**Florida Tech Faculty Senate**

October 3, 2017

**Minutes**

**Senators Present:** W. Arrasmith (DES), M. Baarmand (PSS), P. Bernhard (CS), J. Brenner (CE), K. Burke (SAC), P. Converse (Psych), C. Harvey (SBA), S. Jensen (COB), K. Johnson (OES), U. Jones (Aero), S. Kozaitis (Lib), D. Lelekis (SAC), T. Marcinkowski (DEIS), S. Murshid (ECE), A. Nag (PSS), B. Paulillo (Psych), L. Perdigao (SAC), C. Polson (Bio), P. Sahoo (OES), D. Sandall (COB), M. Silaghi (CS), N. Suksawang (CCM), G. Tenali (Math), A. Walton (COB), N. Weatherly (SBA), R. Wehmschulte (Chem), B. Wheeler (Aero), K. Winkelmann (Chem), D. Yuran (SAC), Z. Zhou (Psych)

**Proxys:** Matthew Jensen (MEA) for R. Rusovici (MEA), Chelsea Stripling (Lib) for A. Huser (Lib)

**Senators Absent:** O. Doule (HCDIA)**,** M. Kaya (BME), B. Lail (ECE), R. Menezes (CS), A. Nnolim (ExSt), R. van Woesik (Bio), A. Welters (Math)

**Other Attendees:** Daniel Batcheldor (PSS), Allyn Deming (Lib), Michael Grace (BS), Nasri Nesnas (Chem), Ken Revay (BOT), 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 September’s meeting; a motion was made by Senator Arrasmith and seconded by Senator Marcinkowski.

The September Minutes were approved by unanimous vote of voice.

**Guest Speaker**

Dr. Monica Baloga, Senior Vice President for Academics and Provost

*Topics:*

University Leadership Structure

Faculty Senate Resolution on Teaching Promotion Guidelines

Recent Discussion about Tenure

Proposed changes to Summer Salary

Dr. Baloga opened by explaining that she had met with Pres. Baarmand who suggested topics he knew were of interest to the Faculty.

Dr. Baloga described the structure of the upper administration panels ***[See No. 127 September 2017 Minutes, under President’s Report, for a more detailed description of this structure*]*.*** She noted that this structure was different than the University Operating Council that met with VPAA & COO McCay during the previous administration. Dr. Baloga acknowledged that there was some overlap in topics between the Academic Panel she chairs and some of the long-standing committees and assured that anything brought up about an academic program will go to the Deans Council and then to each unit.

Pres. Baarmand asked if this was a better structure than in the previous administration, to which Dr. Baloga replied that it is more focused. The Operation and Development panels are working on short term solution, whereas the Academic panel is discussing more long-term, strategic planning. Enrollment is always a topic that is strategized, and an Honors College cannot be implemented right away, so the structure allows for that focus.

Sen. Wehmschulte asked if the structure was on a website. Dr. Baloga responded that it is not and she will bring that topic forward. In the meantime, one can look at the President’s website to see the VP’s that would report to the administrative panels.

Dr. Baloga then moved on to the Resolution for Teaching Promotion Guidelines, reporting that the college deans have begun work and some have taken further steps to get input from their units. The updates will not be in place for this year’s round of promotion, but are scheduled for the next round. She added that the process has been opened up to multiple options to best position the University for growth, including consideration for separate promotion paths and different positions in regard to teaching and funded research. The COE is doing things differently than CoPLA and COS, so we’re looking at what the process will be to bring this to the Faculty Senate as a natural conclusion.

Sen. Arrasmith asked if a mechanism was in place for faculty to be involved earlier, as a healthy discussion on these topics had already occurred last year in response to the Multi-Track Faculty Proposal ***[See Nos. 122-124, December 2016, January 2017, and February 2017 minutes].***

Pres. Baarmand added that he wanted to see more participation on the part of the faculty at this stage in the process. It’s much more effective at the end if the feedback is given early and implemented in the plans, rather than making a call at the end without having contributed any input. The sooner the faculty participation is built into process, the better.

Dr. Baloga agreed that faculty input was critical to the process. Each college will need to work on their own, as each has its own guidelines. It will be up to the college moving forward at the deans’ level. She added that she will address the need for faculty participation at the Deans’ Council and ask if conversations with faculty have been part of the process.

Sen. Perdigao cited the language of a teaching track that keeps coming up. The resolution was not about new tracks but just a revision of the traditional mold that accounted for faculty who primarily teach.

Dr. Baloga admitted a difference in opinion in the Deans’ Council. Some colleges are still focused on creating different tracks. Other colleges have interpreted the resolution as having no differing tracks.

Sen. Marcinkowski referenced the three tracks in the Multi-Track Faculty Proposal that was tabled last year, noting an apparent inconsistency between the Senate’s lengthy discussion last year and the approaches that colleges may be taking now.

Dr. Baloga indicated that her understanding was that tracks weren’t ruled out by the resolution, but that the logistics of the Multi-Track Faculty Proposal were too cumbersome. The deans are developing promotion guidelines for teaching as stated in the resolution.

Pres. Baarmand returned to the topic of different types of positions that some college deans are discussing. The topic of differing titles for different types of faculty was not well received by the Faculty Senate and an impetus for the resolution. Our understanding was to keep the same titles, but allow for the promotion guidelines to account for faculty who do a great amount of teaching, but maybe only a small amount of research.

Sen. Marcinkowski recalled that the intent behind having tracks was recognized as beneficial, but that one of the Senate’s goals had been to focus attention on the more immediate concern of apparent inequities in promotion guidelines for faculty who primarily teach. The structure of the Multi-Track Proposal was viewed by many as too cumbersome to address this concern and goal, so that proposal was tabled, although the concept of multiple tracks was retained in the language of the resolution to ensure that the Senate’s goal and concern were not misunderstood. However, if tracks are being used to mask any such inequity, the Faculty Senate will not respond favorably.

Sen. Kozaitis added that some units have very heavy teaching loads, but do not want to be excluded from research. The promotion guidelines can account for heavy teaching without having a teaching track.

Sen. Marcinkowski pointed out that a Multi-Track Proposal was never approved by the Senate, so it never went to the general faculty. We have anecdotal feedback on the proposal from senators who reported from their units, but not quantitative data.

Dr. Baloga responded that the feedback she received was not that tracks were negative, but that the promotion guidelines supporting them were problematic. It would be helpful to have a sense from the faculty body on this issue.

Sen. Sandall stated that there appeared to be differing interpretations of the resolution in regard to faculty titles.

Sen. Marcinkowski added that discussions of the Multi Track Proposal last year raised concerns that tracks would extend, rather than resolve, inequities in promotion for faculty with heavy teaching loads.

Sen. Perdigao raised an additional issue related to the resolution in how we evaluate teaching. It is not enough to say you’re teaching a heavy load and we cannot exclude research completely from a teaching track. Some units may use teaching reviews. Student evaluation numbers can be ambiguous, so we need to systematically figure out how to measure good teaching.

Dr. Baloga agreed that we cannot have teaching promotion guidelines without something more than student evaluations. The Teaching Council would like to contribute to how we measure teaching performance.

Sen. Winkelmann, to close, stressed that this conversation just illustrated the benefit of having faculty input in the process. There is already confusion over the Resolution. It will be helpful to have the deans communicate the steps of the process with the faculty and senate.

Dr. Baloga clarified that the Deans Council had not yet engaged in deep discussion, but had only reported on what had been done so far. It wasn’t apparent how much had filtered down to the faculty; however, she assured the room that she will have a conversation at the next meeting about early participation from a working group of faculty that includes senators.

Dr. Baloga then moved on to the topic of tenure. Pres. McCay wants to increase FIT’s research ranking and visibility. He wants to get the recognition we deserve. We did increase our ranking by 20 points and want to keep that momentum going. Pres. McCay will address the BOT and question how we can break into those higher rankings when we are not a tenured institution. Dr. Baloga presented a risk assessment of retaining and recruiting faculty to the administration. It was a preliminary discussion based on data available from National Education Association and the AAUP. It is hard to compare FIT to other schools, as we really are unique. Other contract schools are not like us, since they are more like community college or they use a lot of adjuncts. FIT is not like that. We have to back to the 1990s to find another research university with a contract system, but that institution, a health science oriented school in Oregon, is no longer on the contract system. Faculty across the US are accustomed to a tenure system. Coming to a research university without a tenure system is a big unknown. We can explain how the contract system works, but how does this impact recruiting and retaining faculty? Dr. Baloga also shared with the BOT that the topic of tenure was on the faculty’s mind and that the Senate was going to be engaging in further discussion of it.

Pres. Baarmand added that the Senate had formed an ad hoc committee chaired by Sen. Sandall to explore the topic as a way to keep the momentum going from the Multi Track Proposal discussions.

Sen. Marcinkowski asked if Pres. McCay was still a vocal advocate of tenure, to which Dr. Baloga replied in the affirmative.

Sen. Tenali wondered if a committee could also look at factors that cause institutions to move up and down the rankings, to see if tenure would play a part in that movement.

Dr. Baloga responded that FIT evaluates criteria every year before submission for rankings, as well as when rankings come out. We have lots of data and we act on that data. One factor is the number of alumni who donate, not the amount. That’s why we established the Day of Giving which helped us increase our rank. What increased our ranking by 20 points this year was two things. One is our reputation among peer institution. FIT ranks all our peer institutions and our peer institutions rank FIT. There is also a high school counselor panel that ranks institutions. We hadn’t been able to move that number, so we did a media blitz. Timing was critical, so we sent out our materials just before the rankings were done. We showcased what FIT does and put it in the hands of university administrations and high school counselors. Second, we benefited from a change in how US News calculates graduation rates. Historically, we’ve lagged behind in graduation rate predictions; however, this year US News specified normative graduation rates for STEM institutions. FIT’s published graduation rate is now better than the normative prediction. Dr. Baloga stated that she is in full agreement that we explore these criteria and support further initiatives to use data to improve our ranking.

Sen. Tenali asked if the data from these efforts are shared. Faculty in individual units can take steps to aid in these improvements if we have the information.

Dr. Baloga replied that the information is sent across top levels but could be pushed down more to involve faculty.

Dr. Baloga then turned to the topic of Summer Salaries. We had new structure for summer and we did not meet our predicted revenue. It wasn’t as huge of an impact because of campus programs, but because of online programs. We had 50 fewer students this past summer than prior for main campus. We had hoped to increase the number of main campus students.

There is no denying that our summer expenses and revenues are not sustainable. It is not as easy as just faculty salaries. The revenue for summer is included in the expense budget for the entire academic year, which includes salaries, labs, lights, etc. The current summer structure also exposes a big difference in expenditures for undergraduate courses and graduate courses. Pres. McCay wants summer classes to increase opportunities for undergraduates to get ahead and graduate in a timely fashion.

Sen. Kozaitis suggested a head start program for freshman to begin in the summer, and Dr. Baloga responded that it has been done before and that options are considered for student success.

Sen. Arrasmith cited past calculations for the pro-rated pay that accounted for expenditures and asked for a justification for the new enrollment criteria

Dr. Baloga explained that the great expense is incurred at the graduate level, paying for thesis and dissertation courses. More than 50% of summer labor expenses in some colleges go toward these courses as opposed to teaching undergraduate students. Over time there has been a shift in faculty pay to the graduate side, when the directive is that it should primarily go to undergraduate side.

Sen. Arrasmith raised concern with the sudden spike in enrollment criteria last summer, causing faculty to receive partial pay and students left behind when classes were cancelled.

Dr. Baloga replied that the administration is exploring lower enrollment caps for the coming summer, 6 for undergraduate courses and 4 for graduate courses, but the pay would range between $4,000 and $6,000. Exceeding those enrollment numbers, however, would not result in greater pay.

Sen. Arrasmith suspected this would result in lower pay for faculty teaching summer courses; however, Dr. Baloga also referenced faculty opportunities for research and other types of teaching like advising. Opportunity would still exist to earn a comparable amount by doing more than just advising dissertations.

Sen. Matt Jensen asked how summer revenue compared with previous years.

Dr. Baloga indicated that it was difficult to compare, as summer projections are calculated based on size of graduation class, but that summer revenue did fall about 3 million below of expectations. Her understanding was that the online and extended studies enrollment numbers were lower.

Sen. Sherry Jensen suggested that revenue was being confused with profit in the conversation, when considering the changes to faculty pay from previous summers.

Dr. Baloga replied that she would discuss the accounting structure with CFO Cathy Wood.

Sen. Sandall believed it would still be helpful to look at the enrollment data across the past three summers, to consider the total number of student credit hours taken, the number of summer courses proposed in the schedule prior to the start of summer, the number of classes offered during the summer (following cancellation of any classes), and the number of faculty teaching summer courses. These comparisons would allow a better view of how changes in administrative policy last year have already had an impact.

As an example, Dr. Baloga cited the College of Engineering, which had to drop a number of undergraduate courses because the salary budget had been eaten up by graduate course salaries.

Pres. Baarmand asked if summer could be structured as a separate enterprise. There is a disconnect that is difficult to understand when summer revenue is buried in the expense needs of the entire academic year.

Dr. Baloga reported that the Finance Office is interested in separating summer and has been looking at other institutions using that model. She added that it is also a burden that the summer term is at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Sen. Marcinkowski raised a concern about the impact canceled classes may have on faculty and students who find this out too late to look for alternative summer employment, as happened to some in Summer ‘17. In light of such experiences last year, he suggested a marketing rollout in advance of Summer ’18 so students can plan ahead and not miss out on summer opportunities.

Dr. Baloga referenced the task forced led by Gordon Nelson that is exploring a database of offerings that show the best courses to offer in the summer for undergraduates. Perhaps there are better courses we should be offering for our students.

Sen. Arrasmith believed the problem would remain as long as summer planning is driven by revenue. The pro-rata salary initiative was established to ensure that FIT made a profit and that courses students need were offered. Some course offerings are student incentivized, not cost incentivized.

Dr. Baloga explained that CFO Wood is interested in using an incremental performance model as an incentive. Each unit can make decisions on how best to enhance revenue.

Sen. Perdigao cited faculty in units who do not receive pay for advising or have no funded research opportunities. There is an expectation for the 10% model because some view it as a necessary component of the overall salary that accompanied the decision to work at FIT. Flat rates will impact faculty differently and some may find it a challenge to restore their incomes.

Sen. Sherry Jensen reported feedback shared with the Summer Task Force. Some faculty chose to teach last summer for lower pay, since changes were announced at the last minute, but have since stated they would not do it again. There may be a huge drop in faculty participation in summer teaching moving forward.

Dr. Baloga concluded the discussion by acknowledging the hard decisions that must be made to run classes for the undergraduates who need them.

**President’s Report**

There was no President’s report.

**Committee Reports**

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

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

There was no **Scholarship committee** report.

There was no **Faculty Excellence Committee** report.

Sen. Walton, chair of the **Welfare Committee**, reported that the first meeting will take place tomorrow.

There was no **TRI Committee** report.

There was no **Faculty Handbook** ad hoc committee report; however, Dr. Baloga indicated that she is working with HR to resolve inconsistencies and updates in policy language that will need to be addressed in the revised handbook.

There was no **Tenure Exploration Committee** report.

**Adjournment**

President Baarmand asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, so made by Sen. Marcinkowski and seconded by Sen. Brenner, and with a unanimous vote adjourned the meeting at 4:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin R. Burke, Secretary