

Sen. Marcinkowski asked if individual units and colleges will have a say in items to add.

Dr. Bonhomme replied in the affirmative, stating that the Teaching Council has representatives from all colleges and there is an expectation that the representatives will reach out to their colleges.

Sen. Wehmschulte inquired about a timeline for the question revisions.

Dr. Bonhomme responded that Spring Semester will be the earliest new questions can be implemented.

Sen. Kaya raised some concern over the amount of time spent on the topic of the online course evaluations and Dr. Bonhomme assured that the Teaching Council’s role in researching and suggesting new questions would allow the Senate to focus on other issues.

Sen. Winkelmann had an issue with the transition from paper to online. First there will be an adjustment in the medium for the evaluation and then an adjustment to a new set of core questions. How do we account for these adjustments when faculty are evaluated for annual performance and promotion? There appears to be little consideration for how to minimize the impact of the transition on faculty evaluations and this is a concern to faculty.

Pres. Baarmand saw an advantage to rolling out the online format first and then revising the questions, so only one parameter is changed at a time. This process will make it easier to observe the impact on faculty.

Sen. Marcinkowski agreed with Sen. Winkelmann’s concern. Who is responsible for evaluating the overall transition because of the implication it has for faculty promotion and tenure. Will the Teaching Council assume responsibility for this?

Pres. Baarmand responded that the Teaching Council was looking into this concern and will bring their findings to the Senate.

Sen. Sandall referenced the pilot survey report that was sent to all senators: 87% found responses the same as with the paper evaluation. 13% saw results above/below the paper evaluation. But the report is not broken down by course, etc. Overall, the responses were 61 positive, 21 negative, and 17 neutral. The comments appended to the report are worth reading and we can address them.

Pres. Baarmand asked if there were any objections to the Teaching Council taking the lead on revising questions.

No objections were raised.

Sen Sandall pointed out that the Senate has representatives on the Teaching Council.

**Naming the Faculty Excellence Award in Research**

Pres. Baarmand moved to the topic of naming the Faculty Excellence Award in Research. The teaching and service awards are named, but not the research award. We tabled this discussion last year but need to open it again with the goal of its completion before February 2018 when we start the excellence award process. Nomination are now open for the naming of the research award. Please provide supporting statements and documents with the nominations. The Development Office is also seeking individuals interested in research who may be willing to make a donation to the university on behalf of a good candidate for the name of this award. One name that has come up is Pieter S. Dubbelday (Physics and Oceanography in 1980s-1990s). His daughter is a friend of university and has made some contributions in the past. CDO Gary Grant mentioned that she may be open to creating an endowment named for her father to support this award. $100k for endowment will yield a $5000 cash award. The award amount will grow with the endowment. On December 1 we will close nominations. Please provide enough supporting documentation/statements and the credentials. The name from last year will be resubmitted as well.

**President’s Report**

Pres. Baarmand reported the approval of the ESL Bridge Program. International students who are not proficient in English can now be admitted and allowed to enroll in English courses while beginning coursework in the major with some restrictions. This is a gain of approximately 40 new students in spring, and another 80 in fall, and these international students pay full tuition. Additionally, the Northrop Grumann Masters Program will offer degrees in engineering and an MBA. 100 students are estimated for this program and Northrop Grumann will pay the tuition and fees, improving overall enrollment and tuition revenue. Although FIT’s total enrollment dropped from 9200 to 8900 this year, these new ventures are a positive step to recovering the loss.

**Committee Reports**

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

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

There was no **Scholarship committee** report.

There was no **Faculty Excellence Committee** report, other than the call for nominations.

Sen. Walton, chair of the **Welfare Committee**, reported that the committee met with Rodney Bowers and Karen Gathercole on a number of topics. Some revisions to handbook are needed and driven by legal consultations about how the institution handles complaints. Most of the concerns are addressed in the handbook, but faculty are not always aware of the policies in the handbook. A forum for presenting best practices in handling student issues would be beneficial for faculty.

Sen. Arrasmith, chair of the **TRI Committee,** attended the IT Executive Council. The $10k technology mini-grants have returned and ACITC is in charge of awarding the grants. CoPLA is looking at Qualtrics License and would like to cost share with another college. IT is currently working on 20 web servers and setting up new software for handling parking tickets. FIT is selling bandwidth to some government offices and some schools. Telecom is replacing the emergency phones. Instructional Tech is adopting clickers and Zoom will be replacing Adobe Connect for conference calling. Evaluation Kit is moving forward. Red Shift takes and stores data analytics in Canvas. Institutional videos need to have captions for hearing disability. This is not required for course videos, just for institutional videos. Tech support lost the night staff person and is searching for a replacement.

There was no **Faculty Handbook** ad hoc committee report.

Sen. Sandall, chair of the **Tenure Exploration Committee**, reported that sub committees were formed to tackle multiple topics at once and move quickly. More information is forthcoming.

**Adjournment**

President Baarmand asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, so made by Sen. Marcinkowski and seconded by Sen. Huser, and with a unanimous vote adjourned the meeting at 4:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin R. Burke, Secretary