UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
Faculty Senate

Plenary Session

October 20, 2021 – Zoom – 3:00 pm

MINUTES

Present: Faculty and Guests

- Adams. Jamie
- Amare, Nicole
- Bates, Robin
- Brannan, Lauren
- Broach, Ellen
- Bunch, Jaclyn
- Chadhain, Sinead
- Cleary, John
- Copeland, Donna
- Davidson, Cordell
- Feldvoss, Joerg
- Fregeau, Laureen
- Gregoricka, Lesley
- Godang Romulus
- Halbrooks, John
- He, Jia
- Henry, Alison
- Holden, Shelley
- Hossain, Delwar
- Huang, Ying
- Kent, Andrea
- Lee, Christine
- Lewis, Drew
- Lin, Mike
- Lynch, Colleen
- Manders, Jeannette
- Mark, Patricia
- Min, Hosik
- Myers, Charlene
- O'Connor, Tracy
- Rayner, Jonathan
- Shaw, Christy
- Shepard, Beth
- Spencer, Edmund
- Strickland, Jason

- Thompson, Tara
- Turnipseed, David
- Vandewaa, Arie
- Vandewaa, Elizabeth
- Vrana, Laura
- Walker, Sean
- Webb, Brett
- Windham, Mike
- Woodmansee, Brenda

- Meeting called to order 3:00 pm
- Approval of Minutes for 9/15/21 Meeting: Approved
- Approval of Agenda for 10/20/21 Meeting: Approved

- **Guest Speaker**:
  - Andrea M. Kent, Interim Provost and Senior Vice President Academic Affairs
    - Dr. Kent addressed questions about Tenure/Promotion. She reported that the process should not change mid-year with a new President. She will try to send out something to reassure faculty (bc the university is in the process a Presidential search and there are so many in interim positions).
    - Dr. Kent reports a 13% gain in Freshman enrollment as compared to last year (1750 this year) and Academic Affairs is working to maintain or expand current enrollment for continued growth at USA. She reports that they are also working to overcome smaller enrollments that we have had in past.
    - Dr. Kent reports that there has been growth in transfer enrollments at 8% in (748 this Fall).
    - Dr. Kent reports that the university is on target for continued growth for Fall 2022. She reports that on campus tours are an indication of enrollment and they are up by 20% (compared to last Fall). Dr. Kent reports that the new President will best set our size goals.
    - Dr. Kent reports that prospective students have free application week (10/17-10/23). Dr. Kent reports that they are working to waive longer for select subgroups (students of alumni). They are looking at incentives to promote applications, such as $100 virtual visit credit (participate in virtual visit, get credit towards tuition); targeting local school districts in Mobile & Baldwin Counties (23% and 14% gain this Fall respectively); emphasis on diversity (43% increase in AA enrollment this Fall); test optional (started last year, students with a 3.8 GPA do not have to have SAT/ACT test score, they are automatically accepted.

Students with GPAs below this (data is being collected) and a decision is being made what to do about these students.

- We introduced the first needs-based scholarship to enlarge pool of candidates; looking at more opportunities for scholarships through Global USA to grow international enrollment.
- Also, Dr. Kent reports that yard sign campaigns will begin; expanded email communication to parents and students) is ongoing and improvement in texting campaigns; mandatory freshman on campus (unless local, which caused housing to be up 20% and students statistically do better).
- Dr. Kent reports that innovative ways to target military families (especially undergraduate) are underway; increased campus visit opportunities and golf carts bought for on campus tours; transfer, football tailgates with tickets, and other special on campus tours being done. Visibility of the university is being increased with working on billboard campaigns; virtual visits are being increased; and partnerships are being increased with the colleges.
- Dr. Kent reports that there is a new School of Marine & Environmental Sciences- in year 1 of a 3-year plan for graduate and undergraduate programs the College of Engineering is getting a new undergraduate BS degree (Industrial Management & Technology) program.
- Dr. Kent reports that there is possible funding source for new and improved programs. She encourages faculty to reach out to their administration at their perspective colleges to share any ideas for growing new or existing programs.

- **President's Report:**
  - There will not be a raise this year; however, a salary supplement will be paid out by November 5, 2021, for 5% of annual salary or $2,000 (whichever is more) that will be disbursed via direct deposit.
  - Internal Inversion/Compression Adjustment -
    - Not merit based
    - Same and lower rank is considered *(change from older documentation)*
    - Also, time in rank is considered in calculation *(change from older documentation)*
    - Effective Oct 1, 2021
  - Internal Equity Adjustment for Highly Meritorious Faculty
    - Is merit based - is based on the annual evaluation scores of the last reported 4 years
    - Same and lower rank considered *(change from older documentation)*
    - High meritorious service=department mean + .52 of the standard deviation for X department
    - Reward high performing faculty
    - Effective Oct 1, 2021
  - External Salary Survey- nearing completion. Dr. Kent feels like data will be made available to Faculty Senate; the goal is January 2022

- Presidential Search- one more candidate to come to campus next week. Public forum is 10/26 at 11am in Mitchell Center.
  - Recordings of the public forum are available and can be viewed to view the recordings **click on the website and there is a link for Presidential search**. Everyone is encouraged to submit feedback on form- located on Presidential Search website.
  - In addition to the public forum, the FS excomm had an opportunity to interview the candidates and the excomm wrote a letter to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate and will be sent to the Board.
- Mitchell College of Business Investigation- the investigation is complete; a final report will be released soon.

- COVID Response Team Updates- low rates currently in community and on campus. Email released during meeting on October 20, 2021, indicating masks are no longer required, those not vaccinated strongly encouraged to continue to mask.
  - The University continues to offer opportunities for students and employees to be vaccinated at our on-campus or community vaccination sites.
  - Vaccine requirements include Federally contracted employee requirements that will impact the university- how it will impact is being evaluated and faculty that are included will be notified.

- **Reports from Senate Committees:**
  - Academic Development and Mentoring: first event in September with a good showing. The next session will be Wednesday at 3:30 in the ILC. Contact Shelley Holden if interested in being a mentor.

  - Teaching, Learning, and Technology Committee: Canvas should be able to push grades into Banner. The registrar is onboard, and they are trying to figure out what is needed technology wise to make this happen.

    - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): There are concerns about strength of DEI regarding the ongoing interview of presidential candidates, and there are recommendations for a new search to be conducted.

    - The committee is requesting the FS excomm to address equity raises in more detail

    - Dr. Billingsly is working on an asset map, and a history timeline of DEI is in progress.

- **Reports from Caucus Leaders"**
  - none

- **Reports from University Committees:**
  - None

- **New Business:**
  - New Business are discussions only. Will vote next meeting.
    - Policy and Handbook Committee:
      - DEI Portion of the Handbook: Guidelines for Faculty and Administrative Searches within Recruiting Diverse Faculty, it was reported that there have been suggestions for recruiting and retaining faculty from underrepresented groups to aid the search committee in their task of attracting and retaining excellent and diverse faculty through fair and inclusive hiring practices.
      - NTTF (non-tenure track faculty) Promotion Policy: NTTF have the same criteria for promotion as tenure track but different workloads; conflicts with other areas of handbook that state workload performance should be a major consideration for promotion. There are recommendations that an external review to not be required for NTTF promotion. The goal is to link the evaluation with what faculty are doing in their current positions.
        - The new draft includes new titles "Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor of Instruction."
        - Next steps are to revise draft based on feedback.

Meeting Adjournment: MMSA 5:04 pm

Minutes transcribed by Donna Copeland