
College of Arts and Sciences: College Council
Meeting Minutes

College of Arts and Sciences (COAS)

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College of Arts & Sciences Council Meeting : 2015 : 03 : 27

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College of Arts & Sciences Faculty Council Meeting

03/27/2015 Minutes

Members present: John Arthur (Chair); Anna Dixon; Judithanne McLauchlan; Jill McCracken; Michiko Otsuki-Clutter; Melanie Riedinger-Whitmore; Donny Smoak; Mark Walters.

Guest: Candice Reshef, USF journalism student.

The meeting was called to order at 9:41 AM by Chair John Arthur.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for 27 February 2015

The FC reviewed the minutes. Michiko Otsuki-Clutter noted that the minutes needed to be amended re item 2 (Diversity Survey) to reflect that CAS does have a faculty representative on the diversity committee (CADIC): Jamie McHale. Michiko Otsuki-Clutter is substituting for him on CADIC while he is on sabbatical. Minutes approved with amendment.

Judithanne McLauchlan also noted that she did not appear on the 27 February minutes; she was not at the meeting because she was on a field trip with her students that day. The minutes were amended to reflect that.

Jill McCracken asked where the FC meeting minutes were located on the intranet. Chair John Arthur noted that the minutes are on the CAS webpage and can be accessed by following the "Faculty Documents and Forms" link to "Faculty Council," which then takes one to the Library Archives where past FC Minutes can be accessed. A comment was made from the floor that this link is apparently broken; however, as of 3/30/2015 the link is working.

Review of Upcoming FC Vacancies and Committees

As current Chair John Arthur will be stepping down on 15 May, and several other members are leaving a new chair needs to be selected and new members added. An interim chair can be named for the summer only. At the same time, it is important that we have some members who are familiar with the recent activities of the FC in order to have continuity.

Although the Chair and members at large usually serve two years, regular members usually rotate off in 1 year, although they can serve two consecutive terms.

Members who will be staying on the FC for another year:

Mark Walters

Judithanne McLauchlan

Michiko Otsuki-Clutter – although she is scheduled to be rotated off the FC, she will stay for now until the Psychology program decides who will be on the FC next year.

New members as of Fall 2015

Norine Noonan – representing Biological Sciences

New FC Chair

The discussion about the new Chair was tabled pending the arrival of Judithanne McLauchlan. Upon her arrival, she agreed that she would be continuing on as a member of FC and that she would be willing to serve as Chair but did not know for certain until attending her departmental meeting at 1:30 PM on 27 March.

Judithanne McLauchlan will serve as associate chair at the next meeting of the FC on 24 April 2015.

To assist the new Chair, outgoing Chair John Arthur will write up a summary of FC matters that were brought up during his tenure as chair. He noted that the main task for the FC is finding members for the various committees at USFSP.

Re: Review of the list of CAS committees and members – this item was tabled until the next FC meeting due to technical problems with the spreadsheet.

Review Ballot of By-law Changes

Chair John Arthur provided a draft ballot for council review, pointing to the primary issue, which was the elimination of the FC's part in the student grievance process, since the University already has a well-designed policy in place to deal with grievances.

FC member Jill McCracken suggested that a copy of the University policy re: grievances should be appended to the ballot for faculty voters' reference. It was agreed that a link to the policy will be placed on the ballot, but not the entire text.

It was suggested that the ballot should be edited for clarity, and that the wording from last month's FC meeting re: the bylaws change should be inserted, since it is very clear. Chair John Arthur said that he would implement these changes on the draft ballot and send the edited copy out to FC members for approval prior to disseminating the ballot to faculty for voting.

Updates from Chair John Arthur from Last Chair's Meeting

1. There was a discussion of program coordinators' pay: instead of \$2500.00/year, they could have the option of getting a course release, with the stipend going towards an adjunct to replace that professor. However, regarding parity in adjunct pay, it was suggested that the College should supplement that \$2500.00 with \$500.00 additional dollars to achieve parity with what most adjunct instructors receive.
- 2.
3. There was a discussion about course scheduling, as there was an especially strong deadline for Spring 2016; the chairs at the meeting advocated for more flexibility with scheduling because of issues like finding adjuncts to cover courses, particularly if courses are cancelled for initial low enrollment and then are reinstated at the last minute.

4. Re: PARs (personal action requests): there is a backlog of PARs and the chairs discussed acting first on the Fall 2015 PARs since there is a large backlog caused by delays on decisions regarding who is going to be hired.

The backlog is in part due to the fact that visiting professor lines are now no longer set for 3 years, but now need to be approved each year with a PAR, making it difficult to plan ahead for course scheduling.

5. Re: Travel – the new program assistants are being trained to take over travel duties, e.g., reimbursement, which should help speed things up.
6. Re: Summer courses: there was a discussion of how summer courses cover the loss of a course (during the regular semester? Notes are not clear), with the first course covering a loss and the second “breaking even”.
7. Re: Winter Break mini-courses: the chairs asked how will faculty be compensated for teaching these courses, which will be taught over a now-extended winter break. It was suggested that faculty who teach these courses get a course reduction for Spring, or perhaps compensation, though the amount of each was not clear yet. However, at this point, the administration’s primary interest is in learning whether there is faculty interest in teaching such courses.
8. Re: Tenure and Promotion Workshop: will be held 24 April 2015 in STG 110, headed by Mark Durand. Faculty interested in tenure and/or promotion should attend.

Updates from Chair John Arthur from the Faculty Senate Meeting

1. Re: Student Retention: Mark Durand discussed difficulties with student retention at USFSP, which is quite low. This is difficult because it is not clear how to track the causes for loss, and once students graduate, tracking is not consistent between programs, nor is it clear whose responsibility it is to track students.

It was noted that the new person in charge of institutional research, Lauren Friedman, is in the process of collecting information on students post-graduation.

Jeff Reisberg suggested that one thing that is (or could be helpful) is that USFSP students can now use their USF email addresses “forever”.

2. Re: computer storage space (memory) – Jeff Reisberg is pushing for faculty to have more storage space on computers. There is also a concern that there should also be a centralized, safe, storage area for faculty data. The chairs are supposed to check with faculty to see if they have enough storage space.

This sparked a discussion of what faculty were doing for storage space aside from apparently fragile portable hard drives, and several options for cloud-based storage were suggested (AS3, Backlays).

FC member Jill McCracken (in the FC discussion of this matter) noted that USF is not accessible from Mac computers, and that some kind of interface is needed. Although ITS has said that doing this would be too costly, FC chair John Arthur said that he will bring this matter to the attention of John Johnson.

There was also a question whether USFSP has a Technology Committee or not.

Discussion regarding USFSP Adjuncts Concerning How to Improve their Working Conditions

Re: USFSP adjuncts: FC member introduced guest, Candice Reshef, a student who is writing a story on adjuncts, and suggested that chair John Arthur write or provide a summary on the FC's action on adjuncts so far.

Current chair John Arthur said that former chair, Sheramy Bundrick, had drafted a document for the chairs' meeting addressing the issues related to adjuncts (pay, quality of life, support, possibility of promotion, cost of living increases etc.). Chair John Arthur stressed the importance of moving the adjunct issue forward so that adjuncts at USFSP are paid on par with USF Tampa. USFSP is losing adjuncts to Tampa because of the pay disparity, and adjuncts are an important part of the university's success.

There is a high degree of pay disparity between departments at USFSP for adjuncts. Rather than bring USFSP adjunct pay to par with USF Tampa, one suggestion (by Dean Frank Biafora and former Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Han Reichgelt) was to pay all USFSP adjuncts \$3000.00 a course.

FC member Jill McCracken discussed a variety of issues related to adjuncts, reading from an email received from adjunct faculty member Liz Priestly, which listed problems including: courses being dropped at the last minute (placing faculty in a financial bind), office equipment disappearing, the cost of parking, paychecks that were not issued and slow bureaucratic procedures.

FC member Melanie Riedinger-Whitmore also brought it to the attention of the committee that adjuncts do not get the same contributions made to social security as full-time faculty do; instead, a small amount is deducted from their checks to an outside agency (Bencorp). This was a cost-saving measure implemented around 10 years ago by many universities, yet few are aware of this.

Part of the solution is that adjuncts need to present a united front and unionize; they cannot join United Faculty of Florida, however.

In addition, committees such as the Faculty Council can advise, but the real changes have to come from the administration at USFSP and Tampa. However, the FC can make sure that the issue of fairness and quality of life for adjunct faculty remains at the fore by bringing it up often to the administration.

Items from the Floor/ New Business

Items from the Floor:

1. Chair John Arthur stressed that the diversity committee (CADIC) needs to know that faculty interest is high in reaching out to all of the St. Petersburg community, pointing in particular to the fact that recent facelifts to the branding of USFSP all seem to be focused to the northern

part of the county, while South Pinellas is seemingly ignored (e.g. there are signs announcing USFSP coming in from the north, but none as one drives in from the south). There also needs to be outreach to international students and the international community, including having a formal outreach person on staff.

2. Judithanne McLauchlan observed that the ALC's in Arts & Sciences appear to have a new, 5th category : diversity, asking when this was added, and how will it be measured? In discussion, it was suggested that Dean Susan Toler might know how and when this was added to the ALCs.
3. Re: Program Coordinators and compensation. Jill McCracken stated that there was a problem in Verbal & Visual Arts, particularly re: first year composition, whose program coordinator should also receive a stipend. Julie Armstrong is the Writing Studies coordinator, but there is a separate person who handles composition. Is the person who is coordinator for composition classes receiving a coordinator stipend in the summer?

Melanie Riedinger-Whitmore commented that the same thing was happening in the math program; she is program coordinator for Biological Sciences, but someone else is handling the math program coordinator duties but was not getting paid. Melanie had been giving that person the stipend she received.

FC Chair John Arthur said that he would talk to Dean Frank Biafora about stipends for program coordinators, particularly in large programs like ESP&G, math and composition, where there are 2 or more majors but who apparently receive only one stipend for program coordination.

New Business:

Melanie Riedinger-Whitmore stressed that return rate on online student evaluations of teaching continues to be extremely poor, and will impact tenure and promotion as a result. We need to continue to find ways to remedy this situation.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM.

Minutes completed and submitted by Anna R. Dixon; corrected per Faculty Council meeting review on 24 April 2015.