

Welfare Council Meeting Minutes
1/27/2020
3:30 p.m.
L-136 Marston

ZOOM: Topic: Spring Welfare Council
Time: Jan 27, 2020 03:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

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Present: Ray G. Thomas, Suzan Alteri, Laurie Bialosky, Sean Trainor, Ray Issa, Leah Rosenberg, and Joseph Riley.

1. Call to Order

-The meeting was called to order at 3:38 p.m.

2. Approval of November 14 2019 Minutes

-The minutes were approved.

3. Election of Spring 2020 Welfare Council Chair

-Ray Issa will chair next month's meeting while Suzan is out of the country on sabbatical. Suzan will send the Faculty Senate Secretary an update regarding chair nomination outreach for the fall/next academic year and the next three meetings.

4. Old Business

a. Kognito

-Faculty Senate Chair Ray Thomas provided an overview and update of Kognito, an online tool which offers a role-playing exercise to help faculty recognize when students are in distress. In an effort to help recognize signs of students coping with drug or alcohol abuse or mental health issues, faculty are encouraged to take this online training course which is about 45 minutes in length. The Board of Governors (BOG) would like each of the Florida universities to actively participate in this. Faculty will be receiving a message from HR requiring Kognito training in the near future. The BOG takes a strong interest in enhancing the student experience and one way to help ensure safety of the student population is to advocate for strong mental health care. Kognito was mentioned at Faculty Senate in April and September of last year.

-While being cognizant of faculty wishes to reduce time spent on various

university training requirements, council discussed Kognito training benefits. A question regarding if the United Faculty of Florida (UFF) could consider if training hours be included as working hours was not addressed as it is outside council's purview.

b. Leave

-The Faculty Senate Chair continues to work on paid parental leave. President Fuchs has requested COO Charlie Lane and HR VP Jodi Gentry present him with a plan to review by July. Parental leave and advocacy for early learning childhood facilities on campus continue to be a standing item on the biweekly President & Faculty Senate Chair agenda. Childcare facility options is a longer term venture but continues to be emphasized.

c. Climate Survey

-Council discussed the need to address concerns of the graduate student population at UF, given that approximately 1/3 indicated they had been harassed by a professor; the vulnerability of students is a concern.

-Mentorship of graduate students should be a consideration when delving into the issue of sexual harassment.

-Council would like to continue discussion on the following:

-Connect with the Title IX Office and Green Dot training group in the Office of Student Affairs. How many and which groups (staff, faculty, students) have completed Green Dot training?

-There is a concern of under-reporting if students or subordinates fear backlash. Are the number of allegations seen by the Title IX office similar to the numbers reported in the UF Climate Survey? How many reports become investigations once an allegation is made?

-Following the recent implementation of UF's sexual harassment policy, are reporting numbers decreasing at Title IX? An increase could show lack of an effective sexual harassment policy or could indicate more wide-spread knowledge of the new policy?

-What additional steps could council or the university take following the recent news coverage and college meetings regarding the Title IX investigations in the College of Public Health & Health Professions (PHHP) and the handling of the Andrew Lotto case?

-Council reviewed the online outline of steps taken by the Title IX Office when an allegation is received: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/process/>.

-In addition to Faculty Senate and its councils, and the university listserv used by the General Counsel's Office to announce proposed and new regulations, which outlets (i.e. weekly faculty newsletter, HR newsletter, which listservs, etc.) were used to distribute the new UF policy defining sexual harassment? Is the policy re-distributed through any of these outlets on a recurring basis (as a reminder and to assist new employees)?

-How are these policies shared in the onboarding process of new faculty and

staff?

-Because a freshman, female student is statistically more likely to be assaulted, how is this issue addressed in Preview? There is interest in asking new VP of Student Affairs D'Andra Mull to address this topic when she visits Faculty Senate in February.

-The challenges associated with the long distances between offices and parking facilities for elderly or mobility-challenged individuals was also raised in the climate survey. Accessibility was also recently raised in discussion surrounding the recent upgrades to the Keene Faculty Center, which is located in Dauer Hall and open 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., and which will be used as a faculty interaction and collaboration center. With assistance from the Office of the COO about \$100,000 is being invested in changes to the current center, which is currently under the auspice of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. A cappuccino and coffee machine, icemaker, soda, and light snacks are available for faculty, who are encouraged to stop by the facility.

-A brief overview of past efforts towards establishing a university-wide faculty lounge was provided and it is expected there will eventually be additional faculty facilities available which will be similar to the Keene Faculty Center.

5. Adjournment

-The meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.