

Faculty Senate Meeting

When: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 – 3:30pm

Where: Zoom @ <https://fit.zoom.us/j/94892149337>

Minutes

Senators Present: Faculty Senate President Brian Lail (CES), Faculty Senate Secretary Aaron Welters (MTH), Vipuil Kishore (BCES), William Bowman (LIB), Pallav Ray (OEMS), David Wilder (BA), Kenia Nunes (BCES), Steven Rivet (Business), Margaret Wallace (Aeronautics), Gary Zarillo (OEMS), Suzanne Kozaitis (Library), Ersoy Subasi (Aeronautics), Angel Otero (Business Online), Razvan Rusovici (APSS), Jessica Wildman (PSY), Debbie Lelekis (SAC), Marius Silaghi (CES), Csaba Palotai (APSS), Tolga Turgut (Aeronautics), Charles Bryant (Business), Nasri Nesnas (BCES), Hamid Najafi (MCE), Kim Sloman (Scott/BA), Don Platt (APSS), Julie Costopoulos (PSY), Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie (MTH), Gordan Patterson (SAC), Spencer Fire (OEMS), Patrick Converse (PSY), Joo Young Park (MTH), Kevin Burke (SAC), Nasheen Nur (CES), Mehmet Kaya (BCES), , Angela Tenga (SAC), Nakin Suksawang (MCE), Troy Nguyen (MCE), Amitabh Nag (APSS), Luis Otero (CES), Abram Walton (Business)

Senators Absent: None

Proxies: None

Other Attendees: Mary Bonhomme, Korhan Oyman, Lisa Perdigao, Robert Weaver, Melissa Crofton, Karen Kim Guisbert, Munevver Subasi, Heidi Hatfield Edwards, Dory Sigman, Jeff Dorries, Andy Knight, Chiradeep Sen, Raymond Bonhomme, Brian Kish, Rodney Bowers, Jean Carlos Perez, Katie Nicholson, Rob van Woesik, Darby Proctor, Natalie Dorfeld, Tristan Fiedler, Rudolf Wehmschulte, Jessica Smeltz, Nancy Garmer, Mike Slotkin, Theodore Petersen, Roberto Peverati, Chelsea Stripling, Richard Turner, Jonathan Fernand, Kastro Hamed, Elizabeth Dopira, Emily Vogt, Vanessa Edkins, Rick Addante, Nikki Souris Smith, Nick Daher, Robert Taylor, Frank Webbe, Marco Carvalho, Moti Mizrahi, Marcus Hohlmann, Catherine Talbot, Penny Vassar, Kenneth Pike, Rolanda Hatcher-Gallop, Eric Perlman, Eric Guisbert, Annie Caza, Khaled Slhoub, Anthony LoGalbo, Gary Burns, Mary Renfro, Amanda Thayer

Call to Order

Pres. Lail called the meeting to order at 3:30pm. The minutes from the Mar. 1 meeting approved.

University Update:

Marco Carvalho, EVP and Chief Operating Officer, Provost, and Acting President gives a university update.

His first topic he discusses is the overall state of how we are looking in terms of enrollment. Contrary to the trends, through the pandemic, we have been able to maintain enrollment for new students and it looks like that trend is continuing for this fall, they are positive about that. Our weakness has been in graduates. Our return of students has not been as strong. The overall numbers don't change that much, but we are in a good trend. Because we are offsetting students not returning with new students that are enrolling.

A couple of important things to notice. When you look at our total numbers, there is a significant increase. For example, overall there is a 6.5% (increase) in enrollment. However, a lot of that is associated with our ABA (applied behavior analysis) programs which have a special type of arrangement, so you cannot have a direct alignment as a tradeoff. When you look at the main campus, there has been a few declines. For the main campus total, there has been an overall decline of 7%. Overall we are doing well, but in some localized areas we are having some difficulties that have to be addressed.

When you look at the typical return of faculty, in 2020 it was 94.6%, in 2021 it was 95.5%, and in 2022 it was 93.2%.

In terms of colleges, there is a larger decline on campus associated with the College of Psychology and Liberal Arts. But remember there is shift of the population to online so you can't necessarily see it as an overall decline of the College in terms of students. The College of Business and the College of Engineering and Science have had an increase of 5.6% and 2.1%, respectively. This is significant for 71% of our undergrads are in the College of Engineering and Science which is a significant increase overall for the university. The largest decline we have is on our remote sites and some of the online programs, which is why some of the latest decisions have been made. For if you look at the trends in terms of enrollment in our remote sites, they have been progressively declining through the years. And so this year, they made the difficult decision to close some of these sites and they are going through this process because it's for the health of the university. But they understand that these are difficult challenges to be tackled. These kinds of decisions though enable us to now be hiring the number of faculty that we are hiring. We over 30 faculty lines opening in progress. There is a trade to be able to make such an investment. We have to reduce costs in other areas. So they went through a shift in the operations of the online programs some of which were transitioned to main campus to help reduce costs. Again this was transferred into some levels of investments for faculty line, institutional research support, etc.

To summarize, the state of the university is looking positive in terms of enrollment and if nothing is derailed, which he believes we are positioned for that not to happen, we will also have an uptick in enrollment this coming semester. It is extremely encouraging that those improvements are cumulative because there are new students coming in, so these population, for as long as we can retain them, they will stay for the next four years or so. Our retention rate has also been maintained at a level that is positive and we did this through the work of the Faculty and the Deans that actually work with these students to ensure that we're able to graduation on time.

Where I see some of the challenges that we have, we continue to have some of our graduate programs that have difficulty with enrollment, difficulty of actually expanding. In part this is just investment strategies. We have to look at the kinds of incentives, recruiting, and infrastructure we provide. These will enable us to grow a bit

more, to get stronger. We have to look at this with retention too as it's a chain effect, if we don't recruit graduate students then you have a decrease in output of research that in turn makes it harder to recruit students and so on and so forth. The reverse is also true, if we manage to increase our output of research, we are then able to get more students and so on. This is the principle of the IRI (Institutional Research Incentive) investment, which is that if we bring some students to help bootstrap research, that provides feedback for us to be able to go in and start increasing the research. There is work to be done on the graduate side, and we know this and have been working on it for the last couple months and will continue working on that.

In terms of faculty, about 50% of our faculty is either tenured or on tenure track and so we will talk about this in regards to contracts and assignments. The way that our process works and has worked for a very long time, is that we issue contracts for faculty every single year. This is for historical reasons because we were in a contract system and so we were supposed to be renewing and reissuing these contracts. For the last few years there has been a transition of language in terms of moving contracts to assignments. But for tenure faculty you have a continuous appointment/contract although you have assignments changing every year and what changes is only the salary and the start date.

This year we have issued 298 contracts and normally faculty have 30 days to sign and return them. At this time, 62% of all these are signed and returned. Similarly, for tenured faculty, 60% is percentage.

I receive a question from the Senate and from the FTC in terms of that language that was put in the contract, so let me clarify the genesis of that language that I put on the assignment for tenured faculty. The motivation that this contract was to be replaced, was because we've been talking about an equity adjustment which couldn't be sorted out by April 1. This means we cannot calculate the equity by April 1 so we had to issue the agreements or assignments with the same salary and the same date. And my intention was to make clear to the faculty that those were meant to be replaced with a new contract for an adjustment. These appointment is a formality, for the functions that you're doing as a tenured faculty in the year, they are completely separate from your actual contract as a faculty Member and that gets renewed automatically in every single year for as long as your tenured. This was meant to provide comfort to the faculty, rather than upset the faculty in terms of indicating to them that there will be a correction coming when we are able to indicate the salary.

My preferred choice is that we don't issue contracts or assignments to tenured faculty at all, because they are not necessarily. Everything that we have happens through workday. The only positions that have assignment issue would have been positions that are either with term contracts or administrative positions. Hence, if you are a tenured faculty with an administrative position, then you do need to be issued a yearly appointment because that appointment has a provision that tells what happens when you step down from that position.

I want to make clear that if this came out with any different perspective or perception from the 40% of the (tenured) faculty that have not yet returned their contracts, that it was not my intention at all and I hope this helps clarify what that meant. He's also happy to issue a memo if it helps. I find it unnecessary and a self-inflicting

overhead here to reshoot this contract, especially because 60% of the people already signed and return it, and there is no need to do that, given that I can document this particular intention.

Marco Carvalho asks: Does this help clarify that question?

Brian Lail responds: I think it helps a lot. I have a couple questions. Typically, a school issues a continuous tenure contract and that contract reissued only upon unless promotion or change in rank. Why then does Florida tech not actually have an underlying continuous tenure contract? Is there a structural change that could be considered?

Marco Carvalho responds: Absolutely, anything that makes this this process easier. The main issue here is that we haven't been able to put those processes in place yet, we just finished implementing tenure this term. To me if you have an ongoing contract as a tenured faculty Member that's all you need, nothing else. To your point, I completely agree that there is nothing wrong with issuing that contract to start with, which is just the main assignment. And it's up to us to determine if we want to update that with new salary each year or so and so forth or just have those assessments happening through our systems of record when you have a merit raise it comes in and somebody accepts it. Now, if you change titles sure absolutely, you're promoted you get the issue a new one. If you change organizations, you move from one college to another, you get issue a new one. I don't have any problem with either model. I think that we are going to adjust how we do this to make it as simple as possible for the Faculty.

My intention is to not issue this appointments if possible, for the tenured faculty. Also we don't even need to issue those appointments theoretically for the five tracks (i.e., research, library, clinical, teaching, and tenure). My argument is that if you have somebody that is let's say a professor in the teaching track they get a five year contract. And there is no reason for them to receive anything else come to the fourth year when that gets renewed as a new contract. Traditionally, we have done that, and I don't have a problem doing that. But what I'm saying is that it is kind of unnecessary because all the terms are maintain and all we're doing is to rewrite the contract say it is exactly the same thing you just have this new salary and you have this new reporting.

My recommendation is for us to try and simplify that process and to document the contracts to more formally say that you're a tenured professor and it is not updated unless you have a change in status or some sort. In which case you receive a new update to the contract. If you changing status is temporary, such as an administrative task, then you receive a term contract for that position. Other than that it should be continuing. I think this will be helpful to everyone, I think this will make things a little bit clear, will create less overhead, create less errors. I would welcome that, and I would like to work with the faculty to ensure that we have a process in a language that is comfortable for everybody. It's time we came through this process, that we review this so we don't have to be creating this unnecessary confusion every single time.

Brian Lail responds: I appreciate the comments. Florida Tech is missing that continuous tenure contract. What is happening right now because of the absence of that is that we have a letter that people are less confident with. Hence, a lot of attention is put on these, what are still contracts, fully executed agreement between the university

and the individual for the year. Some of the language is nonspecific or ill-defined and raises concerns with what is considered a contractually binding agreement. This is further compounded by not having that underlying perpetual continuous contract that most universities have. Does that make sense?

Marco Carvalho responds: It does partially. Let's make sure that it is stated correctly. Yes, it does cause discomfort and heightened concern for some people, I understand that. As I said, within less than a week of the contracts being issue over 60% already accepted that because they don't have that concern, they understand what that means. Nevertheless, I respect the concern and I think it needs to be addressed I'm not diminishing that, I'm just not generalizing as broadly as you are. But there is also another aspect that I want to bring forward, there is a set of regulations in our handbooks and norms that guide how a tenured faculty is contracted and how the processes go for renewals and everything else. So none of the assignments that we put in place overrides that. They provide further elaboration on this specific tasks, on this specific titles.

To address those concerns, I'm more than willing to sit with you and adjust that language in any way that makes people feel comfortable. If what will make more sense to the faculty is to have an underlying tenure contract, I am happy to work on that and I'm happy to issue that. And, and then we need to make a determination as a group, if we want to have a yearly update or not. If so, then we need to determine what that means. Because if it is just for the salary, then we have to see what do with merit raises, for instance.

My recommendation is that, in order to address those concerns, I am 100% for writing a more formal permanent contract for tenured faculty. Then we can make a determination, if we are to provide yearly updates or if we don't provide the updates we use our systems of record for that, and all we do is to use the assignments not contracts as temporary tasks. I'm happy to work with the Senate or anyone on putting together that.

Brian Lail responds: I think I think that that's very productive direction to move. I would add that the significance of precise language is still very important and attention to that needs to be at a heightened level.

Marco Carvalho responds: I know that and I deal with it every day. Imprecise language leads to discomfort and, if needed, we go back and correct the language.

Brian Lail responds: I am not sure it's even perceived negatively, it's just the uncertainty it invokes as a contractual obligation, which should be avoided. Another question, the term ``replaced" or ``replacing" the contract was one of the new terms, concept, or terminology. Could you clarify what was the motivation for having that term added?

Marco Carvalho responds: Yes. The contracts, which I mean here assignments, are frequently replaced. We you provide that revised contract, it replaces your current contract. In this particular case under discussion, we were trying to indication to the faculty that there will be an equity adjustment coming in. And if that was interpreted in a negative manner, I am happy to remove it.

Brian Lail responds: I understand. It did though follow the terms ``termination" or ``relinquished" which are very precise terms. As such it raises questions.

Marco Carvalho responds: It should be pointed out that by definition a contract that can be arbitrary replaced is not a contract, but I understand your point.

Brian Lail responds: For a clarification, is there a difference between assignment and appointment?

Marco Carvalho responds: No. In fact, this confusion in terminology has been around for a decade. There have been three terms used: appointment, assignment, and contract. We have been trying to clean up/adjust that terminology. In particular, what has been the trend is to try to indicate your assignment is the function that you're going to be conducting this coming year and your appointment is the some particular role that you're assuming.

Brian Lail responds: Okay. One additional question in regards to the change to include that this appointment is effective for one year. If, for example, a faculty member didn't sign that document, then what appointment would they default to?

Marco Carvalho responds: If you read the second sentence that the contract renews every year for as long as your faculty and, if you look at what's written in the end of that sentence, if there is no renewal that contract is automatically renewed each year for as long as your faculty. If you don't accept what's offered to you or if you just forget to put you on the list, and you don't get an assignment then your current assignment on things will continue within the terms that we accept. If it is something not accepted, it is automatically renewed for as long as your contract, for long as your tenure.

Brian Lail responds: OK. If you wanted, as you mentioned, to comment on the upcoming presidential search committee plans.

Marco Carvalho responds: Sure. But before I go there, let me just make sure that this issue is clear. We have to try to make sure that you know people are satisfied with the answer.

Natalie Dorfeld responds with a question to Marco: would you be open to striking the following language added to term two, "one academic year replaced and renewed yearly" so that it's near to what the 2021 contract said?

Marco Carvalho responds: Yes, I would and wouldn't mind doing that at all. If this is something that bothers you, I would be happy to reissue your contract, no problem.

Natalie Dorfeld responds: I appreciate that.

Nasri Nesnas responds with a question to Marco: What would next year look like and is there a move to do away with these annual assignments that need to be signed each time if they are not changing?

Marco Carvalho responds: Right, as I just mentioned, I think that's exactly what we should be doing. Keep in mind, that I receive multiple requests from the tenured faculty asking where is my contract. I believe that there is a lot of confusion on how this happens, and this is why we need to try to come to common ground. We should adjust the contract so it doesn't reflect anything that has to be changed yearly. This way I can issue it once and doesn't have to be issued again. I think that what we need to do here is to review the tenure appointment and modify the language so it doesn't have the concerns with a date and salary, or the terms about replacement as there is nothing yearly as it is a continuous appointment unless a change in rank or something like that. I am 100% on board, I think that this is the direction we should go, I think this will be helpful for everybody, will make the process cleaner.

Nasri Nesnas responds: Thank you, I think that that clarifies the other situation much better.

Brian Lail responds: I think this migration to the more continuous tenure contract beneath all the annual changes is important. I also believe it's a substantial change and an organized effort with faculty would be helpful. But it needs the supporting documentation described in a policy statement that is clear to everyone. This will align us better with traditional tenure.

Marco Carvalho responds: Absolutely.

No more question on this are asked and Marco Carvalho then proceeds to comment on the upcoming presidential search committee plans. He begins by giving some background. The process started somewhat suddenly and the board had to put processes in place in the short term. In this way, to provide some short term continuity for the operation of the university, Marco Carvalho was placed as acting President so that he can assume those functions, to maintain the continuity, all the responsibilities that the University has to execute on a daily basis, while Dr. McCay will be no longer executing them.

From the beginning of the discussion there has been no instance where there was any doubt that a full complete national search will be conducted for the next President. This is the intention of the Board, it is the intention of all of us, and it is what he supports. It is absolutely clear that this is going to happen.

In his conversations with the board, he has made his position clear that we should try to pursue a national search and bring the best qualified President, and there is benefit to bring people from outside.

There are two important items in the process of this search. One is the actual presidential search (how it is going to happen, how that's going to be conducted). The second, is what happens between now and then.

For the presidential search, it is going to be conducted by the board. They have assured him and others that these will be a process launched by a board committee. He doesn't know who is on the committee and it is at the discretion of the board, but they will form a committee to initiate the definition of the search process. That is not necessarily the search committee, it the committee that will determine a few aspects of the process such as: how it's going to be conducted, who is going to be the Committee, what is the description of the President to come, they have to put out a clear set of expectations for the President and whatever it is that they anticipate will be their job.

Two important elements of this group. Number one, they will provide a clear description of the position that's being sought including president's job position description and expectations. Second, that will be an opportunity for that group to receive input from all the stakeholders – faculty, students, staff, and administration.

They have been a week into this process trying to work through the details and provide that information. The assurances he was given was that there would be input or participation from all relevant parties. Second, there will be a clear description that will be posted for the President candidate to come through.

The search process will last nine to 12 months. There are a couple options that the board can choose on what happens between now and the end of the year. One of them is they can come to him and ask him to stay in the role as acting President until the President is selected. That is not his preference. The other option is to bring in an interim President and this takes time. If this is their choice then the interim President will run this process until a new president is elected with Dr. Carvalho he will return to his function.

Dr. Carvalho has assured the board that he is happy to assist with this process, that he is not a candidate, he doesn't intend to apply, and he will maintain his support as long as they need it until they come with a solution.

Dr. Carvalho realizes that there is some uncertainty and asks people to try to see with a positive perspective because there is something to be gained when we come together behind this initiative, to try to build something constructive for the university.

Dr. Carvalho finishes on this topic and Brian Lail opens the floor for questions.

Julie Costopoulos responds: I am wondering if you will be able to release the five year plan?

Marco Carvalho responds: I am happy to do that. It has been a prerogative of Dr. McCay, but now that I am in a position to make that release, I will be happy to do that. I can give you the highlights of the plan. There are four main elements. Basically, to drive the university for increasing efficiency, increase of stability, focus in aligning our processes are areas where we can succeed, and an increase in visibility which is basically marketing and branding. You have a composition of these four elements broken down into multiple activities such as the construction of the Health Center, the initiation of the school of medicine, and all those things align with campaigns for marketing and branding.

Julie Costopoulos responds: Thank you.

Brian Lail thanks Dr. Carvalho and ends this part of the agenda on university update.

Faculty Senate Officer Elections:

Brian Lail brings the next topic up on the agenda, the Faculty Senate Officer elections. He reminds the Senate that the Nominee for Faculty Senate Secretary is Dr. Aaron Welters and the Nominees for Faculty Senate President-elect are Dr. Razvan Rusovici and Dr. Marius Silaghi.

Dr. Lail explains that Dr. Silaghi that he is withdrawing at a nominee and explains that originally there was two nominees on the agenda, but there was a delay that didn't allow him to indicate this withdrawal. As such Dr. Rusovici will be the only nominee for the position now.

Dr. Lail then asks for the nominees to give a brief statement beginning with Dr. Welters and ending with Dr. Rusovici.

Aaron Welters explains that as he will just give a highlight of what his agenda will be while serving in the upcoming year if elected. He reminds the Senate that he has served already in this position as Faculty Senate Secretary (since 9/16/20), but that he is still learning. And, if elected, would like to continue to learn and improve in this role so he can make more meaningful contributions in this role and to shared governance. In particular, he considers himself to be a relatively new faculty member and so he has a unique perspective. As such he can serve as an advocate for newer faculty members in his roles as Faculty Senate member and Faculty Senate Secretary.

His agenda for the upcoming year is to work on the Senate resolution back that was passed in November/December of 2021 on adding missing minutes that were missing due to COVID. He would also like to improve the Faculty Senate website improving its structure organization and adding additional information that can help to disseminate the information from the Faculty senate meetings. In the goal of helping the faculty have a better opportunity have shared governance, This includes, for instance, updating and tracking terms and limits of serving faculty senate members and committee members, posting information on previously passed resolutions, including their dates and actions taken on them, and then examining other peer universities faculty senate websites to get further ideas to help improve our own.

Brian Lail thanks Dr. Welters and then gives the floor to Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie to comment on the withdrawal of the other Faculty Senate President nominee.

Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie responds: This is new news to most of us that Dr. Silaghi is not a nominee anymore. Hence, having one nominee for Faculty Senate President makes the election not relevant appointment anymore, not an election anymore. We should make a motion to postpone this until we have more nominees for this position.

Dr. Lail responds: This has occurred in previous years and many times. I understand and respect your concern, but it is precedent that we proceed. Also, we had an opportunity for nominees and if a nominee has reasons to withdraw, we respect that.

Dr. Nezamoddini-Kachouie responds: This is the first time we have had two nominees and now in the last meeting for voting, you just have one available. I am not sure this has been the case before. We come to this meeting with one nominee in mind to vote and now you say there is only one nominee, this doesn't make much sense to me.

Dr. Lail responds: Had there been one nominee from the beginning, I think it wouldn't change much. For the vote you can endorse, you can not endorse, you can abstain.

Dr. Nezamoddini-Kachouie responds: If it was one nominee perhaps people would have been encouraged to nominate to have a more competitive election.

Dr. Lail responds: We had a period of open call for nominations and that is over now. Changes do happen and we have to be able to accommodate that. At the same time we have an important role that needs to be filled and I don't think delaying that process would be advantageous. There is also precedent on having only one nominee for President which I can share that.

Dr. Lail asks for any other comments and moves forward with the agenda by asking Dr. Rusovici to give his statement.

Razvan Rusovici states that the reason he is here today is that he is part of one of the heaviest workload departments. It was not a decision he took lightly, especially given all the responsibilities. He's noticed through all the changes we have had a lot of faculty leaving. And his main goal is faculty retention which needs to be addressed through several mechanisms. Number one, we have to have an urgent stop of loss measure. And if this means assuring a continuous year-to-year COLA, then that's one measure we can ask for. We cannot have years without COLA. As you know the faculty has done their very best to accommodate rapidly changing requirements during the COVID pandemic. We have had to teach more people with significantly less resources comparison to other schools where each Professor has an IT person next to him, helping him, we do this all by ourselves. We have had so many people leave, we cannot go on like this, and apparently there will be more people leaving. We have a problem in this institution whether the attrition is true free will, whether the attrition is true denial of tenure or denial of contract. This isn't sustainable in the long term because the people left behind will face increasing loads in research, teaching, and advising students. If we are continuously replacing faculty, there is no continuity and the quality of teaching goes down. The adjuncts that are supposed to take over teaching duties sometimes drop out mid-semester. Whatever we do welfare for faculty needs to be addressed and the first thing that needs to be done is a so-called blood stopping measure.

The next thing is the employment and tenure policies need to be revisited. Would it be possible teaching faculty to get tenure, in some ways, to get more job security, or better terms?

The third one is research improvements. We shouldn't even be writing proposals, we should be too busy executing contracts. He has not seen university wide solutions to bring in funding, especially in the college of engineering and science. We're surrounded here by a wealth of companies and we're not doing very well in terms of funding. This segues into Dr. Patterson's proposed resolution regarding the ability of the new president to bring in significant funding because we cannot do these things, we cannot work with decaying labs without significant funding.

Another thing is he would like to introduce a position of Vice President of the Senate in case the President is assigned an academic administrative position in which there is a conflict of interest or that President doesn't serve the interests of the Faculty.

The last one is to look at the rules to improve and speed up communication as well as revisit the Robert's Rules.

Brian Lail thanks Dr. Rusovici and asks to be able to launch the polls if there are no objections. With no objections he launches the polls for only senators to vote on electing the nominees or not or abstaining.

1. Faculty Senate Secretary: Aaron Welters

33/36 ~ 92% - Yes. I vote for Aaron Welters.

2/36 - No. I vote against Aaron Welters.

1/36 - Abstain.

2. Faculty Senate President-elect: Razvan Rusovici

31/36 ~ 86% - Yes. I vote for Razvan Rusovici.

4/36 - No. I vote against Razvan Rusovici.

1/36 - Abstain.

Brian Lail congratulates both Dr. Welters for continuing as Faculty Senate Secretary and Dr. Rusovici for becoming the Faculty Senate President elect.

Old Business

Committee Reports:

1. Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee: AFTC met yesterday and discussed the new language that was introduced in this year's tenure contract. The topic was highlighted already as part of Dr. Marco Carvalho's presentation today in the Faculty Senate so the Senate is aware of this.
2. Academic Policies Committee: Senator Vipuil Kishore said nothing to report.
3. Administrative Policies Committee: Senator Razvan Rusovici said he will need a replacement.
4. Excellence Awards Committee: Senator Julie Costopoulos said they had many excellent applications, the winners have been notified, and we are looking forward to receiving a bunch more next year.
5. Scholarship Committee: Senator Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie said they had an original list of 171 students from four different colleges for Senator Scholarship. A short list of 31 students was prepared and they were contacted to follow-up. Out of the 31, eight of them did follow up. They were asked to submit essays and four out of the eight did submit. They were reviewed by Dr. Aaron Welters and Dr. Joo Young Park. Finally, two students (one from COES and one from COA) were selected for Faculty Senate Scholarship.
6. Technology, Resources, and Infrastructure (TRI) Committee: Senator Marius Silaghi said this is the end of his term as Senator and as Chair of this committee. He is not applying for a new term. When he started as chair, he promised to support scalable participation technology, for involving faculty and senators in the brainstorming and sorting of ideas which is important as a multitude of advisors can make plans succeed. We came out with technology and its full applications is still not here, but I hope to continue focusing on technology and helping there in the future.

The TRI committee met and they have the following news: The register accepted to take over the oversight of post features and other requests for features of the software that the faculty want in this direction. Carolyn Johnson is the one that, for example, will take of implementation of emails about flipped advising flags and so on that faculty require. The ticketing system is moving to team dynamics which will support chat with IT from class if you have troubles in class. Now 80% of the tickets are addressed immediately, that's a new change that was done with the organization of the IT. Still about 30% of the access points on campus are at the end of life, but it's not solved yet because of supply chain problems.

I will also need a replacement for TRI chair.

7. Welfare Committee: Senator Nakin Suksawang said it may also be his last term as Senator as his department has not had a chance to vote on it yet. The rest will be discussed in this meeting when we discuss the COLA Resolution.

President's Report:

Pres. Brian Lail had wanted to report, in regards to the ongoing investigation, on the timeline anticipated. The Melbourne police go out to the fire department of law enforcement regarding such an investigation and that can take several months, and then, following that, the BLE organization forwards it to the State attorney's office, it goes through a review process that can take another month or two. In short, it is ongoing and will take some time.

COLA Resolution:

Pres. Brian Lail tells the Senate that we have the resolution on COLA. We discussed it last meeting and we have solicited feedback from the academic units. He asks if there is any additional discussion. As there is no additional discussion or objections, he launches the poll to vote on that version of the resolution for the Senators only on the faculty resolution on the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

Request for Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)

33/36 ~ 92% Yes. I support the resolution.

2/36 No. I oppose the resolution.

1/36 Abstain.

With 92% supporting, the resolution is passed.

New Business

Resolution Regarding Search for the University President

For new business, Pres. Lail says we have another resolution and defers to Dr. Gordon Patterson.

Dr. Gordon Patterson says we are living in a very precipitous moment in history of university and I appreciate Provost Carvalho for his explanation of the phases of the Search Project. Phase one where the trustees are in some core sense formulating their vision of how the search should go forward is one in which I think the Senate has a definite and an important role, we are a deliberative body, we cannot tell the trustees what they should or should not do, but we can give them advice. Because to me the real core of our university happens in the magic of the classroom and laboratories, where we touch our undergraduate and graduate students.

Over the five Presidents that the University has had, in only one instance was there actually a deliberative search and that was in the moment in which Lynn Weaver resigned, or he said he was to retire and the Board of Trustees established in 2001 a program which involved all the stakeholders. As a historian, I suspect that there are members still of the Board of Trustees that will look back to 2001 and say that was a model.

I think it's important at that time 21 years ago that the Faculty Senate articulate our vision of what we think would be the core features of our President. Certainly competence is critical, fundraising abilities, communication skills, an individual who will look to equity and inclusiveness. Finally, I think it is very important that that we have a President who has an action plan, that sees where Florida tech is, and helps us to understand where we might go.

Yesterday I spoke to incoming Faculty Senate President Dr. Turgut about moving quickly on this matter with a resolution since in the next four weeks it is likely that the Board of Trustees will complete phase one and have devised what the search mechanism will be. And so if we want to be part of this, we need to act soon.

The Senate must be clear on what we see. If you look at the statement that I wrote up, the first four paragraphs refer to one, the mission statement of the university that's published in our official documents. Statements two, three, and four describe what I think is that core element of the role of the Faculty in determining the quality of the institution. The character of the individual that should lead us and our belief that we need to have a place in that process.

My thinking and doing this is I thought it important for us at this time to address these questions and to do it in a constructive way that the trustees will see that we are extending our hand. To help them, that we see this process is one which can, despite the moment that we're in in which so much is uncertain. That we can translate that uncertainty into something that will make us a stronger university, for that reason I presented this motion on to the Faculty Senate, thank you.

Pres. Lail opens the floor to discussion.

Secretary Welters says well said.

Senator Nesnas says I had the same reaction and just wanted to say thank you Dr. Patterson for this very important introduction and statement.

Pres. Lail says we are at a pivotal time at this university there's no doubt about that. Anytime there's a transition at the highest levels. I have great respect and appreciation for what Dr. Patterson is captured in this resolution, and just like to say thank you myself.

Senator Silaghi says just some suggestions from my faculty which I discussed this proposal, this resolution. They suggest that if it's possible to amend our proposal suggesting or giving advice to the board that they could give opportunities to the FIT community to help with nominating the committee's at least some members of the communities that will participate in the search procedure.

Senator Suksawang says after talking with some faculty, everyone is kind of in support of this. But the question was regarding the second resolve, maybe it's worth mentioning a ranking the preferred candidates?

Dr. Tristan Fiedler says he has a question to connect to what Dr. Carvalho said and Dr. Patterson's comments, etc., has there been communication between Dr. Carvalho's office and you as Faculty Senate President that the Faculty Senate will be involved in this process?

Pres. Lail responds the answer to your question is No, there has been no communication regarding the composition of that committee. I do not believe that would come from Dr. Carvalho's office because I understand that it is a committee driven board, and so I think the purview of that process of developing the Committee fall solely on the board members. But I have not heard any or been contacted regarding that.

Senator Suksawang says regardless I think that this resolution still needs to go out because if we wait we might miss the chance for having input.

Pres. Lail responds as a Senator I feel like it would almost be negligent of the body of faculty representing the collective faculty, which is the Senate, to not at least express the spirit of our desire to have some open and transparent process. It's really about trying to recommend ideas that are best for the health of the university through the outcome of that process.

Senator Silaghi says the motion could be to add the FIT community the opportunity to nominate such committee members that have strong interest in the Florida Tech's future. That would be one of the items in the resolution.

Senator Suksawang says the term "FIT community" is not clearly defined and may be too big.

Pres. Lail responds procedurally we have a motion. Do we have a second?

Senator Gary Zarillo seconds the motion.

Pres. Lail says there is a discussion on the proposed resolution to add the statement ``the FIT community be given the opportunity to nominate search committee members that have strong interest in FIT's future.”

Senator Turgut says I wanted to make a point of clarification. I made my views pretty clear, let's hear what Dr. Carvalho says first and then see the situation. Also for procedural reasons, that was the only comments I made and with the content I agree with 90% of it.

The Senate votes on the modifying the resolution to include the language just presented, i.e., ``the Florida Tech community be given the opportunity to nominate search committee members that have strong interest in Florida Tech's future.” There are 7 hands up for changing the language, 9 hands up for oppose changing the language, and 5 hands up abstaining from this vote. The outcome is it doesn't pass (quorum was achieved).

Ersoy Subasi says we are just trying to amend this resolution and I think we need to explain what ``strong interest” is. Also, how will the ``FIT community” will be able to determine the right candidate? Which institution, which organization will help us do that, what is the procedure for that? Are we going to offer a single candidate or rank candidates? I want to have a clear understanding of what we are proposing.

Pres. Lail says the proposed modification has not been voted through so any discussion currently should be now back to just discussing the original resolution.

Senator Nezamoddini-Kachouie says I think the essence of the resolution is faculty involved in the process and not just in the rankings. The common sense is to support this resolution. It is asking the board to have a national search, but if you put too much detail such as ranking then it may get too confusing.

Pres. Lail says it's the whole committee and inclusive of all the stakeholders if this is followed to put forth the candidate.

Senator Silaghi says he was requested by one of his faculty members he represents not something personally I support to the level of stop a motion on it, but I did promise to raise this issue. If possible the candidate should also have had successful experience as a University President for institutions compatible or a similar level to FIT. The candidate should also demonstrate evidence of successful fundraising experience as the level expected by FIT present and future fundraising tiers.

Senator Turgut says I think that if we just add one word here we can make the perception of the board more comfortable. Change ``search committee” to ``search advisory committee” because his research among other institutions shows they usually

have a search advisory committee and the vetting committee is always the board of trustees especially if it's a private university.

Pres. Lail responds that the term search committee has a well understood connotation and there's lots of precedents for that here. It just means that it makes recommendations which is implicit to that term and I'm not sure that advisory term adds to that and is redundant, because inherently that's what that search committee does.

Senator Patterson says I think that all of these observations that reinforce my sense the strength of the Senate is that we are deliberative body, and we take these matters seriously words matter and certainly. Our intent and my intent is to offer as helpful and constructive a mechanism to the board, which is a dialogue. I hope will happen is that we enter into a conversation. I think that the Faculty is the true core of our university with our students, I think the board recognizes that as well. And I just want to give encouragement to at least those members of the board that feels that way that they know that we are ready to step forward. Certainly offer this as a modification of putting in the words advisory in two places in the sixth paragraph. One other thing to meet the observation about rankings which I think does raise a question of what we mean by rankings, I substituted the plural preferred candidates which opens then to the board the discretion of revealing that at their discretion and I think that that is important that the secrecy of the board in making the final decision is something that, obviously, we should not and cannot and will not be privy to. All we can do is to offer our advice as a kind of compass and give a sense of the direction that we would like to help the university in achieving.

Senator Suksawang motions to support the modification and vote on it.

Pres. Lail ask do we have a second?

Senator Nezamoddini-Kachouie seconds the motion.

Pres. Lail says in the second from last results statement we resolve is that the Faculty Senate calls on the Board of Trustees to establish a single search committee to review the credentials, interview candidates, and make recommendations to the board of preferred candidates with at least one half of the search committee comprised of faculty, administrative staff, students, and alumni.

The Senate votes on the modifying the resolution to include the language just presented, i.e., `` the Faculty Senate calls on the Board of Trustees to establish a single search committee to review the credentials, interview candidates, and make recommendations to the board of preferred candidates with at least one half of the search committee comprised of faculty, administrative staff, students, and alumni.'' There are 17 hands up for changing the wording, 0 hands up for oppose changing the language, and 5 hands up abstaining from this vote. The outcome is pass (quorum was achieved).

Pres. Lail says we are back now to the original but modified version of the resolution of the Presidential Search that was just discussed.

The Senate votes on the modified version of the Resolution of the Presidential Search. It passes with quorum with the result that 78% (i.e., 15/19 Senators) voted to support the resolution, 11% abstained, and 11% voted to oppose the resolution.

Senator Patterson says that I think the correct protocol would be to send the resolution through the acting President to the Board of Trustees Chair, Travis Proctor. This would reflect favorably upon both the Acting President Carvalho and the Faculty Senate. That would be my suggestion.

Senator Nezamoddini-Kachouie says alternatively you can submit that to all members of the leadership committee.

Dr. Tristan Fiedler says the only downside to that I see is that it kind of circumvents the layer of communication protocol that Dr. Patterson was mentioning.

Senator Suksawang recommends sending it to Dr. Carvalho.

Pres. Lail says that it is standard protocol that resolutions of the Faculty Senate go through the Chief Academic Officer. In that context I do understand the logic of going through that channel.

Pres. Lail says that upon adjournment of this meeting, Senator Turgut will be Faculty Senate President and that he sincerely encourages everyone to be supportive and help Dr. Turgut as this moves forward. And that we look forward to your leadership.

Pres. Lail asks: Do we have a motion to adjourn?

Secretary Welters responds. Motion to adjourn.

Pres. Lail responds, all right (so moved).

(Several Senators thank Dr. Lail for his service as Faculty Senate President).

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:42pm.

Respectively submitted,

Aaron Welters, Faculty Senate Secretary