
UFF Consultation Minutes

February 21, 2018

Westcott Building Room 201

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Attendees:

University

Kyle Clark
Janet Kistner
Renisha Gibbs
Carolyn Egan
Lisa Scoles
Rebecca Peterson
Danielle Staats

UFF

Matthew Lata
Michael Buchler
Jack Fiorito
Nancy Kellett
Irene Padavic

The meeting began at 1:01 p.m.

Renisha Gibbs welcomed everyone to the meeting and after notifying UFF that Vice President, Kyle Clark would need to leave a little early due to another commitment, asked if they would be amendable to moving some of their agenda items around to accommodate Mr. Clark's early departure.

UFF agreed.

1. Minutes from Consultation Meeting on December 12, 2017

Ms. Gibbs expressed appreciation for the flexibility, and moving to the first item on the agenda, inquired as to whether UFF was ready to finalize the minutes from the previous consultation, since they'd indicated through email that they had no changes to the draft.

UFF confirmed.

Ms. Gibbs stated that once complete, UFF would be provided a finalized copy for their records. She then explained that the University Administration would be moving-up item #7, Legislative Issues, and #9, Parking Issues, adding that they would be addressing parking first.

2. Parking issues

Michael Buchler described how in the elevated parking lot across from the Fine Arts building [Palm Court Lot], a large number of parking spots had been taken over for electrical work, and he asked whether the University Administration knew if this would be temporary or permanent. He also noted that currently there were only two ways to enter/exit the lot, one of them involving a muddy slope people can slip on, and suggested that the University add an exit gate that would provide a way for people to get out on Palm Court more safely.

Mr. Clark explained that the electrical work being done in the lot Dr. Buchler had referenced was Verizon Wireless putting in and/or doing renovations to cell towers, for the purpose of trying to improve communications on campus, and that to his knowledge, some of the equipment would get cleared out when they finished, opening-up a few of the parking spaces, but for the most part, the obstruction would be somewhat permanent. He went on to state that he hadn't previously heard about these issues and was not familiar with the referenced location, but that he would be happy to have the University's Parking Director look into Dr. Buchler's concerns about the slope, and that he appreciated his suggestion. Mr. Clark also mentioned that a new lot would be opening on campus soon, which would add 50 additional parking space and that the University was in discussions about putting in another parking garage.

Dr. Buchler specified that the lot he had referenced was located directly across from the [FSU] Museum of Fine Arts.

Mr. Clark noted the directions Dr. Buchler provided.

3. Legislative issues

Matthew Lata asked about the latest updates from the legislative session, commenting that things seemed to be moving very fast.

Mr. Clark stated that he had been meeting regularly with the University's Chief Legislative Affairs Officer, however, nothing had been confirmed regarding the budget and that the University was still about two and half weeks away from knowing what the coffers would look like. He explained that most committees weren't hearing a lot of new bills at this point in the session, and that they were looking to wind up their work on the Appropriations Committee. Mr. Clark shared that the Board of Governors [BOG] had contemplated and discussed a lot of changes regarding performance based funding, ultimately implementing a number of them, and cited metric #3 as an example, in which they had factored textbook affordability into the cost to the student for an undergraduate degree. Additionally, a number of legislators recommended moving to 100% performance based funding. People are also interested in possible changes to distribution method, but he's not sure if any movement will happen.

Mr. Lata asked if there was any news regarding the Bill on free speech.

Carolyn Egan responded that the Bill had failed yesterday in committee, but noted that it might be revived because it was considered a priority.

Mr. Clark stated that there was a hearing that day in the House.

Mr. Lata asked about a higher education Bill that would require the University to do a survey of faculty and students to see if they feel free to express themselves.

The University Administration wasn't aware of the status.

Mr. Lata asked if the University Administration knew anything about a piece of "stealth legislation" that would allow firearms to be carried on campus.

Ms. Egan indicated that she wasn't aware of the legislation, and as such, was not privy to its status.

4. Requirements for teaching online courses

Dr. Buchler explained that UFF had been contacted by a faculty member who was wondering if they could be compelled to teach online courses, and UFF realized that they didn't know the answer.

Janet Kistner explained that the Chairs had the authority to assign responsibilities, including courses, and that if it was something critical to the students' academic needs, she supposed it could occur, however, she hadn't heard of it happening. From what she'd seen, the Chairs paid attention to the strengths of each faculty member in their department and assigned responsibilities accordingly. Dr. Kistner also mentioned that the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) included language about providing sufficient time for faculty to develop the necessary skill set if their assignment included technology. In addition, she stated that the CBA allowed for faculty to contest their assignment if they had any specific concerns and asked whether UFF knew where this concern had stemmed from.

Dr. Buchler commented that he thought it had something to do with the BOT's shift to online courses.

Dr. Kistner stated that the in person classes were a part of our culture and the full University experience, noting that she didn't see that changing in any drastic way.

Jack Fiorito asked if the University Administration saw teachers being given an incentive to teach online courses in cases where it wasn't their preference.

Dr. Kistner responded that she wasn't sure about that, since as she had mentioned, the CBA already had language that ensured someone was given time to develop and prepare for the role, which she felt was in the best interest for both the faculty member and the University.

Dr. Fiorito stated that he could see someone possibly not wanting to teach online, and feeling like being given that assignment was not good policy.

Carolyn Egan stated that the scenario Dr. Fiorito described would be an assignment dispute, in which case they could use the procedure outlined in the CBA.

Dr. Fiorito commented that in that situation, he didn't see the faculty member having much traction since the Chair has the ability to assign courses.

Dr. Kistner stated that she felt it would be reasonable for a new faculty member to be hired with the expectation to teach online, but that she did not see an issue with mandating online teaching for established faculty that were not hired to teach online.

5. Tenure Homes

Dr. Fiorito stated that in his review of reports that HR had provided, he was looking for a person in a certain department and then was informed that they were not listed in that specific department because they are tenured in another department. He asked if tenure home was something that was tracked and part of HR's database.

Ms. Gibbs responded that the information was tracked in OMNI on the tenure screen.

Dr. Fiorito asked if it was something that could be added to reports.

Ms. Gibbs indicated that it could and asked UFF to send an email explaining exactly what they would like to be added.

Dr. Kistner provided that there are faculty members who are funded in a center or unit in which they are working, but that they are tenured in a different academic unit.

Dr. Padavic noted that she thought there was a home department affiliated with scholars who were nontenured as well.

Dr. Kistner confirmed that there was.

6. Faculty Retention

Mr. Lata indicated that agenda item #6, Faculty Retention, and item #7, Implementation of Clause 23.1(c) in the CBA, were related and with regards to the later, UFF was wondering how this is implemented. He added that the President had made a statement the other day about

requesting funding that would go directly to new faculty, and as such, UFF was wondered what was being done to ensure current faculty are being taken care of and shown that they were valued.

Mr. Clark stated that in the past three years, faculty had received a raise every year and not just in Merit, but in other categories such as Market Equity, which showed that successfully retaining and rewarding outstanding faculty has been a priority in the budget every year for President Thrasher. Mr. Clark added that the University didn't know about funding for next year, but assured UFF that current faculty would continue to remain a priority going forward.

Dr. Fiorito explained that he had suggested this item, because UFF had seen many announcements about hiring new faculty to advance the University's standing, and the concern was that current faculty would start to wonder what was being done for them.

Dr. Kistner asserted that the University Administration had done a lot to reward and retain our faculty.

Mr. Clark noted that the University Administration understands that it is cost effective to retain good faculty, but that hiring new faculty is also important.

7. Implementation of Clause 23.1(c) in the CBA

[Combined with item #6]

8. Part-time administrative appointments

Dr. Fiorito described a case where a faculty member was given administrative duties, but not given an admin code, leaving them in the bargaining unit, and another case in which a faculty member was given a 20% assignment with a code, taking them out-of-unit. He asked how that was determined.

Ms. Gibbs stated that she would be interested to see those cases and asked if the details could be sent. She explained that the University's practice was to remove faculty members from the unit entirely when they were assigned certain administrative duties. She asked if UFF could provide those names now.

Dr. Fiorito shared that Deana Rohlinger was the faculty member who had been removed from the bargaining unit and Annette Schwabe had remained in-unit.

Dr. Kistner explained that it was her understating that Ms. Rohlinger's administrative assignment/admin code wasn't one that would remove her from the unit.

Ms. Gibbs confirmed that her team would follow-up to look at those two scenarios.

9. Follow-up on changing tenure standards in the College of Business

UFF requested that this item be struck from the agenda.

10. Other Business

Dr. Padavic noted that in the minutes from the previous Consultation, Ms. Egan was going to look into the Office of Commercialization and why they were quick to assert ownership on faculty work rather than engaging in negotiations with the faculty member first. She inquired as to the status of this follow-up.

Ms. Egan indicated that she had asked for an analysis, but hadn't yet seen it.

Nancy Kellett stated that she had asked for data on professional development leave during the previous consultation.

Dr. Padavic added that UFF was interested in seeing information for two or three years back.

Dr. Kistner asked for clarification on what type of data Nancy Kellett/UFF was looking for.

Nancy Kellett specified that they would like to know the number of applicants [for professional development leave] and the number of awards, broken down by units.

Dr. Kistner indicated that she would get the professional development leave information requested.

Dr. Padavic shared that UFF had recently become aware of the difficult time a faculty member was having, while seeking a medical treatment for their child whom identifies as transgender. She noted that the treatment was most likely going to be denied, and asked if there was something the University could do make the alignment tighter between its commitment to diversity and the benefits being provided.

Ms. Gibbs indicated that she was familiar with the case, and confirmed that members of her team had been working with the faculty member to assist her with getting answers. She added that the University considers this a protected category above and beyond what is established at the federal level and once again affirmed that the University Administration was doing everything they could to support and liaise with the faculty member. However, the University was not the plan administrator and could not impact the outcome.

Dr. Padavic suggested that perhaps the University's HR personnel could be made aware of these types of issues that could come up so they could know how to advise people, going forward.

Ms. Gibbs responded that going through the process had been helpful for her staff as well, and that the situation had provided them a learning opportunity.

UFF confirmed that they had no additional business.

Ms. Gibbs referenced the upcoming schedule for bargaining and mentioned that it wasn't easy for the management team to commit to meeting every week, as it was difficult to predict the various factors that could impact bargaining. She added that the management team hesitated to schedule more than a few sessions out, because they didn't want to be in a situation where they needed more time, but UFF wasn't wanting to cancel, which had happened last year, and as a result, some of the sessions were less productive than they could have been.

Dr. Buchler indicated that UFF likes to confirm the sessions in advance for scheduling purposes.

Ms. Gibbs responded that the management team's intent was to bargain on Wednesday afternoons, as that had been working the last few years, but suggested that it would be more productive to have the bulk of the sessions when the University Administration had a better idea of their financial position. She noted that last year, a lot of time was spent on non-financial articles and that the work was ultimately thrown out as a result of difficulties with the salaries article.

Dr. Padavic confirmed that at that time three sessions had been scheduled and that UFF would continue to leave their Wednesday afternoons open.

The meeting adjourned at 1:49 p.m.