

2005

AY 2004/2005 FS meetings minutes: 04 Nov 17

Faculty Senate

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FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES

November 17, 2004

Faculty Senate President Susan Greenbaum called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m. The Minutes from the October 20, 2004, meeting were approved as presented.

REPORT FROM FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT SUSAN GREENBAUM

President Greenbaum announced that the Senate passed a resolution at its October meeting stating that it supports in principle the work of the Inter-Campus Academic Relations Committee. Although the document itself has not been finalized, that item is nearing closure.

There have been instances of expansion of degree programs from one campus to another without benefit of policies and procedures. There is now an ad hoc committee which will look into this process to ensure it moves with integrity and without violations.

President Greenbaum will be scheduling a meeting of the Committee on Faculty Issues which was transformed last year out of the mostly dormant Faculty Evaluations and Standards Committee that used to evaluate transitory award programs. In the discussions that surrounded faculty governance last year and the year before, it was deemed necessary to have a committee that would look at faculty personnel issues, evaluation, tenure and promotions issues, and contingently to convene a panel to consider tenured professors who have been dismissed. Although USF has had none of those cases, there are other purposes for this committee such as addressing issues related to the status and professional development of non-tenure earning faculty.

President Greenbaum received a request for an electronic medium which allows Senators to communicate and discuss Senate issues between meetings. Senators Kathy Whitley and Tom Terrell have established a discussion group on Blackboard to serve that purpose. Instructions on how to access and use Blackboard will be sent out via e-mail to everyone. President Greenbaum encouraged Senators to use the medium.

President Greenbaum asked the Senators to review the brochure titled "Faculty Resource Tool on Top 10 Compliance Topics" and send comments to Ms. Marie Hunnicutt by Friday, November 17.

Ratification of the new contract ends at noon on Thursday, November 18th. President Greenbaum encouraged those that had not already done so to submit their ballots to NEC 116 by noon that day. Ballots will be counted on Friday at noon. There will be an attempt to have the contract ratified before Thanksgiving. She thinks it is a better contract, in particular, with the articulation of what academic freedom means which is now part of the contract thereby giving it even more force. She extended her appreciation to the Rules Committee, Past President Elizabeth Bird, the advising team and to all the Senators.

REPORT FROM PRESIDENT JUDY GENSHAFT

President Genshaft thanked the Senators for all the work they have been doing with the administration. She felt that things were much more productive.

She announced that there was a meeting of the Diversity Committee which included all the deans and vice presidents. The Diversity Committee presented a report which contained their point of view defining diversity on this campus with different statistics. President Genshaft pointed out that the commitment to diversity is very important as USF looks for outstanding new faculty.

The Faculty/Staff Appreciation tailgate on November 13 before the USF Bulls football game against North Carolina was a big success with over a thousand people in attendance, many of whom were faculty. It was a great experience and something that will be done again.

President Genshaft will attend the Board of Governors (BOG) meeting in Tallahassee on Thursday. The good news is that action on accountability and the academic learning compact material will be delayed.

REPORT FROM PROVOST RENU KHATOR

Upon the recommendation of the search committee and the guidance of the faculty and staff of the College of Arts and Sciences, Provost Khator had the pleasure of announcing the new dean for the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. John Skvoretz, from the University of South Carolina, will join USF on January 1, 2005, as the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The dean searches for Architecture and the Graduate School are still ongoing, in addition to the positions of Assistant Vice President of Institutional Research, and Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Planning. She asked that the Senators take an interest and participate in the interviews as the candidates visit campus.

Two other points mentioned:

1. Accountability is the number one hot topic and it is not just USF, it is not just Florida, it is nationwide and it is not going away. There is talk about including K-16, whereas it used to be K-12 and then the university.
2. All of the universities have moved ahead trying to work on the ALCs. USF has not started because it did not have direction from the BOG to start working on the ALCs. However, after the holidays USF will start to think about what needs to be done.

The tuition proposal will be on the agenda for the BOG meeting, but as far as the BOG is concerned, it now goes to the Legislature. Provost Khator has asked the staff to start looking at block tuition, its impact, what kind of blocks USF should have and what USF has that will work for the Student Government and Faculty Senate. She pointed out that USF is a very different institution in the State of Florida in that what works for other universities does not necessarily work for USF.

REPORT FROM USF UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA PRESIDENT ROY WEATHERFORD

There was no report given.

REPORT FROM STUDENT GOVERNMENT LIAISON DAVID HOFFMAN

Mr. Hoffman announced that an ad hoc committee was formed within the Student Senate to research the plus minus grading scale. He will be meeting with Ms. Kelly Rayl, Student Government Director of Academic Affairs, who has put this issue at the top of her priority list.

In Student Government's continuing efforts to reach out to students, it held its Annual General Assembly on November 9th. This catered event was held at the Top of the Palms restaurant which gave students an opportunity to present their concerns to Student Government in an open forum environment. Topics discussed ranged from Marshall Center construction and Bull Runner to student organizations and ALCs.

At today's meeting, Mr. Hoffman distributed copies of the *Oracle* to draw attention to an article regarding the Rules Committee that he felt puts the Student Government and Senate in a bad light. He commented that it is impossible to accurately describe the working of a governing body by observing it for one night. It disappoints him that an organization such as Student Government that works so hard on behalf of the students gets negative publicity so often from the campus newspaper. Faculty Senate rarely ever gets publicity, but perhaps this is an example of why that is a lucky thing. Therefore, he encouraged Senators if they have any questions or concerns, as always feel free to contact him.

Senator Sang-Hie Lee commented that the plus/minus grading system had already been addressed. She asked what was the discussion now. Mr. Hoffman replied that Student Government is in the planning stages, starting from the beginning, because they feel that if there is going to be a change, they want to understand why. Student Government does not want to look at the issue from a student perspective, because students on this campus are against having a plus/minus grading scale. Therefore, Student Government would like to research it to find out if there is a disadvantage and if so, why. If, at the end of the research it has been determined that the plus/minus grading scale is the best system and there is no reason to change, he will not bring it to the Faculty Senate. However, if Student Government finds otherwise, he will bring the issue to the Senate and if there is a significant advantage to change, he will request a change.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ACTIONS

a. Recommendations from Committee on Committees (Ellis Blanton)

Chair Blanton presented the following slate of faculty to fill vacancies on an immediate basis on Faculty Senate Standing Committees and Councils:

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FACULTY SENATE STANDING COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS
Fall Semester 2004

Committee on Faculty Issues

Deirdre Cobb-Roberts (EDU)

Council on Educational Policy & Issues

Virginia Cunningham (LIB)

Graduate Council

Maria Coulter (COPH)

Arthur Shapiro (EDU)

Library Council

Patirick Finelli (VPA)

Undergraduate Council

Celina Jozsi (COBA)

These faculty were nominated during the November Senate Executive Committee (SEC) meeting, reviewed and approved by the Committee on Committees, and were presented to the Faculty Senate with a motion and a second. The motion to approve the nominees was unanimously passed.

b. Consensual Relationship Policy (Philip Reeder)

Professor Philip Reeder, Chair of the Counsel on Educational Policy and Issues (CEPI), explained that the Consensual Relationship Policy (CRP) is a draft document that was originally produced by the Office of Audit and Compliance and referred to as the “amorous relationship policy.” A subcommittee of CEPI was created to review the draft policy. Based upon comments from CEPI and the SEC, Chair Reeder presented a revised CRP at today’s meeting for discussion. At this time, the floor was opened for discussion.

Senator Donchin pointed out that the significance of such policy is the responsibility of department chairs. He felt that the policy should have been sent out to all chairs for feedback. He added that the policy does not state that romantic relationships between faculty and students are prohibited. Senator Donchin stated that a policy is also needed for sexual harassment issues. Chair Reeder responded that the policy originally stated that romantic relationships between faculty and students were prohibited. However, CEPI members unanimously agreed that such behavior cannot be prohibited. The council was specifically instructed to address all relationships in the whole working environment, not just relationships between students and faculty.

As a member of the ad hoc committee, Senator Arthur Bochner added that it is impossible to list the different types of relationships in this document. Some members of the committee felt it was not the university's business to legislate against relationships. The committee's concern was, in particular, the issue of exploitation and power. Chairs do not want to be faced with interviewing each faculty member each semester to discuss personal relationships. This is an incredibly difficult problem to make policy on. It is not simply a case of saying "we prohibit" – there are a lot of grey areas. The committee very responsibly tried to discuss those without seeing this as a black and white issue and this policy is the result of those discussions.

At this point, Senator Wendy Nembhard asked if there was a way to get faculty feedback on this policy. Chair Reeder replied that it was his understanding that CEPI was the beginning point, with the composition of the council representing a cross section of the faculty. The policy can certainly be taken to the faculty as a whole, but he did not want to deal with the large number of responses for this particular policy. The policy, as it stands, has been referred to the Provost's Office.

Discussion was held regarding the promulgation process. The point was made that as Faculty Senators it is their responsibility to go back to their constituents and apprise them of issues. This policy may be the kind of thing to send out to faculty for comments. At this time the following three friendly amendments were made to the motion to approve this document: (1) The Faculty Senate approves the motion contingent upon a two week period in which time all faculty and department chairs have an opportunity to respond to this document. (2) The Faculty Senate President will request a delay in the promulgation process until after the two week period. (3) The SEC reviews the comments to determine whether or not the document should come back to the full Senate for a vote.

The friendly motions were seconded and the motion as amended was unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS

a. University Academic Grievance Procedures (Elizabeth Bird)

Past President Bird reminded the Senators that the University Academic Grievance Procedures (UAGP) needed to be approved at this meeting in order for them to be in the catalog for next year. She then gave some background on the UAGP. The procedures passed at the end of 2003, which are the ones currently in the catalog, went into effect this year. Many problems became apparent and during late 2003-04 an ad hoc committee was formed to revisit the procedures and attempt to improve them. During the year that it was revised the ad hoc committee took the procedures back to many committees and councils and reached the current version.

The main issues that needed changing in the old procedures were that the definition of academic grievances was too broad and it opened the door for students to grieve all kinds of general complaints. Also, timelines were not clear and were inconsistent. Finally, it

was not apparent in the document what happens when a department has its own formal procedures. Most departments do not have formal procedures, but they address grievances through their informal processes. Psychology is the only department that has its own complex, formal procedure.

These changes were made in that the definition of grievance is much more focused. It now states that it is a “claim that a specific academic decision or action that affects that student’s academic record or status has violated published policies and procedures, or has been applied to the grievance in a manner different from that used for other students.” The timelines were cleaned up and are consistent throughout. It is now clarified in the document that the department may have its own procedures but the student still has a right to have a formal hearing at the college level. The reason that all of this was agreed to was that it is important that all students should have access to at least one uniform process. Even if there were many departmental processes, it is important that the students at least have one level where everybody is under the same procedures.

All the appropriate groups have approved the document and it came as a motion made and seconded by the SEC. At this time, the floor was opened for discussion.

Senator Donchin asked for a point of clarification on the last paragraph in the document which reads “These procedures shall take effect commencing Fall Semester 2005, and shall supersede all other academic grievance procedures currently in effect” He pointed out that the way this is stated it automatically eliminates departmental procedures. He asked that the word “university” be added so that it reads “... all other university grievance procedures currently in effect” Past President Bird responded that it was not suppose to eliminate and saw no problem with adding the word “university” at that point.

Senator Donchin then offered the following amendment to the last sentence of the footnote on page 3:

“... If the Department does not uphold the grievance, the Chair will report the fact to ALL PARTIES TO THE DISPUTE AS WELL AS TO THE DEAN. The student may, in such cases, [request the College Level review] APPEAL THE DEPARTMENT’S DECISION TO THE DEAN WHO WILL LAUNCH A College Level review as outlined in these university procedures.”

The proposed amendment was seconded and discussed. Senator Donchin stated that he wanted the process to recognize the fact that the department’s decision has been made and was done following a well established formal and appropriate procedure. Past President Bird responded that it is not to appeal the department’s decision. This is a separate committee at the college level that will review the grievance from the beginning.

After a brief discussion, there was a call to question to end debate on the topic. A vote was taken and the University Academic Grievance Procedures were approved as presented without amendment.

b. Departmental Shared Governance (Gregory McColm)

Senator Gregory McColm has been appointed chair of an ad hoc committee to produce a report for the Faculty Senate and, ultimately for the faculty, on what is taking place with faculty governance on a departmental level. There are several reasons the committee will be looking at the departments. One is that this is the place where faculty interact the most. He added that as someone attending chapter meetings for many years, what appears to generate the most faculty grievances under a contract are events that occur at the departmental level.

If one is trying to understand faculty governance and where it occurs, the departmental level is a good place to start by looking at a huge function of small units. Senator McColm thought it would be a good idea to have a committee that goes through this educational experience and share with the faculty. This is not only trying to find out how different places find solutions, but also figuring out what faculty members are up to. It is part investigation, scholarship and whatever appeals. The committee will also look at how departmental shared governance is done at other institutions, as well as whether or not there are any models.

Senator McColm is still looking for people with a variety of skills and a variety of backgrounds to provide a wide number of perspectives. This was another call for volunteers. The report is due April 1, which gives a little over four months to produce. An organizational meeting was scheduled for Friday, November 19th. He will try to arrange for Blackboard communication so that other members of the Faculty Senate may participate. Senator McColm would appreciate all comments, feedback and anything on how to proceed.

NEW BUSINESS

a. December Senate Meeting

The Senators unanimously voted to cancel the December 15th meeting. The next meeting of the full Senate will be January 19, 2005.

b. University Community Engagement (Susan Greenbaum)

Included in today's meeting materials, was a draft charge for an hoc Committee on University Engagement. President Greenbaum asked for feedback about the scope of the committee, the kinds of issues, and any other suggestions.

ISSUES FROM THE FLOOR

There were no issues from the floor.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.