

Faculty Senate Minutes
November 10, 2015

Attendance: Robin Payne (Soc. Sci.), Jim Weekley (BCG), Harry Baxter (ACF), Joe Kremer (Business), Bob Mild (Academic Affairs), Crystal Smith (SOEHHP), Amanda Metcalfe (SOEHHP), Carolyn Crislip-Tracy (Academic Affairs), Jennifer Yerdon LeJeune (SoFA), Daniel Eichenbaum (SoFA), Jessica Alsup (HHP), Matthew Hokom (L&L), Charley Hively (Library), Anthony Yost (Tech), James Dunlevy (CSMP), Siegfried Bleher (CSMP), John McLaughlin (Soc. Sci.), Donna Long (L&L), Chris Kast (Beh. Sci.), Charles Shields (President), Fran Young (Nursing), Tony Gilberti (Tech), Kaitlyn Davis (SGA), Budd Sapp (BOG)

Guests: Maria Rose, Chris Lavorata, Kelly Humphreys, Dixie Yann, Kay Widney, Jack Kirby, Tim Oxley, Mark Pallotta, John Schirripa, Debra Hoag, Cherri Wemlinger, Mike Ransom

- I. Senate President Charles Shields called the meeting to order.
- II. The Senate approved the minutes of the October Faculty Senate meeting without revisions.

III. Announcements/Information/Discussion

A. Welcome to Board of Governors

1. The meeting began with the introduction of members of the Board of Governors. The following members were in attendance: Chair Mark Pallotta, Vice-Chair Dixie Yann, John Schirripa, Student Representative Kelly Humphreys, and Faculty Representative Budd Sapp.
2. President Shields provided the Senate with an opportunity to ask questions or make comments to the members of the Board. No comments or questions were immediately forthcoming.
3. Board of Governors Chair Mark Pallotta noted that the Board puts in a lot of time and effort to improving conditions at FSU. They appreciate what everyone at FSU does for the university, hope that things are going well for faculty, and look forward to working with faculty to improve conditions.

B. President Rose Updates

1. President Rose circulated a memorandum from the OASIS team stating that the shift to two-week payroll has been delayed as Governor Tomblin continues working with the legislature to ensure that the conversion from 24 to 26 pay periods happens without incident. Rick Porto is still in Charleston representing higher education interests. He officially retires in January; however, President Rose plans to ask Chancellor Hill to see if HEPC can retain him in order to continue representing higher education. President Rose noted that OASIS is most likely not a “dead deal” and that the transition will indeed occur once all potential legal issues have been explored.

2. Governor Tomblin has already announced the 4% budget cut from base appropriations; however, state legislators have indicated that another budget cut is forthcoming this fiscal year. Details will be made available when more is known.
3. A meeting of regional institutions is scheduled for Wednesday, November 11. In addition to FSU, West Liberty, Concord, Shepherd, Bluefield, and West Virginia State will be represented with the goal of ensuring regional schools' budgetary and legislative needs are considered alongside those of WVU and Marshall.
4. The HEPC will meet in Charleston next Friday. Harry Baxter will be in attendance as our faculty representative. The Council of Presidents meeting will occur beforehand, which may yield news regarding projected budgets.
5. President Rose shared the good news that the Fairmont Foundation has secured the second largest gift received to date. An announcement will be made on Thursday, November 12 at 5:00 p.m. in the Falcon Center Conference rooms. The funds will be used to finance at least sixteen student scholarships per year.
6. The housing construction project is ahead of schedule with students set to occupy the building by July 2016.
7. Questions for President Rose focused on the on-going issues related to the shift from 24 to 26 pay periods and how it will affect faculty paid on the nine month scale. President Rose confirmed that everyone will eventually need to switch to the twelve month cycle and noted that faculty should speak to Ginger Burns or Cinda Ewing if they are affected.
8. President Rose was also asked about the current trend towards budget cuts occurring on an annual basis and whether or not faculty can expect to receive good news on this front any time soon. President Rose encourages faculty to speak with their legislators and implore them to recoup the lost revenue from coal, gas, and severance taxes and to urge them to protect higher education. The cuts are the direct result of declining state revenue.
9. President Rose was also asked about the status of the pending cuts to PEIA. President Rose explained that we do not yet know the final outcome, but more information may be forthcoming soon. ACF Representative Harry Baxter reminded faculty to complete the questionnaire he sent following the public hearings, surveying whether or not premiums should be based on total family income.

C. Report from Dr. Oxley

1. The Critical Friends group has decided that November 29 will be the lockdown date for assessment data entry for 2014/2015 in order to allow sufficient time to put together a report.
2. Strategic planning is getting a later start than anticipated, but the steering committee will meet soon to develop a plan for moving forward.
3. Year Four of the accreditation review is upcoming for the Fall 2016 semester. Oxley will meet with the criterion chairs to attend a one-day workshop in Indianapolis to learn more about new standards. Their report will be forthcoming.
4. Senate President Shields asked if the Critical Friends group will begin to provide more critical feedback. Oxley explained that the goal is to move to a rubric that is more qualitative than the previously used matrix, which simply documented what was present

in the system. The new rubric will provide constructive, qualitative assessment to programs in order to enable programs to enhance their assessment and help programs that are lagging behind get caught up to speed.

D. ACF Representative — Harry Baxter

1. A legislative round table discussion is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. ACF Representative Harry Baxter and Galen Hansen are inviting all of the local legislators from surrounding counties and hope to have a good showing. The goal is to address matters of concern to higher education and discuss possible solutions to the problems higher education is facing in light of budget cuts. The discussion will be held in the Falcon Center conference rooms and faculty, staff, and students are all encouraged to attend.
2. Baxter again reminded faculty to complete the survey provided by PEIA, which consists of three questions. He anticipates that PEIA will take into account collective opposition to the plan to use household income to determine premiums. PEIA will also require enrollees to fill out a biometric form by April 30, 2016. Failure to do so will result in an extra \$500 deductible. When asked if there are really no other funds for PEIA to draw from, Baxter reported that the state legislature has not contributed any money to PEIA in the last five years. Faculty are encouraged to ask legislators to contribute to the shortfall, which is now as high as \$120 million.

E. BOG Representative — Budd Sapp

1. Budd Sapp thanked his fellow BOG members for attending the senate meeting and reminded those in attendance that a reception would follow the meeting. President Rose was thanked for sponsoring and organizing the reception and for providing an opportunity for faculty to meet with BOG members.
2. Sapp had forwarded information from the last meeting held at the Caperton Center, including constituency reports. Representatives from faculty, staff, and the student body had been invited to the meeting to speak to their experiences at FSU. Sapp believes this is a positive step forward and hopes the BOG will continue to do so in order to work towards transparency and the best possible solutions for everyone. Board of Governors Chair Mark Pallotta confirmed that this was the first time faculty, staff, and students had been invited to speak, but that the BOG does plan to continue to do so in the future.
3. A main concern of the BOG is that the new student housing will be completed in a timely manner so that the first bond payment can be made on time.

F. Student Government

1. SGA representative Kaitlynn Davis made two quick announcements. First, she shared the good news that the SGA secretary has been selected to study abroad in the Netherlands. In addition, she announced that the SGA will have a State of the Student Body Address on December 1 at 8:00 p.m. at the Newman Center.

G. Discussion of Appeal and Grievance Procedures for Faculty

1. Senate President Shields noted that an issue regarding appeal and grievance procedures for faculty was brought to the Executive Committee. Vice President Donna Long elaborated, pointing to growing concerns about the trend towards hiring temporary, rather than tenure-track, faculty in regard to academic freedom and whether or not temporary faculty can feel truly comfortable with exercising academic freedom in light of their temporary status. The Senate was asked whether or not this was an issue that warranted further consideration and whether the Faculty Welfare Committee in particular should be charged with looking into faculty rights and ensuring that faculty are kept informed as to what is happening with the budget, their rights relative to the appeals process, and other related matters.
 - a. In the following discussion, senators raised concerns that even for tenure-track faculty, there are growing concerns about job stability because of budget cuts. Some faculty are also concerned that current hiring trends may have the adverse affect of making FSU seem less academically rigorous or less likely to attract strong job candidates, though similar patterns are emerging at institutions of higher education nationwide. Despite this being a nationwide trend, further discussion focused on the fact that many faculty do indeed feel vulnerable and that this is a serious issue warranting further discussion.
 - b. Senators continued to raise questions about what the Faculty Welfare Committee might be able to do in response to these concerns, distinctions between temporary and term appointments, as well as how contracts for temporary positions typically work. Provost Chris Lavorata explained that contracts of one to three years are typically offered, though these contracts are renewed on a yearly basis with notification of contract renewal given by March 1. Lavorata also noted that Title 133, Series 9, Section 15 of the faculty handbook outlines the faculty grievance procedure. Faculty wishing to file a grievance are directed to HR and to designated attorneys.
 - c. Faculty Welfare Committee Chair Sam Spears had previously noted, however, that the committee would need an official written charge from the Executive Committee guiding them towards action. President Shields concluded that the Executive Committee would provide such a charge by the next Senate meeting.

H. IDEA Evaluation Forms

1. Chris Lavorata spoke with representatives from IDEA, which is migrating completely to on-line applications. IDEA is willing to visit institutions to share their ideas for increasing student participation when they go fully electronic. Institutions will not be required to go fully on-line until they are ready to do so and IDEA is willing to help with the transition so that institutions are able to receive the kind of feedback they require. In the meantime, FSU continues its search for best product with best price and best return rate.
2. Amanda Metcalf reported back regarding feedback from SOEHHP faculty, but their models primarily consisted of in-house evaluations used at other institutions. Discussion followed regarding FSU's effort to implement an on-line, in-house evaluation system in the past which had dismal response rates. Faculty seemed to agree that evaluations conducted on paper, rather than electronically, yield much higher response rates, and

remain frustrated that it is difficult to get feedback for purposes of course improvement in light of consistently low response rates.

3. Tim Oxley explained that the current evaluation system can work for assessment purposes in the accreditation process, but response rates must be improved for this purpose as well. The main thing we need to demonstrate to HLC is that the data entered, including data from student evaluations, demonstrates we are doing what we say we are doing in terms of assessment.
4. Faculty also continued to express concern about what kinds of questions are asked and whether they provide the kind of feedback faculty desire. Lavorata reminded faculty that we will be moving to the long form this year, which IDEA believes will provide faculty with more comprehensive feedback.
5. In addition, faculty asked how evaluations are utilized in the Annual Faculty Reports faculty are required to upload into TaskStream. Lavorata plans to discuss this with the Deans to ensure that faculty get better feedback following the review process.

IV. Unfinished Business

- A. There was no unfinished business.

V. New Business

- A. There was no new business.

VI. Open Forum

- A. Senate President Shields reminded the Senate that he is still looking for volunteers for bookstore advisory committee.
- B. In response to the opening call for questions or comments to the BOG, faculty engaged in further discussion regarding the state of things at FSU. In particular, some faculty feel that in light of the on-going budget cuts, morale has reached an all-time low on campus with many faculty feeling the university is in a very dire situation. Faculty made clear that they do not blame the BOG for these issues, but feel that it is important that these realities are openly discussed. Faculty feel at a loss as to how to get through to the state legislature to stem the tide of the cuts.
- C. Donna Long shared the good news that Suzanne Heagy, recently retired Associate Professor of Language and Literature, has published her novel entitled *Love Lets Us Down*.

VII. The meeting was adjourned.