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Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – November 2015

Faculty Senators

University of South Alabama

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
Faculty Senate

November 18, 2015 – Faculty club - 3:00 pm
Approved Minutes

Present: Gordon-Hickey, Pohlmann, Kennedy, Morgan, D. Smith, Carr, Culler, Fisher, Freed, Harrington, Marshall, Mata, Moore, Ni Chadhain, Reichert, P. Smith, Bourrie, Campbell, McDonald, Gecewicz, Whiston, Fregeau, Norrell, Phan, West, Yazdani, Clanton, Wilson, Bauer, Chinkers, Gillespie, Rich, Richter, Gillis, Grant, Noland, Woodford, Buckner, Dolan, Minchew, Scalici, Palle

Absent: Carr, Kozelsky, Lindeman, Marin, Poston, Stutsman, Broach, Davidson-Shivers, Glover, Audia, Bolton, Cioffi, Falkos, Omar, Ponnambalam, Rachek, Richards, Taylor, Huey, Vandawaa, Varner, Piazza

Call to order – K. West with 3:03 with quorum

Approval of minutes: October meeting – **moved; 2d; approved**

Approval of agenda – motion made; 2d; approved

President’s Report

1. Mid-term Grades

We have had a chance to dig into midterm grades. From the perspective of compliance with the requirements of the Department Of Education, it went great. If it was designed to drive faculty crazy, it was also great. Any student who received an F-NA/SA had that grade “rolled to final.” So, if you went into PAWs after the grades rolled, the Degree Works transcript would no longer list the course as a course in progress. This created the perception that students had been withdrawn. That, of course, was not the intent, but it was the practical effect. On Tuesday, Dr. Johnson said make the rolled grades go away – he asked the Registrar’s office to roll the grades back. You will be able to enter grades for those students who had an F – NA/SA at final grades.

Next semester, the proposal is only to roll grades to final for students who received *ALL* F-NA/SA. It is designed to catch students who are not showing up at all for any classes. This semester there were 58 students who fell into that category. 58 is manageable manually. The 1200 students who received at least 1 F-NA/SA that rolled to final this semester is not manageable manually.

Q: Why aren’t the F-NA rolling out of Sakai? The roll to final grade was never intended to impact Sakai because the student has not withdrawn from the class. If student withdraws, the student falls out of Sakai. Next semester the Registrar will only roll grades for students who have *all* F or U-NA/SA (hereinafter “F*” for ease of typing/reading). For students who do not have ALL flags, they will have a financial aid hold put on registration.

Q: What happens if a student disappears 2-3 weeks before midterm and, therefore, receives all F*'s at mid-term, but then returns to class? There is a roughly 2 week period where the registrar is actively trying to contact the students. After that the grades will roll to final and any change will have to be handled individually. In addition, if you have a student who received an F* at mid-term, professors can let financial aid or registrar know; so they can keep them from being administratively withdrawn.

Q: Why is the University rolling the grades to final and return any federal financial aid at that time? Because federal regulations require a return of the money within a certain period of time. If a student has stopped participating in all of his/her classes at mid-term, financial aid must be returned to the government.

Q: How long does a student need to have stopped attending when we flag them for "Stopped Attending"? There is going to be a document that will be vetted by the officers before it goes out, but we haven't seen it.

The big problem this semester was the lack of communication with faculty. Administration is now keenly aware of the communication problem and the impact on faculty, as well as likelihood that faculty will stop complying. In multiple meetings about mid-term grades, the Executive Committee was told that midterm grades would have no impact on the student and that, of course, was not what happened.

Note – both registrar and financial aid are contacting the students who receive all F*s. The University does not want to give the money back. They are doing everything they can to reach the students and keep them in the system as active. Students are given the opportunity to contact professor/registrar and not have aid returned.

2. Strategic Plan

In reviewing the strategic plan, a number of people noted that there was no specific mention of "faculty" in the plan – a problem if the plan is designed to drive where resources are allocated. After a lot of discussion, the officers thought that the best fit for a mention of the faculty would be in the plan's preamble in a section called "Essential activities." Sam and Kevin took the lead in advocating for a specific reference to faculty and were successful in getting faculty added to the essential activities section in the preamble in the plan.

There were other changes to the draft plan that many of you reviewed, but most of the other changes were minor. Some of those changes include:

- "Athletics" was removed from the "essential activities" section because athletics was not viewed as central to "ALL" areas of the University.
- Further integration of health care and research section.
- Changed "medical affairs" to "health affairs" to include allied health and nursing.

Board of Trustees will approve priority and objectives, but not the metrics.

Metrics are being worked on now.

Phil Carr was concerned with faculty feedback on metrics. He has agreed to map the faculty senate committees to specific priorities and leverage committee members for input into metrics.

3. Summer Pay

This is a big “no information” point. The guidelines drafted by the Faculty Senate are still being considered by the deans. In addition, the change in the amount of money paid to the colleges for each student enrolled in a summer class is still under review by Finance.

4. Maymester

We received questions about 12 month faculty participating in Maymester. Dr. Johnson thought deans would be flexible on this. 12 month faculty teach X classes per year. He thinks flexibility should be given to teach one of the summer classes in Maymester instead. Dr. Johnson wants this to be a discussion between faculty and chair. Kevin West has asked Dr. Johnson to enunciate this flexibility to the deans. For the 12 month faculty who ask to teach a Maymester, let K. West know what happens. If chair says that it can't be done, we need to know so we can continue to be proactive.

Q: What if this becomes an extra class? A: I assume it will be an overload but this has not specifically been discussed.

5. Academic Misconduct procedure revisions

In the College of Engineering, we recently found a vague point in university policy that students were trying to take advantage of. Dr. Johnson has put together an ad hoc small committee to look at the academic misconduct procedure. Some of the recommended changes include:

- No longer have to use registered mail to notify the student of the charge. Sending the notice to University Email will be sufficient.
- No longer have to copy the Lowdown anymore; including a link in the notice will be enough.
- Development of a form with all required information

Attorney's office says our new email system is FERPA compliant.

Q: Does that mean we can now email grade info? A: We have a question into Jean Tucker on this, because we've always been told that you cannot use email to discuss grades.

It was clear no one had looked at this in a long time.

Q: What if the student does not get the email? A: University policy requires students to check their University email every day. Clock will start when the email is sent.

Q: Concern over confirmation of receipt of the email. A: Mark it return receipt requested.

Announcements

1. Search Updates/Hires

Allied Health – committee met this morning. Candidates coming in early December. Finalists in early January

Education – have interviewed 3 of 4 candidates. Hopefully there will be a decision in the week after Thanksgiving.

Medical Affairs – will heat up in January or February

2. Open Enrollment – S. Gordon-Hickey

Everyone needs to disseminate information:

Open enrollment is going on right now. Runs through November 30. This year it was not physically mailed to anyone's home. If you missed the email (Tina Stalmach). HR's website has link for open enrollment, including Southflex. MUST re-enroll in Southflex. Everyone needs to know open enrollment ends November 30.

Pharmacy benefit is new. Will get card in December. Do NOT need to take any action on that. The Express Scrip website seems to indicate you need to do something; you don't need to do anything. Can look at prescriptions to see if they are approved. Once you get pharmacy card will be able to log in for more information.

Also there are some prescriptions that will not be covered. You will receive a letter if one of those is yours. A LETTER will come and the impacted person will have only 90 days to get the script grandfathered and covered.

You will also see Base (for employees hired before Dec. 30, 2012) versus Standard (employees hired on or after January 1, 2013 are on the standard plan). Rates are different for each plan (and of course those went up) and prescription benefit is slightly different.

There is also a BC/BS app if you don't want to carry card

3. Student Government – Ashley Ford

Have a working group on smoking issues, especially in Humanities. Trying to get students to comply. February 25 is Higher Education Day – trying to get as many faculty and students in Montgomery as possible.

4. Thank You – Bill Gillis

Thanks to the volunteers for Faculty tent – including Ron Morgan's daughters. If you won, please thank those businesses that contributed.

K. West – and thanks to Bill and his committee for all work on tailgate and reception today.

Old Business

none

New Business

none

Guest: Scott Weldon, V.P. Finance & Administration –

Thank you for allowing me to be here. I see a lot of familiar faces but many that I have not met. I want to talk about our division and our vision for that division.

I've been with the University for 25 years. I spent 5 years on the health side; the rest on main campus.

Where I see our division:

We are working with Angela Coleman to align our priorities with those of the University.

We are starting with 2 basic priorities – (1) it is our responsibility to protect assets of the University – financial, data, human, property/infrastructure; and (2) we don't produce anything; our role is to make your job easier. We are a service organization for everything you do. I sincerely mean that and that frequently has not been the case in the past. Part of getting to that is "us" understanding what your priorities are. We have a talented staff and we do what we do very well.

But sometimes what is important to us is not important to you. For example, one of the things we take pride in – 45 days after the end of fiscal year we issue our financial statements. How many of you are enriched by that? Nobody. What is important to you? Your reimbursement comes through quickly. Contracts go through quickly. Etc. That's what makes your job easier.

I'm trying to reprioritize, while still getting the financial statements out on time. I sincerely want to make changes so in a year you can say it is easier to do "that" now – get reimbursed, buy something, etc.

Assets are critical. We are a billion dollar entity. There is a lot that can go wrong.

How am I going to get there. First 90 days – talk to as many people as I can. First meeting I had was with Kevin West to learn what was important to faculty. I want faculty to be part of the process. I go to the monthly to the meeting with the FS Executive Committee and administrators; I am looking for informal ways for feedback. I'm meeting with deans, VPs, etc. That is going to take 90 days.

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Second 90 days is to take that data and re-prioritize. Come up with a list of things that are important.

I have also been meeting with those who report to me. I want to know what their needs are and what their strengths/weakness/priorities are. We need to do an assessment of each department in the second 90 days.

In addition, because I've spent most of my career at USA, I'll be taking 2 weeks per year and spending a week on other campuses. I'll do that every year for the next 3 years. Allow us to see best practices. I'll also be going out into the state to meet people – retirement system, etc.

When I went through the interview process questions came up about the biggest challenge – the things that keep me up at night are: (1) current state of health system – not because of what we are doing or not doing; the current health care environment is scary particularly when we are so Medicare dependent. Half of our billion dollars is health care. The health side cannot drain revenue from the academic side. (2) The state of revenue from the state and the attempted dip into the education trust fund. The attacks are continuing. (3) The enrollment bubble. Great things are going on and we have had tremendous growth. Only UA is growing faster than USA. I worry that the steady growth we have seen will cease or worse yet begin to reverse. Every 100 students means 700-800 million dollars. And have to worry about tuition stress on the students. Our costs keep going up but state funding is flat but we can only ask so much of our students. (4) Cost of our retirement plan. The state plan is tremendous but the costs keep going up. (5) Rising health insurance costs. Have to find way to maintain strong plan while monitoring costs.

I sincerely want faculty input. I want your input in developing processes, knowing what is wrong . . . make sure you know WHY decisions were made even though you disagree. That transparency has not always been the case. When I get input, I want things that will impact faculty but also things that impact the University. You are a bright group of people and your ideas can benefit the university. Call or email.

Adjourn: Motion made at 3:59; made; 2d; approved



Faculty Senate Awards & Reception

Caucus Reports

Mitchell College of Business – T. Noland

Austal USA President Craig Perciavalle served as the inaugural speaker in the Mitchell College of Business' Executive Leadership Series in October. Austal USA, the largest aluminum shipbuilder in the world, is one of Alabama's largest private employers with more than 4,000 employees.

During the third week of October, The Mitchell College of Business celebrated National Business Women's Week by hosting female professionals in the classroom. This is the 2nd year that the MCOB has participated in NBWW.

College of Engineering – S. Yazdani

-The Tau Beta Pi Chapter was awarded the R.C. Matthews Outstanding Chapter Award at the National TBP Conference. This is awarded to only one chapter a year (out of 244!). This is a HUGE honor for our students and our -College of Engineering. Congratulations to all the TBP students and faculty members!!

-A new chapter of The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) has been started on campus in the College of Engineering.

-The College of Engineering has posted two new Associate Dean positions: Associate Dean for Undergraduate Affairs and Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Affairs

FS Committee Reports

Evaluation Committee – L. Moore

The 2015 Faculty Survey and the closed-ended answers resulting from that survey were sent out to the Evaluation Committee for approval to be posted on the Faculty Senate website.

In addition, a summary report of the General Education portion of the Survey will be approved for publication on the Senate website, and the committee hopes to generate more small, focused, comparative reports on important topics.

The committee will be meeting in the next month to begin review of the questions for the 2016 Faculty Survey, in particular which questions can be asked on an intermittent basis in order to trim the length of the survey.

University Committee Reports

Safety and Environmental Compliance Committee- W. M. Reichert

The regularly scheduled meeting of the SEC committee on November 18, 2015 was cancelled. At the past meeting the topics of discussion included:

- Drone Policy Development: The University is working with a law firm to draw up a FAA waiver and guidelines for drone use on campus. The FAA also requires a letter from the AL Attorney General's office stating that the University is a state entity and therefore exempt from certain regulations.
- Construction Projects: Delta 3 phase planning has begun. Renovations have begun on the Archives building and tennis courts area. Also, the LMOB is being converted into a warehouse for Facilities Management.
- Continuity of Operations Plan Development: A committee is being appointed to help develop this plan. Over the summer individual divisions/departments were asked how they relate to the needs of the plan.
- Subcommittee Briefs:
 - Children and Women's Hospital: renovations are under way and should be completed by May 2016
 - Medical Center: Hazardous Materials/First Responders training was conducted with 26 attendees. The committee recommends CO₂ fire extinguishers be placed in Ors.
 - SHAC: A contractor has been hired to demolish the School of Nursing building at SHAC
 - SGA: SGA sponsored a Sexual Assault Awareness Campaign. The LiveSafe app has reached 1823 downloads (11% of student population).
 - University Police: 2015 Annual Security and Fire Safety Report has been uploaded to the website
 - Safety and Environmental Compliance: Inspections of 25-30 buildings have been conducted. The committee is awaiting the results of the inspections.
 - Director's Report: There have been a number of employees suffering respiration issues around campus leading to requests to test the air quality in buildings around campus. The majority of the air quality tests have come back with levels in the normal range. Testing of the outside air quality showed abnormally high levels of particulates. It was concluded that the exposures were potentially happening outside of the buildings. ADEM conducted their annual inspections and no deficiencies were found.
- New Business:
 - Stadium Drive Crosswalks: There are more than 30 marked and unmarked crosswalks along stadium drive. The committee is discussing reducing the number of crosswalks by remove/modify the speed bumps and creating lighted crosswalks to help drivers and pedestrians.
- Open Discussion: Dr. Reichert recommended that the bike policy education be made more readily available to students and employees.

Honors Council – E. Buckner

The USA Honors Council met on Sept. 23 in Bethel Building.

Current enrollment is about 225. The 62 new freshmen have more diversity than in past cohorts. The Bethel continues to be a gathering place for Honors Students, especially Freshmen.

Jagspot is now coordinating all scholarship applications and therefore includes honors, major scholarships, etc. There is good participation from Honors in scholarship applications including Portz (NCHC), Goldwater, Marshall, and others. Several students are presenting posters at the NCHC Conference in Chicago.

The Honors Fundraiser event "12th Night" will be held January 6th, 2016.

New initiatives include revising proposal for an Honors minor, developing an admissions rubric for characteristics other than GPA, evaluating possibilities for a speaker series, continuing website development, and expanding efforts to recruit honors seminars.