

Faculty Senate Called Minutes  
for Full Faculty meeting on April 23, 2013

Mindy McAdams presiding.

Meeting was called to order at 11:37 AM

1. Presentation by Jodi Gentry, Assistant Vice President, UF Human Resources/  
Summary of the college faculty senate's role in the administrator evaluation

Jodi Gentry, UF HR on survey of College administrators. Assistant VP of HR presented the overall findings from the spring administrators' evaluation. Gentry explained the survey instrument, how it was developed, and the rigor used to ensure validity and reliability. The process resulted in 161 responses out of 226 requests -- 71% response rate. Department chairs - 68% response rate; Dean - 68% to 72%. N approximated 57 recipients.

Gentry reported having met individually with each administrator to discuss their personal evaluations. She presented individuals with general findings pertinent to the broad themes that emerged from the open-ended questions. Representative quotes and outliers were acknowledged in her presentation to each administrator. Lee asked about a range or mean score for the entire university. Gentry commented that because the survey was based on a subset of questions, it may not be completely comparable. Calvert asked if the outcome from our college on "clear motive" reflected commonness across other colleges. Gentry said she would expect to see higher means when a college's leadership is more stable. Calvert also asked if the top five is typical of other colleges. Gentry said she could not answer that question offhand. However, Advocacy and communication was unusually high for our college. Dodd thanked Gentry for her work and the Senate about the ability to impose a system that could be referenced in terms of the University leadership and the items used to evaluate the items. Gentry invited any further feedback and gave her contact number for any additional questions (273-1771).

McAdams elaborated on the procedure Senate members took to work with Gentry in planning and administering the evaluations. She noted:

- 1) This was a collaborative effort from the Senate and HR. Process was initiated and led by the Faculty Senate with no input from the administration.
- 2) Questions that came up during the process and that were learned from the process.

McAdams encouraged further opinions about how the process would be administered the next time since the College's constitution is currently quite open in defining how the process should occur. She posed the following questions for future consideration:

- Amend the Constitution or the Bylaws?
- Consider establishing clearer rationale and purpose for the evaluation?
- Consider if the process should occur under the banner of "evaluation" or "surveys"? (the latter was suggested in conversation with General Counsel Barbara Wingo)
- Who should be allowed to participate? Administrators, faculty only, etc?

Diane commented that Provost Glover gave her the option of making the results of her results evaluative or not. She confirmed her decision not to disclose the results from her evaluation.

## 2. Discussion item: Tenure and Promotion committee proposal

The T&P Committee proposed wording from the current T & P document regarding teaching. The current language is written as follows:

Student Evaluations: Ordinarily, faculty ratings from the State University System (SUS) Teaching Evaluation Form are expected to be substantially above "average," that is, substantially above a 3.0 on a 1-5 scale where 1 is "Poor" and 5 is "Excellent."

The proposed change in wording endorsed unanimously by the T&P Committee is:

Student evaluations: Ordinarily, faculty ratings from the State University System (SUS) Teaching Evaluation Form are expected to be consistently at or above the department or college average.

The rationale for the change was that the old wording, which required evaluations be substantially above average, that is, substantially above a 3 on a 5 point scale, could have been 3.5 or 3.6 or 3.7, and that might seem to a candidate to constitute "substantially above average," whereas in reality anything below a 4.0 is usually seen as a sign of ineffective teaching.

The item was presented as a discussion item to be voted on at the next Senate-called faculty meeting. Roberts explained the rationale for the new requirement of "at or above the College average."

Lee recommended that explanation be provided with the ratings with a frame. She raised concerns about the possibility of imposing a moving target 'average' on faculty being evaluated. As an example, a 3.9 relative to 4.1 seems not very

distinct. However, adjuncts and grad students who have a vested interest in skewing the grades could bias the average. Suppressed response rates (i.e., intensive training courses, online courses, etc.) may also shift the individual's score relative to the mean. The point was made that variance between teaching standards across college curricula also biased standards. Kiouisis noted that he brought this standard to the T&P process to bring our College in line with the teaching standards. Morton asked if the averages for adjuncts and grad students are included in the means, noting that the quality control among these groups vary by department. Kiouisis said yes. Morton said it would be interesting to look at means by class if not means when grad students and adjuncts are removed. Lee shared her experience in seeing grad distribution among graduate students that seemed to reflect inflated grades relative to the faculty person being evaluated.

Dodd said that ordinarily there is opportunity to comment on justifying the issues beyond a faculty member's control (new prep, graduating class, etc.). So hopefully the Department Chair would help the candidate make the case to explain a below average score.

Pelfrey said that her experience with UF Senate suggested the tougher the courses the lower the score on teaching evaluations seem to be. Roberts noted that the practice going on across campus suggest there are grievances based on individuals not being tenured based on teaching evaluations below 4.0. Kiouisis stated that the language proposed in the College is the rating relative to the College average, not a 4.0. Chan-Olmstead said that if we find that this is not an appropriate standard to our college the language can be changed.

Lee made more points about the personal or stylistic differences across instructors can bias the evaluation standards.

Dodd suggested that, after hearing the discussion, the topic should go back to the T&P Committee to re-discuss and reconsider the issues being discussed. Rogers agreed, particularly as it related to the variance observed between electives versus required courses. He also noted he was bothered by the impulse for this "accepted benchmark" of 4.0. He said it is a specious way to evaluate teaching. The issue, he noted, is being confused by comparing apples and oranges.

Churchill said good issues have been raised. He said the College was dealing with an imperfect measure to begin with, but that the committee was trying to give T&P candidates greater clarity about the criterion on which teaching standards would be assessed. He said he did not know how you could quantify that more clearly.

3. Vote on opening student comments on faculty evals to dept. chairs  
McAdams reminded the faculty about the issue to allow department chairpersons access to the comments provided on student evaluations of faculty This matter was discussed at length in the April 17, 2013, faculty meeting and information was provided about the procedure for voting and reminded faculty to respond to the college committee link. Faculty were instructed to circle their preference and give their ballots to Kim Walsh Childers before leaving the room. All can vote except for the Dean.

4. College committees for 2014-2015 – slate and voting process described.  
McAdams told the faculty that she would develop a slate for college committees that same evening and would then send the slate for voting for committees across the college.

5. College committee chair reports.  
College Committee chair reports were given.

Budget & Planning Committee - Grogan gave the B&P report for the year end. She suggested the faculty address more discussion about how do we make time for ensuring people who chair committees do a good job to chair the committees.

Curriculum & Teaching (Weigold)  
Fall and part of spring spent on curriculum overhaul. And the majority of meetings have been spent on assessments.

Faculty Development & Welfare Committee  
Olmstead reported on committee's programming activity for faculty development in the INC

Technology Committee  
Sheehan reported on the needs and implications of the Sight Sound and Motion course on the College's technology capabilities.

6. New Business  
No new business was discussed.

Walsh-Childers moved to adjourn the meeting. Rogers seconded.  
Meeting adjourned at 1:03PM  
Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Morton Padovano