**MINUTES**

**Faculty Senate**

February 7th, 2012

Senators present: Arrasmith, Baarmand, Battaglia, Brenner, Brown, Campbell, Converse, Cook, Cudmore, Dwyer, W. Helmstetter, Marcinkowski, Menezes, Murshid, Patton, Perdigao, Polson, Ribeiro, Rusovici, Shearer, Subasi, Tankersly, Tenali, Winkelmann

President Polson called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and asked for a motion to approve the last meeting’s minutes. A motion was made and seconded, and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Dr. Polson gave the President’s Report, with information derived from January’s Board of Trustees meeting, and specifically from the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board. He reported Spring 2012 enrollment of new students is up 18.5% from Spring 2011. The university’s budget is now funded by 72% tuition, down from 82%; the goal is 65%.

SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) has given us their five-year approval, with no follow-up issues to be dealt with.

Pres. Polson reported that Florida Tech is the only school of nine-hundred surveyed to be in the top rankings for both undergraduate and graduate online programs.

He closed his report with two announcements: there will be a tuition increase of three percent for next year, with a three-to-five percent increase in room and board fees under consideration; also, a current major concern is that on-campus housing is completely full; not a bed is to be had.

Committee Reports

Senator Winkelmann, head of the Academic Policies Committee, reported that his group had not met, but that he is preparing a trial run of course evaluation by online means, and asked for email from faculty who would like to have volunteers participate in trying out the new sys-tem, which he said would probably be in place by the end of this term.

There was no Administrative Policies Committee report.

Sen. Helmstetter, of the Faculty Excellence Committee, reiterated the March 12th deadline for submission of Faculty Excellence Award nominations.

The Faculty Senate Scholarship Committee has selected the next award to go to a student in physics, in the College of Science.

Sen. Converse, head of the Welfare Committee, spoke to the grow-ing concern on the part of faculty about the parking spaces for sale. He said he’d heard from faculty members, as had Secretary Shearer from one of his colleagues, that the policy of allowing students to pay $750 to park in places that were formerly reserved for faculty is making parking harder for us. As well, it sends a questionable message: money trumps consid-eration of faculty needs. If the administration allows this to continue more faculty parking spots will be eliminated. It was pointed out from the floor that no administrator’s parking space will suffer from this policy.

Sec. Shearer commented that he’d seen only very expensive cars in the spaces bought by students, adding that if there are students’ families who can easily afford our tuition, what’s another $750?

Sen. Winkelmann suggested that faculty buy their $750 faculty parking spaces and students buy their $750 student parking, and that the faculty lots be separate from student lots. Sen. Tankersly suggested we consider a resolution modifying the selling of guaranteed parking. Pres. Polson said he would discuss the situation with the administration.

Another parking issue the Welfare Committee was informed of is the fact that the spaces nearest the entrance of the parking garage are for visitors. It was pointed out, however, that this is intended as a cour-tesy to visitors, who, as Dr. Polson commented, often give money to the university.

The issue of end-of-course evaluation was brought up; percentile categories for faculty (in comparison with other faculty) are no longer printed out with the results. Sen. Winkelmann suggested that these might be restored to the form.

Old Business

Pres. Polson returned to last meeting’s idea of targeting special areas for faculty giving. He circulated an email he’d gotten from Dorothy A. Allen, the Interim Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer, which read, in part: “What we really need now is a project that we can include in the faculty/staff annual appeal that will be taking place in April. Right now, faculty and staff giving is relatively low. We only have 106 donors out of the entire faculty and staff. We are trying hard to encourage more people to show their pride of association with Florida Tech by giving at whatever level they can. In other words, the emphasis is more on donors than dollars. We need to know if the Faculty Senate has something that we can include as a focal point for this appeal, some-thing for this year that is either small and not too expensive, or some-thing we can raise money for this year that could roll up into a larger project that would be part of the big campaign that will be conducted over a number of years.”

Dr. Polson suggested four ideas as possible candidates: a rotating endowed chair; capital equipment; scholarships; and cash awards for faculty excellence. He commented that what the staff might give to is a separate concern.

Sen. Dwyer noted that we used to have a faculty lounge; maybe money could go to reëstablishing that. Sen. Arrasmith pointed out that having ballpark dollar figures would be helpful here. Sen. Battaglia suggested that a payroll deduction of as little as one dollar per pay period might be an avenue of giving, and that giving could be encour-aged by having a minimal prize as a reward.

Sen. Marcinkowski pointed out that it could be very helpful to obtain specific information on faculty giving in the past, which would provide some sense of what people are willing to give for, and how much. Sen. Tenali suggested that giving could focus on student scholarships in each department.

Pres. Polson urged senators get input on this from their faculty.

Nominations for President-elect and Secretary of the Senate remain open. Sec. Shearer has been nominated, and has accepted, for the posi-tion of Secretary. It is possible to nominate a faculty member for either post as late as the next March meeting.

New Business

Pres. Polson proposed the following as a Senate Resolution:

Be it resolved: The Faculty Senate recommends the

adoption of a mini-semester (“Winterim”) to occur

between the Fall and Spring semesters (operational

details to be determined). It further recommends

that faculty be encouraged to develop non-remedial

courses in specialized areas of study that might not

otherwise be available for the students. The Senate

believes that the emphasis of the “Winterim” should

be for student advancement.

Sen. Winkelmann asked for clarification of the phrase “student advancement,” and in discussion about it, Dr. Polson agreed that a better phrase would be “student enrichment.” Sen. Dwyer was concerned with the statement “operational details to be determined.” Sen. Baarmand said he agreed with Sen. Dwyer that we need to know all the details. Sen. Brown pointed out that the mini-semester would be for a minority of students – mainly students behind in math – and we are obliged to concentrate on the majority.

In answer to Sen. Dwyer’s question as to the reason for the proposed “winterim,” Pres. Polson stated that this would both help retention and as well allow faculty to teach any special course not other-wise available during the main semesters. He answered Sen. Cook’s question as to the time frame for it by stating that it would be three weeks in January, with additional compensation to faculty teaching in it – the same ten percent of our yearly salary, as it is with summer teaching.

Sen. Winkelmann said there are scheduling concerns to be consid-ered, and asked if there are models for implementing a “winterim.” Dr. Polson responded that Oberlin does what he and Chief Operating Officer Mc. Cay worked out. Fall semester classes would end December 20th, with the mini-semester beginning on the 2nd of January. Classes would go through the week and be held on Saturdays too. Spring semester would begin the 1st of February, and end on the 20th of May.

Sen. Cook proposed that there be a mini-term of six weeks, with the rest of the university’s schedule staying the same. It was suggested from the floor that this wouldn’t go well with the teaching schedules faculty have. Sen. Marcinkowski stated that he had gone to a school that had had a “winterim,” but that the program had later been done away with; he proposed that we look at those institutions that once had, but ended, this program and find out why they did so. In light of the number of questions raised and concerns expressed about “operational details to be determined”, he suggested that what the Senate could do is call for a careful and thorough exploration of the mini-semester rather than adop-tion of it at this time.

The proposed resolution was amended to read:

Be it resolved: The Faculty Senate recommends the

*exploration* of a mini-semester (“Winterim”), to occur

between the Fall and Spring semesters (operational

details to be determined). It further recommends

that faculty be encouraged to develop non-remedial

courses in specialized areas of study that might not

otherwise be available for the students. The Senate

believes that the emphasis of the “Winterim” should

be for student *enrichment.*

If there are no further changes in wording, this resolution can be voted on at the next Senate meeting, March 13th.

Discussion

Sec. Shearer brought up the complaint of one of his constituents concerning the GradesFirst computerized form faculty are supposed to fill out by way of letting coaches keep track of how well their athletes are doing. This faculty member had stated that new policies, especially those requiring more work for us, should go through the Senate first.

In response to Pres. Catanese’s email of January 23rd notifying faculty of the reinstatement of three-percent raises, the 403(b) match, and assuring us that the university will continue to pay 75% of insurance costs (depending on the plan chosen) despite the rates having been raised, and maintain other benefits, the Senate was unanimous in expressing its appreciation.

Sen. Cudmore suggested that a list of all ICUBA (Independent Colleges and Universities Benefits Association) schools be available to faculty members who are considering college education for their children. He also suggested that we consider expanding our affiliated universities.

Pres. Polson closed the meeting with the announcement that the first Florida Tech football game will be against Stetson, with the Home-coming game against either Case Western Reserve or Carnegie Mellon.

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Bob Shearer, Secretary