**Florida Tech Faculty Senate**

December 5, 2017

**Minutes**

**Senators Present:** W. Arrasmith (DES), M. Baarmand (PSS), J. Brenner (CE), K.

Burke (SAC), P. Converse (Psych), T. Glassman (COB), C. Harvey (SBA), A. Huser (Lib), M. Jensen (MAE), S. Jensen (COB), K. Johnson (OES), S. Kozaitis (Lib),

B. Lail (ECE), T. Marcinkowski (DEIS), S. Murshid (ECE), A. Nag (PSS), A. Nnolim (ExSt), B. Paulillo (Psych), L. Perdigao (SAC), C. Polson (Bio), R. Rusovici (MAE), D. Sandall (COB), M. Silaghi (CS), N. Suksawang (CCM), R. van Woesik (Bio), N. Weatherly (SBA), R. Wehmschulte (Chem), B. Wheeler (Aero), K. Winkelmann (Chem), Z. Zhou (Psych)

**Senators Absent:** H. Crawford (CS), O. Doule (HCDIA), U. Jones (Aero), M. Kaya (BME), D. Lelekis (SAC), D. LeVan (CS), B. Morkos (MAE), P. Sahoo (OES), G. Tenali (Math), A. Walton (COB), A. Welters (Math), D. Yuran (SAC)

**Other Attendees:** Nasri Nesnas (Chem), Gordon Patterson (SAC), Chao Wang (Lib)

**Call to Order**

President Baarmand called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of November’s meeting; a motion was made by Senator Marcinkowski and seconded by Senator Sandall.

The November Minutes were approved by unanimous vote of voice

**Reports**

On October 25, Pres. Baarmand attended the first of several seminars Pres. McCay is running for the university leadership; this first one discussed the University Vision and Strategic Goals.

Pres. McCay reported that the BOT meetings went well and the topic of tenure was well received. He then laid out his strategy to move the university into top 100, emphasizing that he wanted feedback on all points for his draft, so the seminar was more of a discussion, than presentation. Pres. McCay recognizes four elements that are key to advancing the university: great faculty, great students, great leadership, and great infrastructure. The order in which these were listed did not appear to have any significance to Pres. Baarmand. The Strategic Vision is to enhance academic research programs into the top 100 doctoral universities and top 50 engineering and computer institutions, based on the U.S. News and World Report rankings.

Sen. van Woesik asked why emphasis is placed on the U.S. News and World Report and not the Times Higher Education World University rankings.

Pres. Baarmand replied that it is more difficult to move up in the Times rankings, and, for undergraduate studies, the U. S. News and World Report rankings are more frequently used.

Sen. Matt Jensen suggested it was FIT’s recent drop in the Times rankings from 200s into the 601–800 category.

Sen. van Woesik pointed out that research is emphasized more in the Times rankings and not included in U.S. News and World Report ranking criteria.

Sen. Lail added that many international students rely on the Shanghai rankings to be eligible for funding. FIT used to be included, but has since fallen off of these rankings. Will the administration target these as well?

Pres. Baarmand distributed a handout of the U.S. News and World Report criteria breakdown and distribution and replied that the administration is focusing specifically on these rankings.

Sen. van Woesik wondered why FIT didn’t pursue the other rankings, rather than just accept the recent drop.

Sen. Matt Jensen was curious if there was any rationale or financial reason for pursuing just one ranking system.

Sen. Marcinkowski speculated that the administration is focused on the domestic market value the U.S. News and World Report rankings have for our degree programs. He also thought that as far as the other ranking systems go, the adoption of tenure may lead to an increase in positive attention. Tenure could result in more research and publication activity that could bring a measurable benefit for FIT in those rankings down the road.

Pres. Baarmand reported that there is speculation the U.S. News and World Report will include tenure in its criteria, so Pres. McCay’s interest in tenure is perhaps in part motivated by the push to increase rankings. Faculty resources and compensation are big criteria as well, and these are of interest to the Senate and play into our goals to improve ranking.

Sen. Arrasmith asked if the criteria consider faculty resources for the full year or just the academic year.

Pres. Baarmand responded that it was just for the academic year. Summer doesn’t count. Returning to the seminar, the Core Values Pres. McCay listed are 1) to be the best small university in the world, to give education that provides for student success for lifetime, to perform research that benefits all mankind, and to build global citizens.

The Strategic Goals given were 1) to strengthen internal and external communication, 2) to enhance workplace and campus culture, 3) to develop a strong alumni support base, 4) to increase funded research to $100 million a year in support of the Pillars of Excellence, 5) to beautify the campus, 6) to produce graduates employable by best companies, 7) to increase the endowment to $200 million, 8) to be a competitive research university, and 9) to serve as an education engine in Brevard county.

Pres. Baarmand skipped over the detailed key objectives, hoping that Pres. McCay will visit the Senate to present them at a later date, but shared the Operating Principles: 1) open and honest communication, 2) to not worry about getting credit, 3) to put students first always, 4) to provide service leadership, 5) to use common sense, and 6) to practice the golden rule (i.e., treat others as you would like to be treated). Pres. McCay wants everyone on board with these principles. Since CFO Cathy Wood is the planned guest for the January meeting, perhaps Pres. McCay can attend the February meeting so senators can provide feedback.

Referring to the U.S. News and World Report ranking criteria, Nasri Nesnas asked about the assessment surveys that are weighted the 2nd highest.

Pres. Baarmand replied that university presidents at all universities are prompted to rank other universities. FIT employed a marketing blitz just before the surveys were sent out for this year’s rankings. Apparently, this strategy helped FIT advance several spots.

**Committee Reports**

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

Sen. Rusovici, chair of the **Administrative Policies Committee**, shared two issues: 1) The committee was delegated to revise the Faculty Handbook in 3 months, but the task cannot be completed because of the immediate discussions of tenure and the recent changes in department and college structure. Dean Carvalho says the new structure not set in stone, so there is no need to proceed with these topics in the handbook revision as they are still changing. 2) The Faculty Handbook also needs to have legal review in following the AAUP guidelines, as faculty view the handbook and its policies as a contract.

Pres. Baarmand asked if the handbook on the website was the old one, to which Sen. Rusovici responded in the affirmative.

There was no **Scholarship Committee** report.

There was no **Faculty Excellence Committee** report, other than the discussion of nominations for naming the research award later in the meeting.

There was no **Welfare Committee** report.

There was no **Technology, Resources, and Infrastructure Committee** report.

There was no **Tenure Exploration Committee** report, as discussion of the Tenure Surveys would occur later in the meeting as new business.

**Discussion**

***Committee Requirements for Thesis/Dissertation in New Department Structure***

Sen. Brenner opened by raising questions about the impact new department structure will have on thesis/dissertation committee requirements and on the allotment of senators. Would programs within the new departments be allotted senators?

Sen. Sandall pointed out that the Faculty Handbook says senators represent schools and departments and Pres. Baarmand added that the details are in progress and there is ongoing work to address those questions.

Sen. Brenner returned to committee memberships, referencing the requirement for graduate programs for a faculty member outside of the department.

Sen. Johnson reported from a conversation with Dean Carvalho that the new structure is unlikely to change existing committees; however, after the merger new committees will require the member outside of the department. The outside member, as Dean Carvalho stressed, is not for expertise but for protocol, to act as a proxy for the Graduate Programs Office.

Sens. Polson and Marcinkowski both concurred that field of expertise is secondary to the role the outside member played as a representative of Graduate Programs.

Sen. Brenner believed the broad definition of departments was not the way to merge. We should build on proven collaborations. Requiring faculty to be on committees who have no vested interest in the projects is in no one’s best interest.

Pres. Baarmand asked affected faculty if they participated in any discussion of the merger, now that it has been announced. Were you asked for input?

Sen. Matt Jensen reported from the discussion Dean Carvalho had with Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. The entire reason for the merger is to better utilize resources, to avoid duplication and share in common areas. There is a push to advance rankings, but programs are not getting more resources. Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering are very intertwined, but are split apart in the new structure. Faculty can make a case to change this plan, but then the departments would be unbalanced in terms of numbers of faculty. Dean Carvalho stressed that the departments are intended to be equal in size so they can best utilize resources.

Nasri Nesnas asked if the balance in size was in reference to faculty or to students, to which Sen. Matt Jensen replied that he believed Aerospace and Mechanical were split because it involves so many students.

Sen. Marcinkowski reported that DEIS discussed the new structure with Dean Carvalho too. At that time, Dean Carvalho indicated that academic department heads would handle administrative duties, and that program chairs would report to these department heads and oversee clusters of academic programs.

Sen. Winkelmann wondered what the elimination of course duplication would mean for faculty.

Sen. Matt Jensen stated that cross pollination in the teaching was a goal.

Sen. Johnson cited Pres. McCay’s intention that no faculty lines be eliminated. The synergy of course loads will lighten teaching loads.

Pres. Baarmand asked if other meetings are planned to continue these discussions.

Sen. Matt Jensen responded that the discussions are trying to solicit feedback for the new department heads. The administration wants to finalize plans in early spring for an official fall rollout, but these new groupings are taking effect in the spring.

Sen. Arrasmith reported from a conversation with Dean Carvalho that program chairs should be defined and put into place by the end of January.

Sen. Sandall clarified that programs are attached to departments or schools in determining the allocation of senators.

Sen. Johnson shared that Oceanography had suffered in past marketing due to its pairing with engineering; however, in a shift to marketing programs, these departments do not matter as much, since they are designed for administrative functions.

Pres. Baarmand hoped that there will be more discussion among the administration and leadership regarding the different units. The merger is done, but the final format is still something that needs to be acceptable to the faculty.

Sen. Marcinkowski asked if Dean Carvalho could be a guest at an early spring senate meeting.

Sen. Johnson, however, believed it would be hard for the senate to provide feedback as a body to these separate units.

***Nominated Names for Faculty Excellence Award in Research***

Pres. Baarmand reported that THREE nomination letters and bios were emailed to the faculty, as well as the names of the individuals who made the nominations. He then invited those making the nominations to share a few words of support. **[[Please refer to the email for full bios.]]**

Gordon Patterson stated that his nomination of **Dr. Thomas Bowman** was in recognition of his research work and his service to the university. Bowman was a fixture when Patterson arrived 25 years ago. He had several research projects that earned him an award from National Association of Engineers, was a dean, and served as director of International Programs. His research programs brought lifeblood to the university and he is a notable figure for making FIT into a full-fledged university from an engineering college.

Sen. Polson noted that he’d worked among all three nominees, but that he recognized **Dr. Charles Helmstetter** as being a true researcher. He was 1 of 5 prominent researchers at SUNY Buffalo and had 37 consecutive years of NIH R01 support. He proposed and developed a cell cycle that appears in textbooks today and developed the baby machine to produce synchronous developing cells. He was one of the first hired specifically to do research and he was hired to be a prominent, funded researcher.

Pres. Baarmand shared some words about **Dr. Pieter Dubbelday**, who was nominated by Gary Grant in the Development Office. Dubbelday’s daughter is a friend of the university and the Dubbelday nomination could bring an endowment to support the $5000 cash prize. She has not decided on funding an endowment, but the senate’s selection of Dubbelday will be shared as an opportunity for her to do so in support of an award in his name.

Gordon Patterson added that during his historical research of the university he interviewed Dubbelday, and both he and Pres. Keuper stated that Dubbelday was hired in 1961 to be a researcher.

Pres. Baarmand asked senators to report back to units for further discussion and bring any feedback to the January meeting when the vote will take place. There will be an option on the ballot for “none of the above.” If there is no major support for any of the candidates, the senate will not move forward in proposing any of the names to the administration.

**New Business**

***Tenure Exploration Committee Survey #1 Report***

Sen. Sandall, chair of the Tenure Exploration Committee, reported that a committee of 26 faculty, both senators and non-senators, are meeting to research and guide the tenure implementation process to represent the faculty’s interests. One team from this committee recently distributed the first of multiple surveys and are preparing a detailed report. That team is made up of Senators Marcinkowski, Perdigao, Harvey, and Sandall, as well as Julie Costopoulos, Nasri Nesnas, and Jignya Patel. There were 257 respondents to the survey and the open-ended questions yielded a lot of open-ended data.

Sen. Marcinkowski passed out the survey summary report and explained that the committee has broken into three working groups: 1) will work on policy and procedure options, 2) another on transitions, and 3) the more immediate group is doing data mining, gathering both information and evidence. The committee has adjusted its working timeline, following Pres. McCay’s announcement of an August 2018 rollout. This present survey is just the first of several. The next survey will focus on options from the policy and procedure standpoint. At the very end of the committee’s process, Dr. McCay may ask for a vote on the eventual tenure plan. The open-ended questions in the survey were designed to gain a greater understanding of faculty members’ views.

Sen. Marcinkowski then reported that the committee discovered there were a lot of questions and concerns, and they are diverse. Some deal with policies and procedures, others with transitions. A cross-analysis of the open-ended questions will guide the sub teams on the next survey.

Sen. Perdigao discussed the executive summary report. [Please see handout].

Pres. Baarmand referenced the part-time and emeriti faculty who are included in the faculty distribution email list who had received and taken the survey.

Sen. Sandall, however, acknowledged that the team had filtered the results, as respondents were prompted to identify their faculty status in the survey. He then reported that several of the faculty who opposed the implementation of tenure in survey would support it under certain circumstances.

Sen. Marcinkowski cautioned any consideration that the survey data are representative of the faculty, since we do not have a census and a representative sample. However, it is noteworthy that the respondents identified themselves evenly among assistant, associate, and full professors. Response rates were also even among the colleges. Since some faculty chose not to identify themselves by rank or college, any indication of low representation in the sample pool is masked. Nevertheless, these preliminary results are an assurance to Pres. McCay that there appears to be greater support for tenure among the faculty than he has been hearing, so that will be reported to the administration.

Sen. Marcinkowski also acknowledged Dr. Costopoulos’s efforts to examine the segmented, cross-tabular responses to various questions by faculty rank, as well as Dr. Patel’s content analysis of open-ended responses pertaining to faculty members’ concerns.

Pres. Baarmand asked why opinions of faculty who oppose tenure are being singled out in the data reporting. The report should also list the opinions of those who favor tenure.

Sens. Sandall and Marcinkowski replied that Dr. Costopoulos wanted to account for the conditions by which faculty who oppose tenure may consider supporting it and to look for threads and possible considerations in their results.

Sen. Sandall stressed that Pres. McCay wants FIT to begin implementing tenure beginning August 2018, even though he (Pres. McCay) realizes it will not be fully implemented by then. The urgency in the committee’s work is a response to the looming deadline. We want faculty to have a say and if the Senate does not provide guidance throughout the process, the administration will proceed anyway. Knowledge of the reasons faculty would oppose tenure will inform the policy and procedure development stages.

Dr. Nasri Nesnas added that the committee wants the survey’s first message to be simple in order to address the concerns of those who opposed it. The take away from the survey is that a majority support tenure and those who oppose it have valid points that can be addressed in the policies and procedures step. We do not want to shake university structure, as tenure brings peer review and we do not necessarily have the resources other tenure institutions have.

Sen. Sandall indicated that grandfathering will be the topic of next survey. The committee plans to pose questions regarding choice between staying on contract system and moving to tenure system under certain conditions, which will amass opinions of faculty toward policy and transition plans. The committee will be meeting on Friday to address this topic and would like to involve faculty who have experience with tenure systems prior to coming to FIT. Faculty can expect a high level of detail in the next survey, as opposed to more general, open-ended questions. A final report of the second survey will go to faculty, with summarized and grouped responses.

Sen. Marcinkowski recommended inviting faculty with tenure experience at other institutions to participate via the Canvas group that has been set up for the committee’s work. Interested faculty can contact Sen. Sandall.

**Adjournment**

President Baarmand asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, so made by Sen.

Marcinkowski and seconded by Sen. Arrasmith, and with a unanimous vote adjourned the meeting at 4:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin R. Burke, Secretary