

Senate Steering Committee
Minutes
January 6th, 2011
3-5 PM
226 Tigert

Attendees:
Mary Ann Ferguson
Barbara Wingo
Joe Glover
Mark Orazem
Nancy Poehlmann

Bernie Machen
David Quillen
Wolfgang Sigmund
Scott Nygren
Henrietta Logan
Regina Bussing

Jack Mecholsky
Kathy Light
Guests:
Gaura McLeod
Tim Johnson
Bernard Mair

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM

The December minutes were approved.

Reports:

Chair's Report

Mary Ann Ferguson, Chair

Chair Ferguson reported she is meeting with the college council chairs next week and they will revisit shared governance on the college level. Dr Machen's request to identify regulations that might hinder faculty, and humanities issues and how they affect colleges. Committee nominations are in progress and there are many seats to fill. Dr. Ferguson said Scott Nygren brought attention to problems with the campus bookstore; whether there are enough books available to students. She asked the Infrastructure Council to look into the matter. Concern has also been raised as to whether police have sufficient interpersonal skills. Dr. Ferguson asked the Welfare council to continue that discussion. A new secretary, Sue Alvers, will be joining the Faculty Senate on January the 18th.

President's Report

Bernie Machen, President

President Machen reported that he had attended the inauguration of Senator Marco Rubio. Machen discussed the changes in Washington and Tallahassee and their impact to the University's budget and funding for research. He will be visiting Tallahassee next week to discuss the budget with Rick Scott. Dr. Machen announced that Vice President Brian Beach is leaving UF; his duties will be distributed amongst existing administrators. He mentioned Brian Beach's contributions to UF, including Innovation Square. Jamal A. Sowell will be joining UF as a Special Assistant to the President to assist with government relations and the BOT. Dr. Machen discussed the notion of more autonomy for the University. He said UF is currently working on compiling a list of areas/regulations that would be better run autonomously, such as the school calendar. Dr. Machen is going to lag the implementation of the Wednesday before Thanksgiving as a holiday until May. Lastly, he stated that Block Tuition did pass and does not need to go back for BOT review again; 2012 is approved for implementation pending answering the questions raised

Provost's Report

Joe Glover, Provost

Dr. Glover reminded the senate of the National Merit Scholarship issue. UF invests a lot of money in the NMS and would like to examine the admissions process to see if the money could be put to better use. He asked the senate and the Academic Policy Council to work with Dr. Zina Evans on this. Dr. Glover addressed a question about variation in undergraduate and graduate tuition and variation in the fees according to the year of admission. The entire Graduate School had been priced at one rate, but in the future UF can look to national competitors and price various programs accordingly, after consultation with the Deans. He mentioned that he has discussed the FEO program's popularity with the President, as the President needs to make a decision during the spring semester as to whether the FEO program will continue or not.

Information Items:

Doctoral Education Review Committee

Ben Dunn, Distinguished Professor

Ben Dunn reported on the committee's progress. They have held three meetings and a meeting is planned for the end of the month. Since the meetings with the President and Provost, the initial charge has been modified and is now posted under the committee website. Dunn discussed the positive elements of the review, namely gathering information about the best practices that correlate with the success of departments. He also made it clear that this review will not be dependent on one source of information. The NRC data, based on twenty criteria, is one set of data that will be used. The second set of data will be from the Graduate School; it used nine criteria for evaluation and focuses on student quality and outcome. Other data will be internal and external reviews, including articles in professional publications and a survey the committee has sent out to deans, graduate coordinators etc.. Twelve surveys have been returned so far. The charge to the committee called for a report by February the 15th but this has been modified to the end of the spring semester. Dunn stressed the challenges of this charge due to the diversity of the University and the different evaluation criteria used in departments. These differences will be taken into account in the assessment of the different programs. The goal of this review is to compare UF to successful AAU peer institutions and determine the elements of successful programs, while making recommendations to departments that don't fare well in the review.

University Curriculum Committee Proposals

Bernard Mair, UCC chair

Proposed change to name of Bachelor of Science degree from Agricultural and Biological Engineering degree to Biological Engineering

Mark Law, Associate Dean of Engineering

Bernard Mair discussed the reason for the change. The engineering community has changed the requirements for the degree so much that students would have to fulfill two separate degree requirements. Most students choose a biological degree track, so the decision was made by the department to change to the biological degree program instead of agricultural, to follow national trends. This will be sent to the Board of Governors.

General Education Committee Recommendation

Nancy Poehlmann, Academic Policy Council Chair

The main changes proposed are that the chair of the General Education Committee will be selected by the President or his designee, the co-chair elected from the senate representatives, and the Gordon Rule requirement will be renamed as the University Writing and Math requirement.

Campus Safety Discussion

Scott Nygren, Chair-elect

Scott Nygren proposed to have a report in February or March and inviting Jen Day Shaw and Paula Fussell to represent the behavioral counseling team and human resources. He volunteered to introduce them and give an overview on how this all integrates.

Council Reports:

Infrastructure Council

Mark Orazem, Chair

Mark Orazem reported that their December meeting concluded with the agreement that the best practice is to have faculty input on required training. Training is conducted by various offices under a number of Vice Presidents. He met with Elias Eldayrie again and they discussed the overview of governance for IT; Orazem is positive they are moving in a good direction with regard to faculty input and the committees are forming.

Research and Scholarship Council

Henrietta Logan, Chair

Henrietta Logan reported that this council met with the Budget Council and the conversations dealt with the unintended consequences of RCM and how to address these. The Council is meeting in February with Lee Catledge to discuss the report coming out of Enterprise; they are concerned with training to handle the data. In February they will be meeting with Angel Kwolek-Folland regarding P&T and training for this.

Welfare Council

Kathy Light, Chair

No report due to a lack of council meetings.

Academic Policy Council

Nancy Poehlmann, Chair

Nancy Poehlmann reported that the committee had discussed the Gen Ed proposal. They began to discuss the National Merit Scholarship proposal and several questions arose. The committee will schedule a meeting with Zina Evans to answer them.

Budget Council

Regina Bussing, Co-Chair

Regina Bussing reported on systematic meetings conducted with deans from nine units as well as guests. The meetings covered the positive and negative impacts of RCM on teaching and research scholarship; this will result in a senate report. In the January meeting they will begin compiling the report and plan to prepare an online posting for feedback in February. The Council plans to present a report to the Senate in April on the follow up of effects of RCM.

Action Item:

Approval of the January Senate Agenda

Mary Ann Ferguson, Chair

The January Senate agenda was approved, with a minor change made of having the action items first, and information items second

The meeting adjourned at 4.24 PM