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## Letter to the Faculty : 2010 : 04 : 15

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April 15, 2011

Dear Colleagues:

It's hard to believe we are nearly done with another academic year. Commencement is less than a month away. I wanted to write and update you all on a few issues and make some announcements.

### **Distance Learning Course Development Program**

We have now had two rounds of solicitations and awards for the Distance Learning Course Development and Improvement Program. I want to thank all faculty members who submitted (both for full course development and for course refinement). For next year, we will be changing the guidelines slightly to have two deadlines for applying for awards instead of three. We plan to combine the Spring and Summer deadlines to make it easier for faculty to plan their work for summer with the certainty of an award that has already been made. Please remember that if you are teaching a distance learning (DL) course (defined as one fully online and subject to the Distance Learning Fee), you may be eligible for Teaching Assistant Support. See the Academic Affairs website for more information.

The Blackboard Consulting engagement is now at an end. The Distance Learning Advisory Committee, chaired by Dean Carol Hixson, has already begun to examine the Blackboard recommendations closely with the goal of moving USFSP forward on a number of DL fronts. The Committee has already established working groups to assess needs in faculty development, student services, and several other areas. There will be opportunities for more faculty involvement through these working groups. If anything, the pace of DL activity in higher education is increasing at all levels and USFSP has a great opportunity to expand its presence in the online world. The College of Business is developing online options for its MBA and the College of Arts and Sciences (Department of Journalism and Media Studies) has a new MA in Digital Journalism and Design, which will be completely online, that has approved by the USF System Board of Trustees (with many compliments for the innovative nature of the degree). Both of these efforts will enable USFSP to move forward in distance learning in far more depth. I encourage all faculty to take advantage of the faculty development opportunities in online learning and pedagogy as they are announced.

### **SACS Update**

Our SACS Reaffirmation Committee has come and gone. I want to thank EVERYONE who contributed to a truly outstanding on-site review. The Committee left us with only one recommendation – nearly unheard of. The recommendation addresses an issue that USFSP itself identified in its Compliance Certification regarding the SACS requirement that all students receiving a degree from USFSP must take a minimum of 25% of the credit hours for their degree at USFSP. We worked hard and made progress on this issue in the Fall semester. Beginning with Spring 2011, all students receiving a degree from USFSP must have taken a minimum of 25% of their credit hours at USFSP before a diploma will be issued. Thus, we expect to clear this recommendation by the time our response to the Reaffirmation Committee report is due (July 19, 2011). The next action will be the consideration of our reaffirmation by the SACS Board. We will hear the results of the Board's actions at the SACS Annual Meeting in early December. We are confident of a successful conclusion.

Folks, it's an amazing thing to have gone from SACS Probation to a successful Reaffirmation visit in the space of less than three years. I know many of you feel as if it's been "All SACS All the Time" (and I share that feeling!), but we are nearly done with our first full reaffirmation and the next time a Reaffirmation Committee darkens our door will be 2021!! We'll have a 5<sup>th</sup> Year Report and QEP Impact Report due in 2016 but those will seem easy compared to what we've been through.

I'm also pleased to report that our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is underway. Our QEP, "*The Success Equation: A Model for Enhancing Student Learning in Gateway Mathematics and Statistics Courses*," focuses on enhanced learning in three important math courses, MAC 1105 (College Algebra), MGF 1106 (Finite Mathematics) and STA 2023 (Elementary Statistics). I thank the Search Committee, chaired by Dr. Jay Sokolovsky, who found an outstanding QEP Director, Dr. Brenda Burger. Dr. Burger arrived in the middle of the week before the Reaffirmation Committee visit and stepped right up into her role. Our QEP was affirmed by the Committee with no recommendations (again, VERY rare!). Brenda will also act as Director of the Academic Success Center (ASC) so that we can take advantage of the synergies between these two activities and make both successful. Brenda is already making positive changes in the ASC so that we can serve more students more effectively. She has hired a co-director, Ms. Olena Maymeskul, who will oversee the initial implementation of the QEP model into College Algebra, and an additional staff member for the ASC to increase the ability of students to use the Center productively. Please stop by and introduce yourself to Brenda. Her office is currently in BAY 223.

### **The Budget**

The budget situation in Tallahassee is still very unclear. Both House and Senate have passed their respective versions of a budget, with the Senate being much higher in terms of total spending. The difficult negotiations to reach an overall "deal" are underway with many competing priorities. However, under any scenario there will likely be continued reductions for the State University System. In addition, the Florida economy is still weak, housing is still very depressed, and unemployment is still high. Further, USFSP will lose about \$1.8 million in Federal "stimulus" money in July. The only bit of good news is that it seems fairly certain that there will be some level of tuition increase for the SUS (including the USF System, assuming the USF System Board of Trustees agrees) and that will mean some new revenues. Even with another tuition increase, Florida's public universities are still a tremendous value – a great education at a bargain price.

### **The Multipurpose Student Center, Campus Activities Center and Harbor Hall**

The ground has been broken and construction of USFSP's first Student Center is underway. What a change this facility will make at USFSP! It will add a significant amount of housing for residential students, a real campus food service, and much needed meeting space. In addition, the Campus Activities Center will undergo a major renovation beginning this October. The CAC will become the Student Services Building – a "one stop shop" for many student life activities including, the Bishop Center for Ethical Leadership/Center for Civic Engagement/Leadership Program, Student Government, Multicultural Affairs, Disabilities Services, and the Counseling, Health, and Wellness Center that will now include a badly-needed health clinic. Both the MSC and CAC are scheduled to be completed by July

2012 in time for students to move in for the Fall 2012 term. There will be some disruptions, to be sure, as the CAC Core is taken “off line”. But the end product will dramatically enhance student life at USFSP.

In January of this year, USFSP took full ownership of the “old Dali museum”, now renamed Harbor Hall. There is a significant amount of infrastructure work that has to be done to bring this building up to the life and fire safety codes that USFSP must adhere to as a state university (a new fire alarm/suppression system; HVAC, roofing and IT.) BUT, Harbor Hall represents a significant positive addition to USFSP’s physical plant. After an assessment of need and “fit” with the available space and conversations with interested faculty groups, the occupants of the building will be the Department of Languages, Literature, and Writing, and the Program in Graphic Design. This combination of faculty and programs will make Harbor Hall a new campus hub for humanities and the fine arts. We expect that faculty in these programs will be able to move in, albeit as “urban pioneers”, in August 2011. Some renovation work will continue through the next academic year to bring this building to its full potential.

### **New Academic Programs**

After several years of not being able to develop new programs (because of our SACS troubles), faculty have been busy making new programs happen! Three new programs have now been approved by the USF System Board of Trustees:

- **B.S. in Health Sciences**: one of the two most requested degrees by incoming students (the other is Biology). This degree will have a core and “cognates” of 15 hours each, of which the student must select two. USFSP will offer two cognates (one in the College of Arts and Sciences and one in the College of Business) and we have recently concluded an agreement with the USF College of Public Health that will add a Public Health Cognate as an option. More cognates with other USF System institutions could follow.
- **B.S. in Entrepreneurship**: this degree, unique within the USF System, will offer students the academic foundations to put their ideas to work. Dr. Bill Jackson will serve as the campus-wide director of entrepreneurship.
- **M.A. in Digital Journalism and Design**: after a year of planning, the faculty of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies proposed an innovative degree that recognizes and embraces the changes that are sweeping through the journalism community nationally and internationally. This new degree will be fully online and the Department expects to enroll students from around the nation and even from around the world.

Beyond these three, a B.S. in Biology is currently making its way through the USF System approval process. If all goes well, this degree could be on the Trustees’ agenda in June 2011 for implementation in Fall 2012. For next year, the College of Business is working on a proposal for a B.S. in Global Business and the College of Education is working to expand its success in Digital Mathematics into an Masters in Middle Grades STEM Education. All of these new degrees are directly in line with USFSP’s Strategic Plan and will be vital in achieving USFSP’s goals. Of course, future academic programs will depend on availability of resources and an assessment of need and student demand. The SUS Board of Governors has set a new, higher bar for approval of new degree programs within the SUS and the approval process will challenge faculty to think both deeply and creatively about what new programs will meet both

student and economic needs and about how to implement these new programs in efficient and effective ways.

**Kudos To:**

- The Department of Journalism and Media Studies for **again** being asked to host a delegation of foreign journalists as part of the Edward R. Murrow Program of the US State Department. USFSP is one of only a handful of universities nationally to host a delegation – it’s quite a feather in the cap of the JMS faculty.
- Kathy and John Arthur for yet another large grant from the National Science Foundation that will support their anthropological and archaeological work in Ethiopia. Kathy Arthur will also play host to a Fulbright Scholar from South America in August.
- Judithanne Scourfield-McLauchlan, Diane McKinstry and numerous others for their work in writing the application that enabled USFSP to receive the elective Classification in Community Engagement from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Only 311 other institutions throughout the US have this designation. We are in mighty good company.
- The College of Education, specifically Dean Vivian Fueyo, for her work in concluding an agreement with USF Sarasota Manatee (Dr. Terry Osborn, Dean of USFSM’s College of Education was also instrumental), the “Bay to Bay Educational Consortium”, which will open more opportunities for students in the greater SaraBay/Pinellas regions to take graduate courses and pursue degrees.
- Dr. Sheramy Bundrick for leading the effort to create a new Art History minor; and to Dr. Tom Hallock for leading the effort to create an undergraduate Certificate in Creative Writing. These new initiatives provide a wider range of academic options for our undergraduate students.
- Dr. Raymond Arsenault, whose book, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*, will be the basis for an episode of the PBS series, “The American Experience” (debut on May 16), and who will himself appear on a milestone episode of The Oprah Winfrey Show (airdate: May 4) along with many of the original Freedom Riders, celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this history-changing event in America.
- All of the Faculty award winners announced on April 7: Dr. Phil Trocchia, Chancellor’s Award for Teaching (and College of Business Teaching Award), Dr. Wei Guan, Chancellor’s Award for Research, and Dr. Jill McCracken, Chancellor’s Award for Service. Please also congratulate Dr. Michiko Otsuki Clutter, College of Arts and Sciences Award for Teaching, Dr. George Roy, College of Education Award for Teaching; and Ms. Patricia Pettijohn, Non-Teaching Faculty Award. I want to thank the Faculty Senate Research Council and Awards Committee for their work in selecting the most worthy recipients of the Chancellor’s Awards. This year the Non-Teaching

Faculty Award was selected by the Faculty Senate Awards Committee (and this will be the case from now on).

- The students of Beta Alpha Psi, the collegiate honor society for Accounting, Finance, and Information Systems, who took the second place in the Southeast regional competition and placed ahead of USF Tamp and LSU. Only Mississippi State University outscored our team!
- Daniel Scott, Associate Director of Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Innovation Alliance, College of Business, was recognized in the latest issue of *Florida Trend* magazine as one of the “Impact Players” in the Tampa Bay Region.

### **Transitions**

Change is the only constant. People move on – and that’s true at USFSP as well.

- On April 8, Dean Vivian Fueyo, founding Dean of the College of Education, announced her intention to step down and return to the faculty as of January 1, 2012. I want to take this opportunity to thank Dean Fueyo for her creative and stalwart leadership of the College through its formative years. There are so many accomplishments that it would take pages to list them, but key among these is the College’s achievement of full accreditation by NCATE. This was truly a milestone (and not easy) and I thank Dean Fueyo for leading this effort. I have already met with the College faculty (at a faculty meeting last week) and I will shortly move to convene a Search Committee for a successor. There will be ample opportunity in the coming months to formally recognize and applaud Dean Fueyo for her many accomplishments and her dedicated service.
- Dr. Kent Kelso, my colleague Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, has departed for Texas A&M at Texarkana. TAMU-T is the newest institution in the TAMU system and Dr. Kelso will serve in a similar role as he had at USFSP. His family and that of his wife are both nearby and that was a strong consideration in his decision to move on. Dr. Sullivan made the decision to align Academic Affairs and Student Affairs more closely so as we are moving to refill this position, it will be either an Associate or Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs reporting to me. The Search Committee, ably chaired by Julie Jakway, has been working diligently and expects to bring finalists to campus before the end of this semester. Our goal is to have a new person on board by July 1 or certainly before the start of Fall 2011 classes. In the interim, if you have student-related issues that are not academic grievances (for which there is already an established process), please contact me.
- Three of the four Associate Deans at USFSP either have or shortly will return to the faculty. Dr. Deanna Michael in the College of Education will be succeeded by Dr. Lyman Dukes. Dr. Bill Jackson (see above) has stepped down and will now devote his energies to building the Entrepreneurship program with the new degree a reality. Mr. Bob Thompson will move from the Office of Academic Advising to the College of Business as Assistant Dean for Undergraduate

Studies. Dr. Mark Pezzo will return to the Department of Psychology; Dean Biafora is now in the process of selecting a successor. We all owe a debt of gratitude to each of these Associate Deans – they have worked very hard to solve student issues, develop workable and reasonable course schedules to assure timely student progression; and generally have been “utility infielders” in supporting USFSP’s academic programs. Please take a moment to thank them for their service.

- With the formal retirement of Dr. Steve Ritch, Dr. Bill Heller has graciously assumed the role of Director of the Bishop Center for Ethical Leadership and Civic Engagement. There is no one more suited for this job! The addition of “Civic Engagement” to this Center’s name will enable Bill, Judithanne Scourfield-McLauchlan, Charlie Justice, and others to work collaboratively together so that academic and co-curricular activities in leadership and in civic engagement will be appropriately aligned and mutually reinforcing. The Student Services Building (renovated CAC) will house all of these activities together in the same space. With the Lead-Learn-Serve grant going full bore, the Citizen Scholar course development continuing, and the increased interest of students in meaningful civic engagement activities that reinforce important learning outcomes, USFSP is now positioned to take these activities to a new level.

### **Research Month**

Please check the flyers and posters that are circulating around campus for Research Month activities. There is an Undergraduate Research Symposium and Graduate Student Expo and many other interesting events, including important grants training. Please note that all students wishing to print posters on our two large format plotters must first be trained. Contact Pat Scott in the Office of Research for details. The Faculty Research Council has done a great job of showcasing research at USFSP. Invite your friends and colleagues to any or all of the events. Faculty may wish to note especially the **Faculty Researchers Reception at the Poynter Library April 20<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m.**

### **Semi-Annual Finals Week Cookie Bake Extravaganza**

The Office of Academic Affairs is again sponsoring a cookie baking frenzy for the nutritional and emotional benefit of our students during Finals Week, April 30 – May 6, 2011. All faculty and staff are encouraged to bake as many cookies as they are able to (or buy them if you are challenged by the very thought of using an oven or measuring spoon) and deliver them to the Office of Academic Affairs starting on Monday, May 2, 2011. These goodies are set out on large platters in the DAVIS Hall Lounge and supply needed carbohydrates to students getting those final minutes of studying in or who need a sugar bounce. You bake (buy) ‘em, we’ll take ‘em (and we promise not to nibble on our way downstairs). **We need a lot of cookies to make this work throughout the week**, so start now and stock up (cookies freeze well). Thanks.

### Commencement

Our Spring Commencement will be on May 8, 2011 at the Mehaffey Theater at 6 pm. I encourage ALL FACULTY (full-time and part-time) to attend this wonderful event. Many of your students with whom you have worked closely will be graduating and this is your time to celebrate with them. Please let Yoli Lanuza in my office know if you plan to attend so we can be sure to have seating for you. It's our responsibility and our joy(☺) to attend this ceremony. Please be there.

Every day I never fail to be impressed by what my faculty colleagues are accomplishing and the progress that USFSP is making. This semester especially, I thank you all for your dedication and your commitment to USFSP and to our students. I hope to see you at Commencement and I wish you all a productive summer. Go forth and do good things, and....

Thanks for listening,

*Norine Noonan*