

College of Journalism and Communications
Faculty Meeting
March 21, 2011
Minutes

AGENDA

Administrator Evaluations
For the Dean

Dean Wright opened the meeting by informing those attending that 34 out of 51 faculty had completed the administrator evaluations, which is about a 67% rate. Beginning Fall 2011, the evaluations will be conducted electronically which should increase participation. The evaluations will be conducted annually.

The dean said the data and comments were useful and provided information to help administrators meet our primary goal: Doing everything we can to enhance each faculty member's ability to teach and conduct their research and engage in creative activities. He also urged that everyone offer feedback at any time on any topic and emphasized that his door will remain open.

In reference to communication and leadership, Wright reported the data ranked him highly in the areas of maintaining a positive climate and dealing with everyone on an equal and fair level. Interestingly, he said, many faculty members appreciated that he is very approachable and his door is always open, but some saw him less accessible. A suggestion made was to increase the number of small group settings would sometimes be more effective for some people than one-on-one or large meetings. Dean Wright agreed to do so. He is strongly committed to continuing the monthly informal "Dialogue with the Dean" sessions in addition to lunches with groups of faculty, such as new faculty and assistant professors. In addition he now will set aside times on a regular basis for "faculty chat hours," during which faculty can drop in and talk about whatever is on their minds. Dean Wright emphasized, that he did not want this to suggest that the chat hour sessions are the only time faculty can drop in. Faculty are always welcome with or without an appointment, and his door will remain open whenever there is not a meeting in progress.

Wright discussed other aspects of the data, including tough decisions that had been made over the past five years, whether we should have tighter administrative control over department chairs, the necessity for the dean to spend a significant amount of time fundraising, positive relations with externals and University of Florida officials including the president, provost and other deans, and an expressed need to increase interaction with other deans around the nation. On the later, Wright agreed that heavy fundraising responsibilities have dominated his travel time, but that with the new development team it's possible to engage in more interactions with national colleagues. He cited his upcoming trip to Chicago to the ACEJMC Accrediting Council meeting as an immediate example.

The dean strongly disputed one false perception articulated in the evaluations that there was a goal to dismantle the Dept. of Telecommunication (which he reminded faculty members is his home department of tenure). Wright noted that this has never been considered, and that enrollment in the department has increased rather dramatically on the past two years. Also, the new Media and Society specialization will

likely make Telecommunication the largest department in the College. The question, he emphasized, is what to do about the fact that students in telecommunication news and journalism are in two different departments with different curricula despite the fact that industry has long passed this model. The dean suggested we work together to solve this problem, for the benefit of our students and because the accrediting will cite this as a weakness in the curriculum. He suggested we will gain momentum when the new chair of the Dept. of Journalism arrives. Regardless, the dean emphasized that as long as he is dean there will be four undergraduate departments in the College and those will include the Dept. of Telecommunication. He also stated that this again showed the value of evaluations. False impressions surface and can be addressed. There also was discussion about handling of complaints about a department chair.

With regard to internal communication, the dean said that the College has been greatly understaffed in communications, fundraising, business and departmental office assistance for many years relative to other colleges on campus. The budget crisis has prevented the administration from resolving this. He hailed the recent hiring of a College communications director, Quenta Vettel, which will help transform internal and external communications of the College. The College's "Open Line" or a similar newsletter will be reinstated by late summer. Communicator will reappear in April. The dean is also eager to discuss launching a College of Journalism and Communications Intranet that will be the first screen when anyone logs on in Weimer Hall. The screen will contain information about the college including the dean's activities and faculty and student accomplishments as well as important links. The hiring of the new Assistant Development Officer Lindsey Stevens will help in generating bi-weekly fundraising reports. We look forward to having a full staff back in the College office, replacing Kelly Erdahl and getting Kerry back, as well as hiring a part time assistant to help in processing development work and travel receipts for development activities and for faculty when departments are backed up with requests. The dean did state that the College has raised \$16.5 million dollars during the campaign despite the horrible economic conditions. Wright noted that during many months of the campaign he had no active development officer to assist him while other colleges have as many as five. We now have two full time development officers.

When asked about accomplishments, Wright cited the open manner in making tough decisions about the \$1.8 million in budget cuts and how those were implemented without cutting allocations to the four departments or the doctoral programs. In addition, expenditures per faculty on travel and faculty development and have actually increased over this period. He also cited tough decisions regarding formats of the radio facilities and the total reorganization of the media properties, including a national search and the hiring of Randy Wright as executive director. We also totally re-wrote our Constitution and implemented a process for shared governance and created our Faculty Senate.

The dean urged faculty to feel free to come see him at any time on any issue and stressed that we can continue to make great strides forward as a college, working together collegially and in the spirit of shared governance.