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Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – February 2014

Faculty Senators

University of South Alabama

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Senators, Faculty, "Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – February 2014" (2014). *Minutes 2013-2014*. 4. https://jagworks.southalabama.edu/minutes_twentythirteen/4

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February 19, 2014 – Faculty Club - 3:00 pm
Approved Minutes

Present: Estis, Gordon-Hickey, Kennedy, Morgan, Benko, Carr, Connors, Fisher, Haywick, Husain, Kozelsky, Loomis, Marin, Mishra, Ni Chadhain, Schulze, Smith, Freed, Campbell, Landry, Finley-Hervey, Whiston, Broach, Davidson-Shivers, Norrell, Phan, West, Britton, Tate, Alexeyev, Burnham, Cioffi, Gillespie, Racheck, Rich, Ruchko, Gillis, Noland, Woodford, Buckner, Fuller, Minchew, Walls

Excused: Marshall, Shaw, Glover, Audia, Falkos, Richards, Huey, Varner

Unexcused: Smith, Faile, St. Clair

Call to order – 3:03 by J. Estis

Approval of minutes: January 2014 meeting

Motion made; 2d; unanimously approved

Approval of agenda

Motion made; 2d; unanimously approved

President’s Report – J. Estis

- Presidential Search/Transition

At long last, we can say the search is over. The day of announcement was full of emotion and excitement. Dr. Waldrop and his wife, Julie, came to the Board of Trustees meeting after the Board voted to offer him the position. Now we move to the transition. Plans are underway for the transition. J. Estis is representing the faculty on the transition team.

The team has met and is acting as a data collection point. The team’s goal is to identify key areas of University operations and identify accomplishments, challenges, and priorities. A lot of this involves collecting information from indirect reporting lines and a getting broad array of information to Dr. Waldrop as quickly as possible.

There will be some key meetings in the early days of the transition. Dr. Waldrop wants to meet with each unit. Initially those meetings are likely to be in a town hall style format. We would like caucus leaders to be involved in developing questions and communication. We do not have an exact start date, though should be some time in April. Currently we do not know if the college meetings will be completed this semester; some meetings with units may bleed over to summer, particularly for 12 month units.

Member of COM caucus expressed concern with a town hall format because of difficulty in scheduling; the smaller the group the better.

During the first few months, the unit meetings are likely to be overviews. We likely will see more small group meetings as we move forward. Dr. Waldrop has expressed commitment to communication in general and with the Faculty Senate in particular.

If you have caucus specific information, please send to J. Estis.

Purpose of transition team is more of a logistics function. Feedback is coming from all corners of the University. One senator noted that J. Estis is the only faculty member on the transition team and L. Chronister is the only VP who was not on the search committee who is also not on the transition team.

J. Estis noted that the purpose of the transition team is not to have voices from all corners, because information will come to Dr. Waldrop from other means. It is a small committee to help with logistics. Another part of the committee's charge is the welcoming event which Dr. Waldrop has expressed should be low key.

The Faculty in general and the Faculty Senate in particular received a lot of accolades during the Board meeting for the faculty's commitment and hard work during the search process.

- Buildings Update

Received updates from administration last Wednesday. One update was the student center – it is close to completion. There will be a soft opening this spring and in the fall there will be a real full opening.

Starbucks in the library is open

Announcements

- Projected Caucus Headcounts for Fall 2014/Elections – K. Woodford
Caucus leaders please talk to your Dean's office and send K. Woodford the projected headcount for fall (that is the number of full time faculty members below the level of Assistant Dean or Director who should be on staff as of August 15). The projected headcount will be used to determine how many seats each caucus should have for the new Senate which will be formed at the April meeting. K. Woodford will let caucus leaders know how many seats need to be filled between the March and April meetings. We generally ask for elections to be completed by the first week in April (at the latest) so we can schedule a new senator orientation before the first full senate meeting.

- Adjunct Faculty Meeting Report – E. Loomis

Meeting held Monday to discuss possible means of having representation of adjunct faculty. Those attending overwhelmingly favored establishing an adjunct faculty advisory council that will advise the Faculty Senate executive committee on adjunct-related issues. Discussion was to have 9 representatives – 1 from each college -- serving a 2 year term. See a need to have mix of the types of adjuncts (e.g., adjuncts who are full-time university employees and adjuncts who are primarily employed outside of the university).

- Higher Education Day – Thursday, February 27

Hope that some of you will come to Montgomery. The big event is the rally on the Capitol steps. There is a lunch following and it is usually well-attended by legislators. Need as much representation as possible. If you want a seat on the bus, please email Happy Fulford or the general governmental affairs email. Some of us will be going up early to walk around to legislators' offices with Happy.

- Freshman retention – J. Estis

Retention numbers from fall to spring was 89% for first time freshman. That is good news. It will take a while for this to catch up to graduation rates, but this is an important statistic because of its impact on graduation. In addition, applications are up over last year.

- Faculty Senate Spring Party – M. Gillespie

Need information – e.g., how many people went last year? @50. We are looking at dates during the first week or so of April. Last year we lost people because it was a Saturday night. The year before it was a Thursday and attendance was much better.

Interest in doing something informal with crawfish, shrimp, gumbo, etc. Will try to find something that is centrally located with a relatively early start time.

Question raised about community partnering award.

- Med School Café:

The February Med School Café lecture will feature Dr. Elizabeth Minto, assistant professor of neurology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine and a neurologist with USA Physicians Group. Her lecture, titled “Migraine: Diagnosis, Treatment and Prevention,” will take place Feb. 20, 2014, at the USA Faculty Club on USA’s main campus. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m., and the presentation begins at noon. During the talk, Dr. Minto will discuss the diagnosis of migraine; current evidence on causes and mechanisms; treatment strategies and common pitfalls; and ways to prevent migraines, including both medications and some alternative therapies that have shown evidence of success.

- Judy Burnham’s Retirement

Judy, a long-time COM Senator and caucus leader, is retiring effective March 28. We wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

Addendum: Judy is postponing her retirement until at least September.

Old Business

- Handbook Committee Resolution

The resolution is intended to provide greater independence for college-level committees. It requires faculty members who are on both college and department committees to cast vote at departmental level. Faculty members can participate in discussions at the college level but not vote. Second it would remove Chairs from P&T committees, unless the committee cannot be formed without it.

Question raised why not ban someone from serving on both? A: Because in many departments it would be very hard to constitute a department committee. Also problems forming college committee.

How easy will it be to flaunt the exception for Department Chairs? Language -- “difficult or impossible” to constitute a college committee. Problem is there are small units with few full professors.

Motion to approve resolution made by S. Fisher and seconded by P. Carr. Unanimously carried.

New Business

- **On-Line Monitoring Resolution**

Originated with issues with chairs inserting themselves into on-line classes then entering those classes at-will. When working on this policy, we could not find any policy on chairs entering traditional classes either. Does anyone know of a policy because we could not find one? No one in attendance new of a specific written policy.

The draft resolution requests two 2 things – Chairs in on-line classes will not be able to see more than students can see to make observation on par with traditional class observation. Second, as drafted the resolution would require chairs to report, in writing, to faculty member what they observed and when they observed it to create greater parallel with traditional classes. In traditional classes the faculty member knows when the chair has observed and what the chair saw, giving the faculty member the opportunity to contextualize for the chair what the chair observed (e.g., I was trying something new and it didn’t work). A faculty member cannot provide context if the faculty member does not know the chair has been in the on-line class.

Finally, there is language at the end of the resolution allowing a chair to request to see other information like grade book and messages – which is how the practice currently works in traditional classes.

Q: In 1st paragraph – justification – do the department chairs need to formally tell the faculty why the chair is entering? No. They do not have to tell you why. The language comes from the AAUP’s new policy – can’t observe to harass, intimidate, etc. Have to be there to evaluate for promotion or to help improve instruction.

Q: So what if they go in for improper reasons? What is the recourse? There is no official recourse in policy b/c the chair is not going to admit it. But what it does is require the chair to report what they saw and when, and there is a limited check if you turn on your Site Statistics.

Q: Not saying the faculty can say no to the chair? No. Drs. Franks and Johnson were adamant that any policy had to allow the chair to show up without approval. Justification was monitoring poor instruction. Also Dr. Franks and Johnson indicated they would not accept any type of “prior notification” language because they want the chair to be able to go in unannounced. We can fight on both but feeling is it will come to a dead end quickly.

Notably, the AAUP draft policy language is much stronger – we are trying to compromise.

Will be brought up for discussion and vote next month.

Guest Presentations: Dr. Angela Coleman, Associate V.P. for Institutional Research

Also attending: Cecilia Martin

Provided handouts related to University's strategic plan and assessment of that plan.

Slowly making the rounds talking about the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, how we engage in planning & assessment, what historically has happened, and where we want to go. I have met with Deans and many associate deans. Would like to come into departments to talk to faculty about assessment and try to move away from the "check the boxes" approach that is seen in some places.

Office created last fall. Cecilia and I have been working together as a team since last November. We have been working on a number of things including strategic plan assessment. Our conversation today is about the structure of how we talk about planning and assessment. The content of strategic plan may change with the new president but how we use the plan should not change.

Developing partnerships to try to determine how to assess the plan and how we assess departmental information (e.g., placement of grads, graduate surveys).

We've learned that there is no index of the data or fact book – e.g., what does a "1" mean in this field.

Trying to look at what you should put in trac dat and how programs are assessed. What you are collecting should go hand in hand with the internal or external review process.

Working with Ron Styron on assessing the QEP. Cecilia supports Class Climate and on-going student engagement survey.

About 1/3 of our students don't come back each year. About 33% of our freshman won't be back as sophomores. We then lose another 1/3 in the next 3 years who never graduate. We are below peer institutions in retention and graduation rates. Doing more of the same won't work; need to look at what we are doing right and what we can do better.

Looking at strategic plan – my favorite objective is 3.3 – "support and retain a diverse community of learners to enhance campus life" and etc and etc and etc ... difficult to assess. Tried to translate that very long, very vague, very multipurpose statement into something objective and assessable.

Q: Will this strategic plan help us if Alabama moves to performance based funding? The plan itself, no. If Alabama goes the way of other states, much of what is evaluated are in the plan. However, the legislature is likely to come up with one or more criteria we haven't thought of and don't assess.

Tried to identify some key indicators and weighs to evaluate.

Want to hear if there items or measures you think are missing, we want to hear it. If you think items are inappropriate, we want to hear it. For example, our draft did not include retention of faculty and one small group meeting said that should be tracked at university level.

Also been discussing how assessment may look different by college. For many units, for example, looking at major declared on application is meaningless because students change majors multiple time. Need different ways to look at success – e.g., how long did it take from enrollment in X class did it take student to graduate in Y major.

Would like to know now what you need to know so we build it into our system, rather than dealing with a lot of ad hoc requests later.

Q: Will there be assessment of Baldwin County versus other campus? Yes. Don't know best way to capture but there is an interest in capturing.

Q: Developing new programs = workforce needs – will it be possible for you to generate data on that such as through interviews/surveys of local employers? We are looking at post-graduation assessment. As part of that we may collect information from employers. However, because development of new programs is often industry specific. We are happy to support that data collection but we will not likely be doing annual market analysis. Q: So we can come to you for help with evaluating marketability of a particular program, you can help design how to survey that? Yes. I can help designing a survey and identifying how to reach the target groups for feedback.

Also want to mention that when you see Faculty Senate mentioned, we are hoping to leverage work that is already going on. Collecting alumni surveys, exit surveys, etc. to try to find similarities of need. Hoping to leverage and streamline some of that data collection. Similarly you have a survey and we'd like to talk to FS about how that survey could help with university assessment.

Unit & Program Assessment – we've been collecting info. on how to improve upon our planning and assessment functions. Be flexible. Everyone has different needs. Less is more. When I go through trac dat I see departments with tons of assessment items and others that have a narrow few. When I ask what do you know or what does data mean to you, I get blank stares. It needs to be more than a box you have to check. Many colleges have meaningful planning function but it isn't reflected in what the college puts into trac dat.

There will be boxes that just have to be checked. But we need to think about those. Quantitative and qualitative data should drive our assessment and planning. Unless it is a mandatory box, don't collect it if you don't need and aren't going to use it. Think critically about what is collected.

Extrapolation of how we are going to begin the conversation on assessment & planning is based on objectives of strategic plan. Looking at priorities – retention, completion, enrollment, engagement. A lot of talk about scholarly/creative productivity and where that needs to happen. There are places where that will be high priority versus other places where it isn't.

What we hope to do is to think strategically about what we are doing and how we capture the work we are doing and how we move things forward.

Can build something over the next few years – SACs won't be interested in the next few years. So this year is a year to discuss, next year is the year to think about curriculum map and assessment. Cecilia and I will be working and talking to colleges and department about ways to re-evaluate and move forward.

P. Carr noted that we have a major opportunity to get involved at the beginning of the strategic planning process. In past we've been left out of the nuts and bolts implementation. Need to take advantage of this initial planning and get involved in the conversation.

Adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

Committee Reports – submitted in writing

- **Academic Development and Mentoring (Justin St. Clair)**

The Academic Development and Mentoring Committee met on Monday, January 27, 2014. The following members were present: Mir Zohair Husain (A&S), Jeff Landry (CIS), Phillip Smith (A&S), Justin St. Clair (A&S).

St. Clair reported that the committee's memo asking for clarification on possible "mandatory attendance" was well received. Dr. Nicole Carr (Director, Student Academic Success and Retention) has promised to provide the committee with studies on the relationship between attendance and retention. A pilot study is also under consideration.

St. Clair followed up on the feedback that the committee provided Rob Gray re: the spring ILC schedule. We advocated programming that focused on academic development outside the classroom, as most developmental programming at USA seems to be focused on pedagogy.

The committee discussed revisions to the "Faculty Senate Mentoring Program" brochure and made plans to email the faculty reminding them of the program. The brochure was subsequently revised and a mass email sent.

- **Environmental Quality (Doug Haywick)**

- **Evaluation (Sam Fisher)**

- **Planning and Development (Mark Gillespie)**

- **Policies and Faculty Handbook (Eric Loomis)**

The FS Handbook and Policy Committee met on January 19th. The seven members present at the meeting voted unanimously to pass the Promotion and Tenure Resolution. The Committee also discussed a possible Adjunct Faculty Advisory Committee resolution, to be written at a future date.

In subsequent emails, the Committee discussed and voted on the Online Monitoring Resolution. This resolution unanimously passed the Committee.

- **Salary and Benefits (Susan Gordon-Hickey)**

No report

- **Technology Utilization (Kevin West)**

- **Ad Hoc:**

- **Research and Creative Activities (Ellen Buckner)**

Caucus Reports – submitted in writing

- Allied Health Professionals (Elisa Kennedy)
- Arts and Sciences (Mara Kozelsky)
- Continuing Education (Joycelyn Finley-Hervey)
No report
- School of Computing (Jeff Landry)
- Education (Tres Stefurak)
- Engineering (Grant Glover)
- Library (Vicki Tate)
Starbucks has finally opened at the Marx Library.

The Serials Discard Project is well underway through its 4-phase plan. The 1st phase involving JSTOR database titles is almost complete. The Marx Library's serials holdings were compared to the volumes available in the databases to determine which volumes are duplicates. The volumes were then marked either as discard or keep. A list of to-be-discarded titles was shared with the library liaison for each department to allow the departments the chance to request holdings for their departments. Initially 7 departments requested materials which were boxed up and are still waiting for transport. Next, the remaining titles were offered to the general public for auction. We had 4 bidders and the university received \$1495 for the materials. All of the sold materials have been picked up and we are in the process of discarding the remaining JSTOR titles. After going through the process of offering materials to university departments and to the general public, it was determined that we would no longer be able to do this because of the large amount of time and work involved with doing this. If we were to continue to do this, it would mean we would be unable to meet the beginning of summer deadline. So far, less than half of the titles in the collection have been processed. We are halfway through phase 2 and have started phase 3.

The library has several database trials going on: 2 reference-resource databases -- CRCnet Base & CHEMnet Base, and 3 streaming-video databases – Alexander Street Press Films, Films on Demand, and Psychotherapy.net. Both the Alexander Street Press Films and Films on Demand have a large variety of videos, including art & architecture, health sciences, guidance & counseling, diversity, history, education, science & engineering, and social sciences.

Both libraries are now in the process of filling vacancies, both long-term and newly-opened. Biomedical library has filled their outreach librarian position after being frozen for several years. Marx Library currently has two positions open with a third to be available this summer due to recent retirements. No timeline yet on when they will be advertised.

- Medicine (Judy Burnham)
Twenty-two physicians affiliated with the University of South Alabama College of Medicine have been included in the 2014 Best Doctors in America database.

Two clinics associated with USA Physicians Group relocated to the University Commons at the corner of University Boulevard and Old Shell Road. The USA Digestive Health Center and Knollwood Physicians

Group - both previously located on the Infirmary West Hospital campus - have moved into their new offices and began seeing patients in January.

Dr. Natalie Bauer, assistant professor of pharmacology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, and Dr. Clara Massey, professor of internal medicine and director of the division of cardiology at USA, recently presented lectures during a series of break-out sessions at the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women symposium.

Medical students from the University of South Alabama College of Medicine provided check-ups for the local homeless population last week during Mobile's Project Connect, a new event being hosted by Housing First's Homeless Coalition. In addition, more than 100 coats and fleeces were distributed at the event. The outerwear was collected by members of the USA Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society.

- Mitchell College of Business (Tom Noland)

No report

- Nursing (Elizabeth Fuller)

Old Business

Resolution to Amend Faculty Handbook Procedures for Collegiate Tenure & Promotion Review Committee

WHEREAS, the AAUP 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure states that “freedom of teaching and research and of extramural activities ... [and] hence, tenure, are indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society”, and

WHEREAS, the University of South Alabama incorporates this Statement in its Faculty Handbook, and

WHEREAS, the academic tenure process must reflect the importance of tenure to the obligations of the University by upholding the freedom of teaching, research and extramural activities essentially connected with it, and

WHEREAS, the importance of such freedoms extend to academic promotion, and

WHEREAS, a fair and impartial tenure and academic promotion review process must insure the free, open, and independent deliberation by those collegiate committees which are charged with reviewing departmental tenure and promotion recommendations,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that section 3.11.4.3, part 1, of the Faculty Handbook Tenure Procedures shall be revised, in its first paragraph, to read as follows:

1. Departmental Procedures

The departmental tenure committee shall be notified by the department chair to consider a faculty member who is in the final year of probationary service. The departmental tenure committee is normally composed of all tenured faculty members in the department except the chair. The committee shall have an opportunity to examine whatever supporting information and materials the candidate may have submitted in support of his/her candidacy. *Faculty members who serve on both the departmental tenure committee, and on the collegiate tenure committee, shall vote concerning the candidate at the departmental tenure committee only, and must abstain from voting at the collegiate tenure committee.*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that section 3.11.4.3, part 2, of the Faculty Handbook Tenure Procedures shall be revised, in its first paragraph, to read as follows:

2. Collegiate Procedures

Each year, the dean (or director) of each college, school and division shall appoint a collegiate tenure committee of at least seven (7) members. Membership on this committee shall be limited to tenured associate and full professors. *Chairs of departments will not serve as members.* (Given the above exclusions, some academic units may find it difficult or impossible to constitute such a committee. In that event, the dean will appoint an appropriate committee, following the spirit of the review process.)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that section 3.10.3, part 1, of the Faculty Handbook Promotion Procedures shall be revised, in its second paragraph, to read as follows:

1. Departmental Procedures

For the purposes of dealing with the recommendations for promotion, the appropriate faculty consultative body consists of a committee composed of all those members of the department, except assistant professors, senior in rank to the candidate. Some academic units may find it difficult or impossible to constitute a committee, given the above exclusions. In that event, the chair appoints an appropriate committee, following the spirit of the review process. All involved faculty must have an opportunity to examine whatever supporting information and materials the candidate may have submitted in support of his/her candidacy. *Faculty members who serve on both the departmental promotion committee, and on the collegiate Promotion Evaluation and Review Committee, shall vote concerning the candidate at the departmental promotion committee only, and must abstain from voting at the collegiate Promotion Evaluation and Review Committee.*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that section 3.10.3, part 2, of the Faculty Handbook Promotion Procedures shall be revised, in its first paragraph, to read as follows:

2. Collegiate Procedures

The dean (or director) of each college, school, and division will appoint each year a Promotion Evaluation and Review Committee (PERC). Membership on this committee is limited to tenured associate and full professors. *Additionally, chairs of departments may not serve as members.* (Some academic units may find it difficult or impossible to constitute such a committee and will follow the spirit of the review process in the constitution of the committee.)

New Business
Draft Resolution – Observation of On-Line and Traditional Classrooms

WHEREAS, the increasing role of online learning has raised questions about the extent of, and rationale for, classroom observations by authorized supervisors such as department chairs, and,

WHEREAS, such observations may be legitimate to the extent that they are used in assessing the instructor's advancement or the enhancement of instruction, and,

WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate holds that, to the extent feasible, observations of online classrooms should parallel the observation of traditional classrooms, in which every observation of the classroom is known by the instructor, and in which information not available to all students, such as individual grades or feedback from the instructor, can be accessed only by requesting it of the instructor, and,

WHEREAS, this parallel between the observation of traditional classrooms and online classrooms is further recognized by the American Association of University Professors, which states:

“a classroom is not simply a physical space, but any location, real or virtual, in which instruction occurs, and that in classrooms of all types the protections of academic freedom and the faculty's rights to intellectual property in lectures, syllabi, exams, and similar materials are as applicable as they have been in the physical classroom”¹

and,

WHEREAS, the USA Faculty Handbook currently has no formal policy governing a supervisor's observation of faculty classroom performance,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that section 6.2.1 of the USA Faculty Handbook shall be expanded to include the addition of the following section:

3. Observation by Supervisors

Because of the usefulness of having firsthand information about an instructor's teaching effectiveness, a faculty member's classroom instruction may be observed by an authorized supervisor, such as a department chair. Such observation is justified only in those cases where the purpose of the observation is either to evaluate the instructor for advancement purposes, or to enhance instruction.

Observation of online classrooms by supervisors is to be done sensitively and in a way that parallels that of traditional classrooms as closely as possible. To this end, supervisors' observation of online classrooms shall be done using a viewing mode identical with, or closely similar to, that of a student. Furthermore, since faculty teaching in a traditional classroom are aware of when supervisor observations take place, as well as of what is observed, faculty teaching online courses shall be informed, in writing, of what portion of the online classroom was or will be observed, and when.

Supervisors who have a legitimate need to view a traditional or online classroom instructor's gradebook, or feedback provided on individually submitted student work (such as completed papers, tests, and quizzes), may request that such materials be provided by the instructor.

¹ American Association of University Professors, *Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications*. November, 2013, p. 8.

