Faculty Senate Meeting
Minutes from Meeting on Friday, October 30, 2015

Call to Order:
Faculty Senate meeting was called to order by Amanda Urquhart, Vice-President of the Senate, at 2:03 pm

Members Present:
Jeannie Paulk (Nursing), Shawn Seat (Science), Abul Sheikh (Business), James N. McCrimmon (Agriculture), Anthony Fitzgerald (Human Sciences), Russell Pryor (Liberal Arts), Brian Yost (Liberal Arts), Amanda Urquhart (Mathematics), Steve Janousek (Human Sciences), JoAnn Brannen (Business)

George Lowerts (Agriculture and Natural Resources) was given a proxy by Sen. Jason Scott for this meeting. Sen. Pres. Christina Dent gave a proxy to Sen. VP Amanda Urquhart.

Presentation of Minutes:

Old Business:
1. 12 month pay cycles for 10-month faculty:
   a. Data was collected from the membership on the desirability of a 12-month option: Sen. Brannen said that one of her constituents wanted to go a 12-month pay cycle. Sen. Sheikh said that one of his constituents wanted a 12-month pay cycle and no one was a 12-month faculty member. Sen. Urquhart received 6 replies from her constituency, 3 of whom wanted to go to a 12-month pay cycle and one of which was a 12-month faculty member. Sen. Seat reported that 5 out of his 14 constituents wanted to go to a 12-month pay cycle. Sens. Prior, McCrimmon and Janousek said their constituents wanted the option without citing specific statistics.

   b. Sen. Fitzgerald suggested that there was no reason the option should be unavailable and Sen. Brannen added that the request for this option be submitted in time for the transition from ADP to PeopleSoft.

   c. Action item: Sen. VP Urquhart will append this to the requests made to the Cabinet.

2. Promotion and Tenure Guidelines:
   a. Sen. Yost reported his findings from electronic comparison of the old P&T handbook with the new handbook. He found that the recommendations were mostly followed with two minor and two major exceptions:
i. Minor: In Section E, Lecturers are not explicitly made exempt from requirements to perform advising, committee work, etc. in evaluation.

ii. Minor: Promotion and tenure if there is no department head should be made by the Dean only in the case where the Promotion and Tenure Unit is the school – this might be unclear as written.

iii. Major: On page 7, if a faculty member is appointed as an instructor it was 3 years for promotion to Assistant Professor and it is now 5 years.

iv. Major: Advising is supposed to be measured purely by student evaluations, while no instrument for doing so currently exists.

b. Sen. Fitzgerald said there was concern by Deans that some faculty might resent instructors not being required to do committee work and advising. Sen. Sheikh mentioned that some people intentionally chose to be instructors so they did not have to do these activities, one of which was a faculty member for 14 years. Sen. VP Urquhart said that perhaps new hires would be under the new policy but those already in lecturer positions should be grandfathered in under the previous policy.

3. Policy on Interruption of Probationary Period for Promotion and Tenure:
   a. Dr. Lowerts favorably mentioned the policy at UIC that distinguishes between leave that is for an academic reason and for other purposes, such that the former can count toward time in grade and the latter does not.
   b. Sen. Brannen reminded the Senate that our prior conclusion was that pursuit of a PhD should count toward time in grade, and Sen. Yost added that this policy was common around the country.
   c. Sen. Fitzgerald brought up the question of leaves of absence for a purpose not related to improvement of ABAC, citing southwest Asian opportunities advertised in The Chronicle of Higher Education as trying to get a temporarily higher salary than they get at ABAC, so this should not count. However, exceptional cases like Fulbright scholarship should count because that improves the reputation of ABAC.
   d. Sen. Sheikh explained what the concern was: if a faculty member is on 2 years of educational leave in the first or second year prior to tenure it may require waiting an additional year before application for promotion. He further cited that there was a specific problem about this in the Department of Mathematics. **Action item:** Sen. Fitzgerald suggested that Sen. Sheikh bring a written recommendation at the November meeting to be considered, which was agreed by the Senate.

4. Retired Faculty:
   a. Sen. VP Urquhart gave an update concerning retiree email availability: Janet Haughton requested that the Cabinet authorize retirees to be given indefinite access to ABAC email; no reply occurred by the Faculty Senate meeting date.

New Business:

1. USG Faculty Council meeting 10/23
   a. Sen. Seat described important issues discussed with the Faculty Council, including the address to the Council by USG Chancellor Huckaby:
i. Huckaby mentioned that the USG received an additional $58m in formula funding in FY15, the first increase in a while. Gov. Nathan Deal has recommended a 3% increase in faculty salaries in FY17, although the Chancellor warned that the “1%” increase last year was rounded up from 0.75%. A legislative initiative will allow for 3% of appropriated money to be pushed forward for up to five years to allow for better fiscal management (increased from 3 years in 2015).

ii. Among responses to questions from the Council, Huckaby mentioned that the decision to increase Presidents’ salaries was driven by the need to retain good leadership; he cited serious financial problems at several schools in south Georgia as among the risks posed by ineffective leadership. Also, although few professors are at the limit, the 33-1/3% maximum for summer salary remains in effect even in cases where the salary is fully funded by grants. The change to performance funding instead of the old formula funding was stalled by the Legislature due to their belief that it would damage some institutions. In response to whether institutions in the USG will have to eat costs due to Move On When Ready, Huckaby simply said “Yes.”

iii. Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs Houston Davis announced an adjustment to policy on shared leave: now payment can be made for people with immediate family members with serious illness as well. He also mentioned he was willing to come to faculty governance bodies to discuss issues in person.

iv. Dr. Dennis Marks of the USG Retiree Council addressed the FC and made a request to faculty governance bodies to include a representative of retirees in their meetings. Sen. Seat suggested a non-voting member be considered by the Faculty Senate.

v. In response to the issues over the summer with a resolution, Sen. Seat volunteered to be on a committee to propose revisions to the constitution and bylaws of the USGFC.

b. Sen. McCrimmon mentioned that the Open Enrollment period was coming up the following week, and recommended that HR director Richard Spancak may be a contact point to let retirees know about the idea of making a retiree council at ABAC.

c. Sen. Janousek indicated the Senate could benefit from a retiree’s experience.

Action item: Sen. VP Urquhart will contact Mr. Spancak about addressing retirees and will talk to the Cabinet about having an associate retiree member in the Faculty Senate.

2. Provisions for Faculty Senate in the summer semester: Proposed amendment to the Senate Constitution

a. Sen. Fitzgerald made a proposed collection of changes to be voted on in the November meeting to continue work on having Faculty Senate meetings in the summer term. The proposals are:

i. In article III: Officers, Section 3: President pro tempore: The phrase “Shall be elected by the Faculty Senate” would become “shall be elected from the existing membership of the Faculty Senate”.
ii. In Section IV: Meetings, Section 1 Frequency: The phrase “once per semester for fall and spring semester” would be changed to “once per semester in the fall, spring, and summer semesters”.

iii. Article VI: Amendment of the Constitution, Section 1: Amendments: The following sentence would be appended: “No change to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Faculty Senate shall be adopted during the summer semester.”

b. Sen. McCrimmon noted that any of the continuing Senators would know then-current issues. Sen. Fitzgerald mentioned that the three proposed amendments would be voted on separately in November’s meeting.

3. Human Resources Update
   a. Sen. VP Urquhart received a note from Sen. Pres. Dent that there would be a change in the cost of the high-deductible plan by about $12 per month for an individual plan.

A motion to adjourn was made by Sen. McCrimmon and Sen. Sheikh seconded the motion. The Senate adjourned at 3:11 p.m. The next meeting will be held November 20, 2015.