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Faculty Senate Minutes

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Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – August 2019

Faculty Senators

University of South Alabama

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Faculty Senate

Plenary Session

August 21, 2019 – Faculty Club – 3:00 pm

MINUTES

Present: Cooper, Henry, O'Connor, Pelekanos, Powell, Thompson, Adams, Beebe, Bryan, Cesarini, Feldvoss, Gibbs, Gossett, Halbrooks, Hossain, Lewis, Lindeman, Mark, McCready, Raczkowski, Rinehart, Koon-Magnin, Young, Zlomke, McKinney, Sittig, Sweeney, Gecewicz, Koestner, Broach, Donaldson, Fregeau, Keshock, Woltring, Cleary, Cloutier, Spencer, Lemley, Shepard, Ding, Harmon, Kilgo, Lin, Rayner, Sayner, Weber, Chow, Madden, Turnipseed, Bertolla, Myers, VandeWaa, Pai

Excused: Huang, Riley, Scott, Swanzy, Younce, Piazza

Start Time: 3:04

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes: MMSA
- Approval of Agenda: MMSA
- President's Report (Susan McCready)
 - Enrollment Update

The FS Executive Committee, comprised of FS officers and FS committee chairs, met with the President, the Provost and some others yesterday. Enrollment as of two days ago was down 516 overall, including 289 first-time freshmen (that number on a basis of 1835 represents over 15%). Graduate enrollment is up by 229, which was the only bright spot.

David Johnson went through a list of items that they are going to do to address this, including:

- Adjustments to our scholarship structure
- Raising caps on some high-demand programs, esp. in Allied Health
- Admit more undergraduate nursing students
- Further expansion into China with Allied Health programs
- Partnerships with Community Colleges

- Longer term: look at ways to offer more at the MA/MS level
- Consultant to Admissions (!!)
- Review of administrative things such as when Fin. Aid offers are sent, etc.

We emphasized that the Faculty want to be part of these various solutions, so if you have ideas/suggestions, send them to me for now and I'll send them up the line.

- Building Update

Buildings all seem to be on time. Faculty should be moving into the Simulation Building during the Fall and it should be ready for Spring semester. There are renovations going on in UComm for more doctors' offices. North Dr. traffic circle is done. Work on John Counts drive delayed by weather but catching up. Alumni Center and Stadium on schedule.

- Other Updates from 9/20 Meeting with the President

- MCI faculty are being absorbed into departments in the COM. This is going to affect Senate representation. For now, we are waiting to act. My concern is that some faculty will be unrepresented or exposed.
- Insurance Committee is meeting next week and will vote on a proposal to increase rates by \$13/family, \$3/individual. They are pursuing TeleDoc and other cost savings measures.

- ACHE Salary Information Request to Faculty

A representative from ACHE met with the Ex Comm at the beginning of the summer. They want salary data from the Faculty, not just from the University and are apparently going to provide some support to help us get this done.

- Strategic Planning (again)

Another round of Strategic Planning is starting and I've been asked to participate. I'll know more next month and will report.

- Caucus Leader Responsibilities

Caucus leaders: you're the main point of contact/dissemination of information for the Senate to most of our colleagues. Please make sure that you are holding regular meetings and sending out reports to the colleagues in your college at least monthly! If we want the Admin. to be transparent, we need to be, too!

- Other

- Policy Update (Shepard)

The Chair Review Policy was approved by the CAD in June and will be updated in the Faculty Handbook. The University Instructor 3rd Rank policy is still before the CAD, waiting for numbers from Scott Weldon. The Non-Tenure Track Full-Time Faculty policy is not as pleasant: the CAD returned to us a wholly different policy. We're creating a working group with David Johnson, or we'll have to vote yes or no on what the CAD returned to us. McCready: "we want clarity so that people who are not tenure track are judged on their job description and not on that of TTFTF with research expectations."

Regarding proposed policy FS 1011 to amend §3.14.1 "Searches for Tenure Track Faculty," the CAD proposed changes which are more than editorial. Shepard: "they are different enough that we need to vote on it." McCready: "the CAD was concerned with confidentiality and didn't want information about applicants to be revealed. In addition, the CAD took out language about consultation with faculty and instead included language about an opportunity for faculty feedback. Again, there are enough changes for us to vote on it. The CAD proposal is an improvement and is better than the current policy in the handbook." A vote was proposed: MMSA – the CAD proposal to FS 1011 passed.

- Committee Assignments (Cleary)

There are a lot of committees mentioned in the Faculty Handbook. There is confusion as to their charge, so there will be an analysis made of the various committees to update them and make any changes as appropriate.

- Ad Hoc Athletics Committee

An ad hoc committee was proposed, but the general consensus among the Faculty Senate was that the proposed charge was problematic. There was a consensus that this might be brought up again with a revised charge.

- Special Guests:

- Student Evaluation of Teaching Instrument

- Kathy Cooke, Dean of the Honors College
- Sam Fisher, Professor of Political Science

The CAD has passed the Student Evaluation of Teaching Instrument. We'll vote on it but not today. It is not an evaluation of teaching but a perception of instruction. If we want to change the discourse, we know the words we use matter. Make it clear this is a perception, not an evaluation. The instrument is from UCF. We want to discover if there are differences based on gender, divisions/colleges. Part of the emphasis is to get away from using evaluations as a basis for P&T. Different colleges have different requirements. Colleges can add additional questions. Also, with the new system, whatever evaluation instrument is used can be loaded into Digital Measures. There will be no double barrel questions. The instrument will be structured for every different department in terms most applicable to that particular department. The implementation

system and instruments will talk to each other. Also, it will replace the evaluation system we have. Class Climate is going away. Currently, you can't get survey results until after the incomplete deadline. There will be a vote on this instrument at our next meeting.

- John Friend, Director of Counseling and Testing (“CTS”)

Friend and doctoral student Lorne Marie spoke about services offered by CTS. According to Friend, half of the top 10 impediments to academic achievement are psychological. According to the College Student Mental Health Survey (Fall 2018), 92% of students feel overwhelmed, while 31% men and 45% women screened positive for probable depression. Most concerning: 60% of students wanting help did not get help. The stigma of mental health is the number one reason students did not get the help they need. Dr. Friend's goal is to talk to groups like the FS because faculty can be valuable resources for him. Students more likely to present to counseling if a friend or someone with whom they have a relationship can connect them to CTS. The most common mental health issues experienced by students can be treated effectively with counseling. The problem is to get them in earlier than later. Counseling services are free and confidential, with timely appointments and a focus on solution-focused models and crisis management. CTS cannot talk to parents without the student's written permission. On average, we meet 1-3x times with students, and they get what they need. We work longer with students suffering from trauma, eating disorders, and sexual abuse. We see students within a week from time they first contact us.

This is important: if you have a student in crisis, call us immediately – we want to see the student immediately. Question: how can we follow up if we send someone your way? Friend: ask the student if it would be OK to follow up with the student in a day or so? One Senator stated that they have been in crisis situations with students, but no one answered the phone at CTS, so the faculty member took them by car to the CTS office, but there was no one there. Even when they are in crisis, they can't get an appointment for 5 days. Friend responded that he's confident this situation has been resolved, especially with the impending move into their new building adjacent to the Student Health Center. He then gave the Senate his personal cell number, and said if they encountered a situation like the Senator described, to please call him immediately.

Friend continued and said CTS has a triage protocol – if you are thinking about hurting yourself or someone else, or if you've been sexually/physically assaulted, then you are in crisis. Crisis means different things to different people, but it's better to err on the side of caution. In response to a question inquiring if CTS had sufficient staff, Friend says a staff with a ratio of 1 full-time clinician to 1500 students is standard. CTS has a staff of 4 FT clinicians, so the ratio is 1 in 3000. We do train graduate students, both MA and PHD, and we also have 2 full-time doctoral students in training. We're not where we want to be – most people are aware of this, but we're not alone: all regional universities struggle with maintaining the 1:1500 RATIO. I'm going to make sure we do everything possible to help our students.

We focus on clinical matters, but we want to do outreach and more prevention. We encourage faculty members to become involved, so please give me a call because we want to do presenting with students in particular. I have a presentation on prevention and giving students the skills to handle the stress they'll have on campus. If we wait for students to come to counseling center, many won't. A senator asked if faculty could learn outreach activities, and it would be useful for Dr. Friend to give a presentation to departments. Friend responded by noting there are resources on the CTS website. He encouraged the faculty member to contact him to set something up. How can you help? notice, approach, collaborate, refer.

Next, Lorne Marie talked about Jag Connect, funded by a grant to fund suicide prevention initiatives on campus. "We're coming to the end of our grant funding, but we want to make things sustainable. We want to promote a culture of connectedness and collaboration on campus. The ultimate goal is to prevent suicide. We offer services/resources including depression screening day, merchandise, and workshops. We can make appropriate referrals to services."

- Adjourn: 4:45 pm.

Committee Reports Submitted in Writing

- Fringe Benefits Committee (Jamie Adams)

The University of South Alabama Fringe Benefits Committee met on May 21, 2019. At this meeting the status of USA's Health & Dental Plan was discussed.

It was reported that as of April 30, 2019 expenses had exceeded revenue by \$2,133,743. The cost of benefits and administration increased by \$1.8 million compared to that time the previous year. Highlights from the report include:

1. Revenue is flat based on the rate hold for 2019 and the slight increase in expenses is due to an increase in covered members equal to 56 or 1.2% compared to this time last year.
2. The reserve stands at \$10,786,539 compared to the 15% target of \$7 million.
3. Large claims account for 36% of the increase. Claims in excess of \$50,000 have increased by \$779,916 compared to this time last year.
4. The pharmacy benefit accounts for about 34% of the total benefit cost.

It was stated that the Plan has had a rate-hold for the last three years but the year-to-date experience indicates that an increase in the cost sharing amounts is very likely for 2020. The amount of that increase was not discussed. The University Fringe Benefits committee will meet again on 8/28/2019.

