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Faculty Senate

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Faculty Senate President Laurence Branch called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. The Minutes from the August 20, 2008, meeting were approved as presented. President Branch stated that a draft of Minutes from the Senate Executive Committee meetings will be provided to the full Senate for informational purposes.

REPORTS BY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS


Graduate Council Chair Strange was not at today’s meeting. Therefore, no report was given.

b. Report from Committee on Faculty Issues (Paul Terry)

Committee on Faculty Issues Chair Terry reported that the group had its initial meeting last week. There is a full roster of 10 faculty members representing all the colleges. Their first organizational meeting is with President Branch on Friday, September 19. The three main topics for the meeting will be: the administrator assessment; differential/campus tenure and promotion standards; and the online student evaluations.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Report from Ad Hoc Task Force to Review Administrative Structure (Gene Ness)

The first meeting of the task force was held on September 15 at which eleven members were present. The next meeting will be held at 4 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 20. Senator and Chair of the task force Ness asked President Branch to provide the task force with a specific charge to assist them in focusing on their tasks. The committee created the following list of items that should be addressed in regards to administrative reconstruction: determine what the existing organizational structure is administratively; what amount of resources are devoted to administration at USF as compared with the University of Florida and Florida State University as well as peer universities; review the growth of resources devoted to the administrative structure in the past five years; determine whether or not the mission of the Office of Research and Innovation is being accomplished. Senator Ness also discussed the frustration on the part of the task force with the number of university e-mail addresses which he said is an impediment to interdisciplinary activities. Other issues discussed by Senator Ness included parking, filling out forms, and the recommendation to establish a Blackboard site for the purpose of sharing information.

In response to Senator Ness’s report, President Branch commented on the lack of a unified information system. He reminded the Senators of President Genshaft’s
commitment to the issue by having the university’s Chief Technology Officer, Michael Pearce, address the group last semester. President Branch will invite Dr. Pearce back to a future Faculty Senate meeting to provide a follow-up report on the information systems at USF.

b. Draft Proposal on University Structure Change Procedures (Emanuel Donchin)

As Chair of the Council on Educational Policy and Issue (CEPI), Dr. Donchin presented the latest draft of the University Structure Change Procedures prepared by CEPI. CEPI was charged by the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) to draft a policy that would specify the procedures to be followed in order to submit proposed changes in the “status quo” of the university structure. Chair Donchin pointed out that the most critical change to the draft was on page two, paragraph two, which now states, “Any official whose authority includes suggesting, or implementing, changes in the status quo must follow these guidelines.” The SEC approved the document at its September 3 meeting and it was being presented to the Faculty Senate for adoption. However, Chair Donchin pointed out that the actual status of the document was not completely clear. The Senate could adopt it as guidelines, and then it becomes guidelines adopted by the Faculty Senate. The other approach, which was being proposed, was to recommend a policy adoption which means that the policy is mandatory and it must be followed. However, the Faculty Senate does not have the power to adopt policy, only to recommend. If adopted, it would be forwarded to the Provost’s Office where a decision would be made as to whether or not to recommend the policy for promulgation. At this time, Chair Donchin announced that the draft document came to the Faculty Senate from CEPI as a seconded motion. The floor was opened for discussion and the following comments were made:

• Several wording changes were recommended, but the proposed changes were not brought to a vote.

• The policy is too reactive, too rooted in what happened. A policy is needed, but it should be worked out in a more general, less reactive way in conjunction with the administration in the spirit of shared governance so that it is a policy with which everyone feels comfortable.

• The document is not written in the tone of shared governance.

• The proposed procedures are only a recommendation to the Provost which can be either accepted or rejected. There does not seem to be any controversy in the document.

• A briefer, more concise document is needed that has been worked out in a shared way; something needs to be done for future administrators.

Prof. Donchin noted that CEPI received detailed comments on the draft from the Provost’s Office. Careful consideration was given to these comments and most of the suggestions have been incorporated into the text presented to the Senate with
endorsement from the SEC. Chair Donchin also noted that the need for specifying the procedures with such details reflected the consensus of the SEC and CEPI, that as the realignment process was implemented, there were too many instances in which major changes were imposed on departments without prior notice to the chair and with no review, at the department level, of the imposed changes. It is the view of CEPI, as confirmed by SEC, that the process outlined in the document under consideration represents ‘shared governance’ at its best.

Provost Ralph Wilcox commented that there was no question in his mind that the principles in this set of guidelines are very helpful and add clarity. He still maintains the notion that the definition of consultation is in the eyes of the beholder. There is a need for some shared understanding. He was troubled by the less than constructive tone that is evident throughout the document. Provost Wilcox said it is not surprising that there is a reactive element in it as well. He admitted that certain processes could have taken different paths but at the same time the reality of the situation is that the university had to deal with significant budget cuts in a limited amount of time. The Provost supported and endorsed the recommendation made to take this back to the table where there can be deliberation and creditable input on behalf of all stakeholders so that everybody is involved in drafting a set of guidelines. He pointed out that the principles embedded in this document represent a solid basis for further discussion.

Chairman Donchin thanked the Provost, on behalf of CEPI, for endorsing the principles and procedures outlined in the document. He added that while there is no question that we are facing major budget cuts, there has been no attempt to explain precisely how the proposed realignments address the problems created by the budget cuts. This is why the draft requires that a proposed realignment be accompanied by a detailed report on the financial consequences of the proposed changes.

There was a call to question. A hand vote was taken on the motion to accept the draft proposal from CEPI and SEC to be forwarded to the Provost for action. The results were four in favor, two abstentions, and the remainder opposed. The motion failed.

At this time, Secretary Barnett proposed the motion that the Faculty Senate endorses the underlying principles in the CEPI document on recommended university structure change procedures and recommends that the Provost establish a university policy in this spirit. The motion was seconded and a friendly amendment was offered. The final motion read: The Faculty Senate endorses the underlying principles in the CEPI document on recommended university structure change procedures and recommends that the Provost, in consultation with the Faculty Senate, establish a university policy in this spirit. The motion unanimously passed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

a. Southern Accreditation of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Update (Kathleen Moore)
Associate Vice President Kathleen Moore presented an update on the Southern Accreditation of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation status and then responded to questions. Secretary Barnett inquired about SACS reporting on shared governance at USF. Dr. Moore responded that SACS had reviewed shared governance practices at USF and found them to be acceptable. Secretary Barnett requested a copy of this report to which Dr. Moore indicated that she would e-mail the document to the Faculty Senate President.

REPORT FROM PRESIDENT JUDY GENSHAFT

After extending her thanks for the opportunity to work together with the Faculty Senate on the university structure change policy, President Genshaft’s report consisted of the following items:

• Nine of the 28 community colleges in Florida have changed from two-year to four-year institutions. In response, the Legislature successfully passed a bill to form a State College Task Force, and President Genshaft will serve on that committee which is headed by the Commissioner of Education. The task force will set up guidelines for other community colleges who want to become four-year institutions. However, by statute, the community colleges cannot offer graduate classes. These colleges are not to duplicate what already exists and can offer only workforce degrees.

• The Florida Board of Governors will be meeting Thursday, September 25 in the Marshall Center. The day before, the Florida Chamber of Commerce is meeting in the College of Business to hear about issues regarding higher education and the work of the different task forces.

• President Genshaft gave her State of the University Address last week in the Marshall Center, and it was also webcast. She reiterated her congratulations to the professors who have brought in $360-million of research dollars.

• The USF Center for Entrepreneurship has been ranked fifth in the country, according to the *Princeton Review and Entrepreneur Magazine*; moving up from ninth last year.

• Congratulations were extended to English Professor Pat Rogers who is being inducted into the British Academy.

• Dr. James A. Hyatt has been hired to be the new Senior Vice President for Business and Finance. He will start at USF on November 17.

• USF is keeping a close watch on what is happening on Wall Street and how this could affect everyone’s retirements.

• A task force to work on a campus drinking policy for the entire USF community will be established. President Branch will be asked to submit names for potential members.
• President Genshaft apologized for not having the five-year history and five-year overview of the staffing patterns in the offices of the President, Provost and Vice President of Health. She affirmed President Branch’s request that such a report will be provided for next month’s meeting.

REPORT FROM PROVOST RALPH WILCOX

Provost Wilcox announced that two consultants will be visiting USF to look at the structure, processes and procedures of its graduate schools with the notion of building one graduate school to better align it with the goals of the university. The consultants have been identified by the National Association of Graduate Schools; one is from the University of Kentucky, the other from Emory University. They will be meeting with a variety of stakeholder groups including the Graduate Council. The Provost also wants input from the Faculty Senate.

Thanks were extended to those who participated on the search committee for the Senior Vice President for Business and Finance. President Branch expressed his appreciation to the Provost for inviting the Senate Executive Committee to participate.

The name for the newly aligned college, formerly known as the Florida Mental Health Institute, is the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences.

REPORT FROM USF UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA PRESIDENT DORN

In response to the financial crisis on Wall Street, UFF President Dorn assured everyone that the billions of dollars invested by the Florida Retirement System are tremendously diversified.

The next bargaining session is Friday, September 26. There were two grievance hearings heard in the past last couple of weeks, and they will be described in detail in the biweekly newsletter.

He commented on the SEC draft meeting Minutes of September 3 regarding faculty wanting to switch from nine to twelve-month disbursements. It would also require bargaining. The credit union can arrange for automatic pullouts. How this is done will also be included in the biweekly newsletter.

ISSUES FROM THE FLOOR

Secretary Barnett re-visited the Blackboard discussion site and asked how/what can be done to get Senators to sign onto the site. He will try again next month.

REPORT FROM USF FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT LARRY BRANCH

Faculty Senate President Branch’s report consisted of the following:

• Due to a scheduling conflict, he was unable to attend the September meeting of the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates, which is comprised of all the Faculty Senate presidents of each state university. He will email the Minutes to all the Senators.
The suggestion was made to send a representative to those meetings if either he or Vice President Permuth cannot attend.

- He attended his first USF Board of Trustees meeting as a trustee. President Branch has been appointed to the work group on Academic and Campus Environment.

- Mr. Jerry Trotter, Student Senate President Pro Tempore, was recognized. He asked that if there was a Senator interested in volunteering to act as liaison and attend the Student Government Senate meetings to inform President Branch. The meetings are held on Tuesdays at 6 p.m.

- Immediate Past President Michael Barber was acknowledged for his leadership of the Faculty Senate. A reception was scheduled after today’s meeting at which Dr. Barber will be recognized for his service and contributions from 2006 to 2008.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.
ADDENDUM
Follow-Up Items

Faculty Senate Meeting
September 17, 2008

1. Invitation to Chief Technology Officer Michael Pearce to attend future meeting to provide an update on information systems (Larry Branch).

2. SACS report from Vice President Kathleen Moore to be forwarded to President Branch.

3. President Genshaft to provide information on the status of future administrative hires.

4. President Genshaft will solicit names from President Branch for potential members of a task force on campus drinking.

5. Provost Wilcox to convene a committee to draft a university policy in the spirit of the CEPI document.