President’s Quality of Life Committee
Meeting Minutes for
Wednesday, December 5th, 2012
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room, 7th floor of Crawford Building

In Attendance: Monica Baloga (Chair), Catherine Cook, Carla Deras, Rob Ghiotto, Eric Kledzik, Bill Macom, Aiken Oliver, Daniel Otero, Jon Shenker, Brian Thai, Cookie Young

Absent: Susanne Bahr, Cassandra Carnley, Andrew Hernandez, Ulreen Jones, Jackie Lingner, Shane Santana

I. Approval of November 7th meeting minutes
The minutes were unanimously approved with no corrections.

II. Traffic Safety Campaign
Mr. Kevin Graham, Director of Security, attended as a guest speaker to discuss and request assistance with a traffic safety campaign/educational program on campus. It is believed that the campaign would be most beneficial and effective if it was supported by the Quality of Life and the Student Government Association (SGA). He reported that there has already been one accident whereby a car ran into a student on a skateboard (thankfully with minimal injury). He further reported that there are plenty of near-miss incidences every day. In order to address safety concerns, Mr. Graham proposes to (1) post signs requesting that no bicycles or skateboards are to be ridden through the crosswalks on University Blvd. and Country Club Rd. and (2) require nighttime illumination on all bicycles. SGA representatives on the QOL committee stated that they were working on a safety policy to incorporate into the Student Handbook. Additionally, anyone participating in the bicycle program on campus would be required to sign a form that states that they have been informed of the safety policy.

At the Chair’s request, the SGA representatives agreed to continue working with Mr. Graham on the safety campaign. In addition the Chair asked the Traffic Safety Subcommittee to invest how other institutions enforced safety policies. Mr. Graham was thanked by the Chair and the committee for his time.

III. Winterim
The Chair moved to the topic of the proposed Winterim, stating that this committee was only to discuss items that might affect quality of life on campus should this system be adopted. In addition, committee members were asked to discuss possible solutions to any issues that were brought up. It was announced that three calendars have been proposed to accommodate either a 3- to 4-week Winterim. Within each calendar, university holidays and fall/spring breaks were either completely eliminated or drastically shortened. The following outlines a short list of pros and cons that were discussed in the meeting.

Pro: This could be a good opportunity to allow transfer/international students to take pre-requisite courses that may otherwise cause a delay in their schedules.
Concern: Everyone expressed how important it would be to have a strong enhancement program in place for non-remedial students. Possible solution: Are there possibilities for offering online courses to students?

Concern: There are initial reports that undergraduates in science-related majors are concerned about summer research/internship programs. Many of these start early and can run up to 10 weeks. No solution could be determined for this concern. The Chair instructed those members who are concerned about this to determine the number of students who would be affected by this.

Concern: Graduate students are concerned about Winterim causing a delay in graduation, thus putting them at a disadvantage when competing for job openings. No solution could be determined for this concern.

Concern: There are concerns about whether graduate student stipends will be covered over the Winterim. Possible Solutions: (1) Provide funds to colleges/departments to cover stipends with Research Assistantships over the Winterim. This would be a big plus for graduate students who would now have 10 months guaranteed pay each year instead of 9 months. (2) Don’t change stipend amount. Allow time for adjustment to the new schedule.

Concern: Despite pointing out that students would have all of January off, SGA representatives expressed that loss of Spring Break would be very unpopular with students. No solution could be determined for this concern. The Chair encouraged SGA to inform students of the Winterim proposal since anecdotal evidence is suggesting that many know nothing about it.

Concern: Because the athletic season begins in February, student athletes would need housing/living requirements for January. It is believed that these expenses would not be covered by scholarships. Possible solution: Provide additional funds to the athletic department in order to offset the cost of training/housing/feeding the athletes.

Because of time constraints, the Chair stopped the discussion of this agenda item and asked members to follow up with collecting recommended feedback from students.

IV. Sub-Committee Reports (if any)

Due to time constraints, only the Promoting a Sustainable Campus Subcommittee has time to present an action item. A proposed timeline and format for a Sustainability Project Competition was presented to committee members for review and comment (appended to the minutes). This proposal is in response to the President’s pledge to annually fund a student-driven sustainability project, which was a recommendation brought forward by this subcommittee during the last academic year.
V. Next meeting: TBD in January, 2013

ACTION ITEMS:

1) Student groups whose summer internships would be affected by a shortened summer program (because of the introduction of a Winterim) should report the approximate number of students affected. It may also help to know what majors would mostly be affected.

2) Review Sustainable Project Competition proposal and be prepared to discuss it at our next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica H. Baloga, Chair
December 17, 2012
Florida Institute of Technology
Sustainability Project Competition (SPC)

Goal: Efforts to increase the “sustainability” of the Florida Tech campus can take many forms. Maximizing energy use efficiency, conserving water and other resources, reducing waste generation, increasing recycling, and improving habitats around campus are just a few of the basic approaches for enhancing sustainable systems on campus.

Students are major contributors to the intellectual and operational efforts to improve sustainability operations. The Sustainability Project Competition is designed to encourage students to develop potential programs to increase the ecological and economic efficiencies on the campus. President Catanese has approved awarding up to $10,000 each year to implement the best proposals for sustainable projects.

Proposal Timeline and Format:

March-April 2013. Announce the Sustainability Project Competition to the campus community, and present the timeline for program proposals as defined below.

End of August 2013: Announce the competition for the current academic year, and publish comprehensive proposal format instructions, and proposal review criteria.

During the fall semester, students will identify sustainability topics they wish to pursue, and develop full proposals for their projects. Proposals will require:
- Statement of Need
- Summary of Proposed Project
- Detailed Description of Project, including timeline, procedures to implement project, procedures to maintain project (if appropriate) even after student graduation
- Budget (a typical project will cost $2000-2500, although larger budgets will be considered).

End of November 2013: Proposal submission deadline

End of January 2014: review of proposals by members of the Quality of Life Sustainability Subcommittee, faculty in the Sustainability Program and ad hoc reviewers. Proposal reviews may include oral presentations and discussions between the applicants and review panel. Announcement of Awards will be made at the end of the month.

February-August 2014: begin work on project, to be completed according to the proposal timeline (this can extend into the following academic year, if appropriate)

August 2014: Announce the competition for the new academic year, and re-start the cycle at the beginning of the academic year for this second year and all subsequent years.