**Florida Tech Faculty Senate**

February 6, 2018

**Minutes**

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

Burke (SAC), P. Converse (Psych), H. Crawford (CS), I. Delgado Perez (COB), C. Harvey (SBA), A. Huser (Lib), M. Jensen (MAE), U. Jones (Aero), M. Kaya (BME), S. Kozaitis (Lib), B. Lail (ECE), D. Lelekis (SAC), T. Marcinkowski (DEIS), G. Maul (OES), B. Morkos (MAE), S. Murshid (ECE), N. Nesnas (Chem), A. Nnolim (ExSt), B. Paulillo (Psych), L. Perdigao (SAC), C. Polson (Bio), R. Rusovici (MAE), D. Sandall (COB), M. Silaghi (CS), N. Suksawang (CCM), G. Tenali (Math), R. van Woesik (Bio), N. Weatherly (SBA), A. Welters (Math), B. Wheeler (Aero), K. Winkelmann (Chem), D. Yuran (SAC)

**Senators Absent:** O. Doule (HCDIA), S. Jensen (COB), K. Johnson (OES), D. LeVan (CS), A. Nag (PSS), A. Walton (COB), Z. Zhou (Psych)

**Other Attendees:** Alan Brown (Chem), Amitabh Dutta (COB), Kastro Hamed (DEIS), 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 January’s meeting; a motion was made by Senator Marcinkowski and seconded by Senator Brenner.

The January Minutes were approved by unanimous vote of voice.

Before moving to New Business, Pres. Baarmand reminded the senate of the two additional meetings scheduled on February 20 and March 27 that will allow more time to discuss the adoption and implementation of a tenure system. The schedule of tentative topics was designed to conclude the process by the end of the spring semester. Pres. McCay wants a plan in place for Fall 2018.

**New Business**

*Faculty Senate Membership post-COS and COE Merger*

Following the reminder, Pres. Baarmand turned to New Business. Provost Baloga called a meeting of the administration to address the impact the merger would have on membership in various committees, including the senate. Pres. Baarmand was invited to attend this meeting and agreed to bring the topic to the Senate. He recommends that the senate elect to stay with current membership rules as outlined in By-Laws, to which he referenced. Although the units are defined differently after the merger, the total number of faculty in senate will be comparable. He did not anticipate much of a change and believes the current formula will be manageable.

Sen. Perdigao asked if comparative numbers could be shared, since any change in the distribution of senators from the merger will have an impact on the weight of representation for units in other colleges.

Pres. Baarmand again referred to the By-Laws, citing the President’s acquisition of a faculty census from the VPAA each year to determine the allocations sent to each unit head in time for the March elections. Once the report from the VPAA is obtained, the number of senators allotted to each unit will be known.

Sen. Burke suggested comparing numbers from the current roster with the number of senators the new college departments would receive using the formula in the By-Laws; however, Sen. Arrasmith pointed out that the definition of units at the time the By-Laws were written were different. Now we have super departments, so the old definition does not describe the new model.

Pres. Baarmand acknowledged that the new departments in the joint college would be allotted more senators, but felt those units and unit heads would be best positioned to select senators that represented each of the main programs within those departments. Senators should be elected to be a good representative of the unit based on its programs.

Sen. Marcinkowski suggested that the senators appointed in August 2017 continue till the end of the academic year. The senate can revisit this topic next fall. Sen. Arrasmith added that the merged college structure would not be finalized until May.

Pres. Baarmand pointed out that, traditionally, his unit did not make committee and senate assignments until the beginning of the fall semester. But what is written in the By-Laws is not the same as his unit does in practice; it says elections should occur in March, following the VPAA’s census report.

Sen. Sandall warned that any amendments to the By-Laws would need to be finalized in time for a vote at the fall general assembly.

Sen. Perdigao stressed that the issue is bigger than just the senate makeup. Some committees like the UGCC offer one seat per school or department, so increases in membership from the combined college will effectively lower representation from units elsewhere.

Pres. Baarmand believed the senate should just focus on the senate membership, not on the membership in other committees, and suggested keeping the current representation for now and revisiting the issue in the fall when the new structure is finalized. He then turned to the committee reports, postponing the President’s report until after the discussion of the tenure survey results.

**Committee Reports**

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

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

Sen. Brenner, chair of the **Scholarship Committee** reported that the student scholarship decisions were made that morning: Gage Gossett from Mechanical Engineering and Julia Implagliazzo [[***check spelling***]] from Forensic Psychology were selected. Those names will be submitted to Judy Thompson for the Honors Convocation in April.

Pres. Baarmand, chair of the **Faculty Excellence Committee**, reminded senators of the February 16 deadline for nominations. Late nominations will not be accepted.

Sen. Delgado Perez announced that the **Welfare Committee** is still awaiting reports needed for the *Faculty Handbook* revisions.

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

Sen. Sandall, chair of the **Tenure Exploration Committee**, began by recognizing the team’s efforts in the process. The second survey report was finalized this morning, but work has been ongoing since the survey closed. He also wanted to dispel a rumor circulating campus that only faculty in the combined College of Engineering and Science would be eligible for tenure, in the eyes of the administration. For the record, Pres. McCay stated directly that this rumor is not true. Sen. Sandall then turned the report over to Sen. Marcinkowski, a member of the committee.

Sen. Marcinkowski reviewed the committee’s process. The first survey had an exploratory purpose and was sent in December to the faculty, including emerti and part-time faculty. The second survey was built from the results of the first survey, leading to a diverse range of questions. Additionally, this survey was not sent to the entire Fac-Forum listserv, but to a targeted list of approximately 300 fulltime faculty, from which 235 [[**verify these numbers**]] responded. Julie Costopoulos was involved in finalizing the survey instrument. She found a measure in Qualtrics that locks browser usage to stave off any ballot stuffing. The committee members had to remind themselves that the survey is not a vote; it is a means to gather information on the faculty’s perceptions of tenure and the responses reflect those views. A third survey might be in the direction of a vote, but the second survey was a means to shape the definition of tenure. Therefore, the report is formatted differently, since there are a variety of clustered items. It includes an executive report, a summary broken down by theme, and a full data report with supporting bar charts. The committee tried not to short anything in the report.

Sen. Marcinkowski then noted that the executive summary included the number of responses and distribution among colleges and ranks. There are six respondents who did not self-identify. Rank had almost equal distribution among Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, and Full Professors, which the committee felt was a good representation from those ranks.

Sen. Marcinkowski then summarized some key findings under boldfaced statements that delineated question groups in the part 2 summary.

[Refer to the Second Survey Report]

SUPPORT: Of those who responded, 87.7% are in favor and 7% are opposed to tenure. Regarding the timetable, support is split, narrowly in favor of President’s timetable of Fall 2018.

ELIGIBILITY: Greatest support was given for faculty with all three components of teaching, research, and service (91.9%).

REVIEW CRITERIA: The greatest support is for the revised promotion guidelines that the senate passed a resolution in favor of last spring. Greater attention to teaching is added to these guidelines. The greatest number supported that the review be undertaken by same two-tier structure and at the same time as the promotion review.

FULL: 51.5% supported grandfathering only those promoted in the past 5-10 year. Less than half supported a mandatory review.

ASSOCIATE: Greater support was given for requiring a post tenure review for associate professors. This flips from the support for post tenure review of full professors. The majority support a tenure review after 4-6 years if not automatically grandfathered. For those who do not meet criteria, a majority support the option of transitioning into a contract system.

ASST PROF: Would not be eligible for grandfathering. Most faculty support 6-7 years to complete a tenure review and an option to transition to a contract system if tenure is not awarded.

NEW FACULTY. A small percentage felt criteria should be higher for new faculty coming after the implementation of tenure; however, most faculty did not support an up or out model done at other institutions.

PRE-TENURE REVIEW. Most support a pre-tenure review as is done at some institutions.

ADDITIONAL TENURE POLICIES: A majority thought the contract length for tenured and non-tenured should be same, depending on rank, as is now done: 3 years for Assistant Professors, 4 years for Associate Professors, and 5 years for Full Professors. An overwhelming majority support a pause in the process for major life events and for a change in responsibilities at the university.

POST-TENURE REVIEW: Most respondents oppose a post-tenure review that led to appointment modification or termination, but support reviews that were developmental and offered incentives.

Following Sen. Marcinkowski’s summary, Sen. Nesnas presented a qualitative assessment of the report’s findings. He noted that 27 of the 30 questions reflected faculty opinion that leans strongly in one direction and that a lot of information can get buried in the data. Sen. Nesnas offered some takeaways for the senate to consider, cautioning that his message was not data but an effort to focus the discussion toward the most pressing issues. He provided six bullet-point issues that grouped the faculty’s answers together for clarity. [**Below is a revised version of what was read at the meeting, accounting for a typo correction made to the report**]:

**Take Home Message of**

**Results of Survey 2 on Tenure Implementation:**

**SUPPORT**

* Nearly 90% of respondents are in favor of implementing tenure as long as staying under the contract system is an option

(Split, but slightly more in favor, on implementation in FA 2018)

**MECHANISM**

* A plurality of respondents support tenure granting process to be conducted by the same committees handling promotions, and concurrently

**GRANDFATHERING**

* 81% and 72% of respondents support grandfathering Full and Associate Professors, respectively
* Most respondents support grandfathering Full and Associate Professors who were promoted within the past 5-10 years, and if review was necessary, a CV and brief teaching and research statements to be sufficient

**TENURE CLOCK**

* Most support at least a 6-year tenure clock for Associate Professors as well as current and incoming Assistant Professors who are eligible to go up for tenure

**UP or OUT**

* More than half of the respondents did not support an “up or out” system; a mechanism to retain professors who provide substantial value received the most support

**POST-TENURE REVIEW**

* More than half of respondents were not in favor of post-tenure review, unless, it was developmental and corrective and not linked to appointment modification or termination

Following Sen. Nesnas’s message, Sen. Lail asked about the university’s role in termination for cause.

Sen. Sandall responded that the *Faculty Handbook* includes a statement regarding termination for just cause. The AAUP has guidelines for this too, but we won’t know all these details by August. Sen. Rusovici asked what the AAUP guidelines say and Sen. Sandall offered to look them up.

Pres. Baarmand insisted that FIT be consistent with what is done at other institutions, which are established as norms.

Sen. Nesnas cited consistent definitions of tenure, following AAUP’s guidelines, at most institutions; however, he noted that there is variation among these institutions in regard to a post-tenure review, which goes hand in hand with a tenure system. The review could be detrimental or development. 48% of institutions have a post-tenure review, but there are a lot of different systems. Some models do link the review to termination, but the successful models link the review to developmental incentives.

Sen. Lail agreed that a standard definition and language will be driven by litigation, but the effectiveness of tenure hangs on its safeguarding of faculty. The issue of termination cannot be left to the side.

Sen. Arrasmith asked if there were guidelines for a contract system?

Sen. Sandall replied that some institutions are starting to have this language for contracts. A professor of practice is a common name for those on a contract system. The committee has not yet researched how many institutions have an option to move to contract system.

Pres. Baarmand recommended that the committee put together a model the senate can discuss at the February 20 special meeting. He also suggested opening up participation to others who are interested outside of the committee. He again asked Sen. Sandall to lead the effort so there would be a basis for discussion at the next meeting.

Sen. Sandall pointed out that contracts will be issued soon, so it may not be possible to implement tenure system in August 2018 unless new contracts will be issued mid contract year.

Sen. Winkelmann wondered if the senate’s timeline could be shared with Pres. McCay to confirm that the administration is not making any changes in time for contracts before the parties have come together to discuss the details.

Pres. Baarmand reminded everyone that the general faculty vote would have to be in August.

Sen. Maul asked how the Board of Trustees is involved in the process, to which Pres. Baarmand replied that the BOT had endorsed the idea of a tenure system but was not involved in the details.

Sen. Sandall added that the BOT does not see the implementation of tenure as a trustee-driven change, but an administrative one left to the faculty and administration.

Pres. Baarmand offered to share how Pres. McCay presented tenure to the BOT in his forthcoming report: It’s a bold move to help rankings and one of his bold initiatives.

Dr. Kastro Hamed asked if the promotion criteria needed to be reconsidered for the tenure system, particularly in relation to the new joint college.

Sen. Rusovici agreed and cited the resolution passed last spring.

Pres. Baarmand confirmed that the deans are meeting with Dr. Baloga to consider the promotional guidelines changes; however, it was unclear when the senate would receive the proposed changes. Some colleges may have already shared plans with their faculty.

Sens. Perdigao and Brenner indicated that CoPLA and COE were actively working on the changes.

Sen. Murshid asked if Pres. McCay would be willing to grandfather full professors in time for the August 2018 vote if the main purpose was to increase ranking.

Sen. Rusovici announced that changes to the criteria would need a 2/3 vote, according to the *Faculty Handbook*.

Sen. Morkos inquired about the preferred option for current assistant professors who are not granted tenure, question #25 from survey: only 8% supported a terminal 1 year contract, but over 50% supported moving into a contract system.

Sen. Nesnas compared the numbers to what faculty believed for incoming faculty, that 29% receive a terminal 1-year contract if not granted tenure. People feel that the tenure system should not penalize those hired before its implementation.

Pres. Baarmand believed the university is responsible for making sure a faculty hire will be a success when they’ve been brought into a tenure system.

Dr. Amitabh Dutta cited the pre-tenure review most institutions as a mechanism to alert individuals of their progress toward tenure, but Sen. Sandall noted that the issue faculty have is that the rules are being changed halfway through the process.

Sen. Arrasmith pointed out that 29% in favor of the up-or-out tenure approach is not a majority.

Sen. Nesnas added that faculty hired into a tenure system will also have the resources and support of a tenure system if they are expected to play by the same rules common at other ranking institutions.

Sen. Brenner wondered how new hires for the 2018-2019 should be handled. The job candidates are learning of the potential of tenure, but it will not be finalized at time offers and contracts will be made.

Sen. Matt Jensen suggested that search committees be completely open and honest.

**Announcements**

Pres. Baarmand opened nominations for the Faculty Senate President and Secretary. Elections will take place at the March meeting and those elected will take over at the April meeting. Nominations can be sent to him and Secretary Burke by email, but will also be accepted from the floor at the meeting. He advised discussing with nominees before making the nominations.

**President’s report**

Pres. Baarmand opened his report to reflect on his attendance at the faculty promotion committee meeting, to which Sen. Perdigao is chair. He noted that an issue was raised regarding the use of course evaluations in evaluating faculty teaching for the purpose of promotion. This is a hot topic and faculty have raised concerns over the course evaluations being the sole metric for faculty teaching. Some committee members consider the responses to just 1 or 2 questions, usually the overall value of the course. Students evaluate the course and instructor with the same five-point scale, which will overlook other things the teacher has done. Some very good teachers do not get good numbers on these questions because they have high standards for student performance. Pres. Baarmand believed the issue should be taken up by Sen. Tenali and the Academic Policies Committee to discuss with the Teaching Council in order to develop a better mechanism for evaluating faculty teaching.

Sen. Nnolim agreed that the course evaluations are poor indicators of good teaching, since good teachers are committed to good instruction not to making things easy for students.

Sen. Perdigao informed the senate that the Promotion Committee will be having a follow up meeting to consider anything that could standardize the process. Some faculty provide small sample sets of course evaluations, but other provide all of their course evaluations. If the committee can revise the promotion guidelines at the university level, we can standardize the metrics that demonstrate strength in teaching for everyone.

Pres. Baarmand did not want efforts duplicated, but noted the broader contexts of the issue. The new online format for course evaluations plays into this discussion too and the Teaching Council is currently addressing them. The senate should find out what they’re working on and perhaps make use of their ideas.

Sen. Kaya asked if faculty currently up for promotion will have additional metrics to consider, since they may not have them going back the past several years.

Pres. Baarmand assured that faculty up for promotion will be evaluated by policies that were already in place, but suggested that the Promotion Committee consider the old vs new metrics in evaluating faculty. He offered to reach out to Sen. Tenali and collaborate with the Promotion Committee.

Pres. Baarmand then turned to the topic of the merger, sharing what Provost Baloga had presented at the workshop. She outlined three benefits of the merger: 1) to improve ranking and visibility, as programs will overlap and span four out of the five pillars of excellence; 2) the positive impact on research, expected by enhanced teamwork by shared resources and facilities as well as course reduction from the elimination of duplicate courses; 3) the centralization of grants and budgets will reduce staff expense and tasks and provide the department heads more flexibility in allocating resources toward the goals of the pillars.

Pres. Baarmand named the six new departments that were presented and aligned to the pillars. Each of the departments will have a head on a 12-month contract as well as program chairs on 10-month contracts. As expected, the merger brings a big culture change. There should be no impact on the SAC accreditation. The administration is putting together metrics to monitor the goals of the merger to make sure it is headed in the right direction, and using a list of private universities with 5-7k undergraduates for comparison. Florida Tech can draw from the experiences at other institutions and determine what was done well and could be implemented. They serve as aspirational models. Provost Baloga noted in her presentation that most of the aspirational universities have a larger faculty body than FIT. Carnegie Mellon, for example, is ranked 25 and has over 1300 faculty.

Sen. Matt Jensen asked if any aspirational institutions have a combined College of Science and Engineering and Sen. Nesnas added that it would be interesting to know the number of faculty and staff in those colleges too.

Pres. Baarmand indicated that Provost Baloga has those numbers, including the student to faculty ratios. She also mentioned that Florida Tech purchased email addresses of deans and presidents to send promotional materials to those who give institutional rankings. He then added that institutional branding is currently in progress. The VBK company had a tour of campus and their analysis should be finished in April. We will hear how they recommend improving Florida Tech’s branding.

To close the report, Pres. Barmaand highlighted that Pres. McCay is selling the tenure system as a bold initiative to the BOT to help our rankings. He cited the college merger and pillars of excellence as bold moves as well.

Dr. Kastro Hamed asked if the list of aspirational institutions is available and Pres. Baarmand offered to attach it to the minutes.

Sen. Nesnas wondered if VBK would recommend FIT or Florida Tech and Sen. Kozaitis noted that if the company recommends Florida Tech that the university’s URL would need to be changed and WFIT would need to be changed to WFLT for Florida Tech to stick.

Sen. Jones asked if the full tenure survey report will be distributed and Sen. Sandall confirmed it would be sent electronically.

**Adjournment**

Pres. Baarmand asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, so made by Sen. Murshid and seconded by Sen. Sandall, and with a unanimous vote adjourned the meeting at 5:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin R. Burke

Faculty Senate Secretary