
UFF President's Consultation Meeting

May 2, 2018

FSU/Training Center – Stadium Place

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Attendees:

University

President John Thrasher

Sally McRorie

Kyle Clark

Janet Kistner

Renisha Gibbs

Carolyn Egan

Lisa Scoles

Lynn Hogan

Rebecca Peterson

Danielle Staats

Adam Donaldson

UFF

Irene Padavic

Nancy Kellett

Matthew Lata

Michael Buchler

Jack Fiorito

Scott Hannahs

Robin Goodman

Joe Clark

The meeting began at 2:01 p.m.

Renisha Gibbs welcomed everyone to the consultation. She indicated there were some members present with a hard stop time and wanted to go ahead and get started. The UFF introduced one new member from the UFF team, Joe Clark.

1. Minutes from Consultation Meeting on February 21, 2018

Ms. Gibbs asked if UFF had received minutes from the last consultation, had the opportunity to review them, and if there were any additional edits or corrections.

Irene Padavic asked if the edits she had sent over had been accepted.

Ms. Gibbs confirmed that they had been.

Dr. Jack Fiorito stated that he wanted to express appreciation for Mr. Kyle Clark's remarks on the 5th page about the various raises that were distributed to faculty over the past few years.

Ms. Gibbs expressed her appreciation for the feedback, and continued that she was going to finalize the

minutes and move on. She requested that agenda item 5 be moved up to the first item, as Dr. Kistner has a need to leave early and would need to speak to that agenda item. UFF agreed with this request.

2. Data on Professional Development Leave Applications

UFF

*This topic was covered right after the meeting minutes were approved, as the team member with the most pertinent comments on it had an obligation requiring them to leave early.

Ms. Kellett expressed her gratitude for the data on this, saying that she found it very surprising. She asked how can the parties collaborate to make people more aware of it. She is aware a memo is sent out, but she was a little surprised that more people aren't applying.

Dr. Kistner thanked her for the feedback and replied that she has seen a pretty steady enrollment into the program from her side of things.

3. Faculty Poll Results

UFF

Mr. Matthew Lata indicated that he wanted to share the results of the UFF faculty poll. The question was posed if faculty members are satisfied and those who strongly agreed or agreed was 64% this year. For the question as to whether faculty morale was high, 48% strongly agreed or agreed. These were up from last year and had steadily improved over the past four years, so the trend is positive. He continued that UFF would like to share the results of their faculty poll.

Passes out handouts of faculty poll results

Dr. Joe Clark stated that he'd like to point out a couple things. Regarding salary priorities, across the board raises stand out among the choices as the one that's most preferred. Merit and market equity are also high priorities. On the second page the top priority shows to be cost of living. The single most encouraging salary increase from 2017 was shown to be market equity.

Ms. Gibbs asked if market equity raises were close to departmental merit as far as priority to faculty and raised the same question in relation to the first chart.

Dr. Joe Clark confirmed that her observations were correct.

Dr. Fiorito stated that, on the third chart, the \$650 performance increase was ranked quite a bit lower than market equity or departmental merit. Moving on, to non-salaried priorities (page 3), faculty are still very concerned about retirement and health benefits. He believes the reason for this has to do with the cuts that faculty underwent a few years ago in these areas. They're even ranked ahead of just-cause, which is typically a very highly rated category. In terms of administrator ratings, the faculty seems particularly unhappy with the Dean in the College of Fine Arts. UFF is unsure if that refers to the previous Dean or the new Dean, as the poll was done in February. Dr. Fiorito added that there were some happy people out there as well, like Music. The top of page 4 reflects the interplay of faculty and dean. Human Sciences is rated the worst in terms of climate. But yet the Dean in Human Sciences didn't do that badly as evidenced by the bottom of page 3. Finally, parking is rated the worst of any of the things that were listed.

Ms. Gibbs asked what was the specific wording on the last question for that chart.

Dr. Fiorito responded that it was a bunch of different questions, and the parking question was something like “parking is satisfactory” and participants agree or disagree on a 5-point scale.

Vice President of Finance and Administration Kyle Clark asked whether Dr. Fiorito and UFF were surprised by the parking score.

Dr. Fiorito responded not at all.

Dr. Robin Goodman stated that it’s underestimating the problem to categorize the parking issue as all a bunch of spoiled people that just want to park right by the building.

Vice President Clark responded that he didn’t say anything about anybody being spoiled. Everybody wants to park as close as possible and he understands that.

Dr. Goodman replied that sometimes they just want to be able to find a space.

Ms. Gibbs expressed her appreciation for UFF reviewing the poll results with them.

Dr. Fiorito stated that he was aware that the University is participating in something called the COACHE survey, and wondered whether UFF would be able to see the results from that.

Dr. Kistner replied absolutely. The results are not in yet, but once they are they will be distributed. They may not have the results until August.

Dr. Fiorito responded that he will be looking forward to that, and thanked her for the information.

Dr. Scott Hannahs offered that he was not particularly impressed with the wording of the questions on that survey; it was his opinion that they looked like they wanted pre-determined outcomes.

Ms. Nancy Kellett said that the survey did not seem appropriate for non-teaching faculty.

Dr. Kistner replied that the survey is done every three years. She wasn’t sure whether it was broadened to include more varied responses this time around.

Dr. Hannahs answered that he was asked last time the survey was taken.

Ms. Gibbs asked who comes up with the questions for the UFF poll.

Dr. Hannahs replied that UFF does. He elaborated that they try to be consistent year to year in an effort to capture trends. But they also pull in new questions to try to be relevant to ongoing situations.

4. Intellectual Property Rights for STEM Faculty

UFF

Dr. Hannahs said that the issue isn’t specific to STEM faculty, but he thinks it happens more often with STEM faculty. He brought this up previously at a consultation. He believes it is about the difference between how “works” and “inventions” are considered. He has had some faculty members who have run into issues with this distinction. Works seem to be something that, if a faculty member writes a book or produces a piece of art, it is considered a piece of work, and Faculty members own the rights to it. It’s different it seems if it’s an invention. The difference seems to be between copyright and patents. If it is

an invention, University owns the rights to it. Dr. Hannahs explained that they have had faculty that applied for patents and had waivers of the University rights because they produced during summer when they're not on salary, or are on sabbatical. He specified that he is talking about situations where they took their own time and didn't use University resources, and yet at the moment the University can claim rights, Nor does it matter who thought of it or who put in all the work. He continued that it gets a little funny with software, since software can be both copyrighted and patented. It's the difference in how these are handled that is causing confusion. The faculty are not always aware of this difference. He stated that UFF sees this as an issue and there's some discontent.

Deputy General Counsel Lisa Scoles responded that there is an article in the CBA that talks about this topic. She stated that next year is full book bargaining, so if this is an area that UFF wants to revisit then the parties could attempt to clarify the language at that time. She added that if there is a particular situation UFF would like to discuss, she would be happy to facilitate a meeting. It's hard to provide clarity absent specific context.

Dr. Hannahs answered that he doesn't believe it's a question of the CBA, but of the faculty's interpretation and understanding. He believes he's seeing a divisiveness between the faculty and the administration in how that's being handled.

Ms. Gibbs asked whether the divisiveness he mentioned was in relation to inventions and works or in general.

Dr. Hannahs replied that he's seen it in relation to inventions and works but he thinks it is indicative of a trend in general.

Ms. Gibbs sought to clarify, and asked Mr. Hannahs if he was saying there was a violation of the current contract language.

Dr. Hannahs responded that he does not see a violation, but he thinks it's a matter of fairness. He continued that he can bring it up next year at bargaining and discuss it further.

5. Spending Priorities in Coming Fiscal Years

UFF

Dr. Irene Padavic inquired as to what the University plans to do going forward to comply with Article 23.1C, relating to the annual budget request made by the institution to the legislature for recurring funds. She wondered how these requests are tracked, and whether there was documentation that could possibly be passed along to UFF. She completed her question by asking whatever funding FSU is granted by the legislature, where does faculty fit in with those anticipated priorities.

President Thrasher responded by stating that ever since he was hired, he has been talking about the high priority he puts on faculty, and on rewarding them accordingly in the form of salary increases. However, some years are more aspirational than others, depending on how the legislature addresses the needs of the University. This past year the budget was quite frankly put into flux, mainly because of the Parkland issue. A lot of things changed in the last 3 weeks. Overall he thought the University system did reasonably well. His aspirations haven't changed; he wants faculty to be taken care of as well as possible, with an understanding of how the other priorities of the University fit in as well.

Vice President Clark added that the University didn't get as much in pre-eminence funds this year. He thinks that is perhaps a sign of what is to come, because there are more pre-eminent institutions. The

University did receive a pot of money that only FSU and UF received, and if not for that pot the University would have received much less in terms of recurring funds. His office looks at market data all the time, they look at University budget requests, and it is really about trying to find a happy medium, where he can advance and accomplish the University's strategic plan, while at the same time not offending the legislature by asking for all of it in one large chunk. If you ask the legislature for a number that's too large then it is not taken seriously.

Dr. Padavic thanked them both for their responses.

Dr. Goodman asked how it is decided how much money will be put into existing faculty vs. new hires.

Provost McRorie answered that it's a collaborative decision. They look at requests from all the colleges and departments. Last year they made 2 separate requests. Colleges/departments needed to show evidence that they were pursuing "world class scholars" and what the implications of certain hires would be. These are all metric requirements for the state and the BOG to meet the top 25 goal that the institution has. The pre-eminence money is distributed to FSU with the charge that they're expecting the school to get to the top 25. That's why they decided to start allocating that money to Florida State. She continued that she spent a full week last year with a number of people in conference rooms looking at every college request, what the impact would be on student numbers, graduate student numbers, all kinds of things related to the full range of opportunities of success at the University. It showed 125 new faculty appointments, the most that has ever been hired in a year. New faculty lines were given and was not at the expense of giving current faculty salary increases and market equity distributions for the third year in a row. She feels all these actions do in fact meet the needs of the University moving forward and also meeting the goal of moving into the top 25.

Vice President Clark stated that the two areas that the University scores the poorest on are financial resources and student-to-faculty ratio. The student to faculty ratio needs to drop further in order to leapfrog other institutions.

Provost McRorie added that more faculty makes for a better student to faculty ratio.

Dr. Goodman asked if there is a working definition for "world class scholar" or an idea of how one is identified.

Provost McRorie responded that it is a term that the BOG and the legislature use.

President Thrasher elaborated that the intent of that term is to hire quality people. That's what the legislature wants the University to hire, the best and brightest that can be found.

Vice President Clark alluded to a prior consultation, recounting how the legislature sent a letter that said all the money FSU received last year could be one-time money. The good news is that now that's been established as part of FSU's recurring budget.

President Thrasher offered that no two legislatures are the same, even if they have the same presiding officer. The University's goal is to try to continue to work to get into the top 25. It's something that benefits the University. The University received 51,000 admission applications this year. He thinks that's a very positive sign, one that shows progress is being made. Going back 9 or 10 years ago, FSU lost a lot of faculty members. Now the University is working to build it back up to appropriate student to faculty ratio.

Dr. Goodman stated that she agrees with his sentiments and expressed appreciation for the feedback,

adding that her questions were not meant as hostile.

President Thrasher responded that he didn't take them as hostile. He enjoys talking about the faculty. He continued that generally, when he talks with a new group about the University, the first thing he talks about is how excellent the faculty is.

Provost McRorie reiterated that there have been 125 new faculty hires over the past year, with 80 contracts signed already. There will be a huge influx of new faculty this fall. This money was spent in large part to reduce the class sizes. A little more than half of the classes at FSU are less than 20 students. The reason it's like that is because that environment is more conducive to excellence in both teaching and learning. She continued that the reason she is here, and she believes the reason most University employees are here, is because of a strong bond with and care for the students. She and her peers are doing the best they can to be efficient and effective as the University moves up in the rankings. She stated she is proud to be here and loves this institution and wants the faculty to know that.

Vice President Clark added that they can expect to see over 200 people at new faculty orientation this year.

Provost McRorie highlighted that this amount of hires is over and above what has been done in the past. 125 new faculty lines have been added. The Governor expressed that that money might not be permanent, but the decision was made to go ahead and make that investment anyway.

Vice President Clark offered that move was a bit of a gamble on the University's part, but one they deemed worth taking.

Dr. Goodman prefaced her next question by stating that it may sound hostile but is not meant as such, then wondered what is the relationship between the world class scholar program and the student to faculty ratio. Because it would seem to her like those faculty wouldn't be the ones teaching those classes.

Provost McRorie responded that that's not necessarily the case. All of the new ones being hired are extraordinary people both in and out of the classroom and some will indeed aid the cause of reducing class sizes.

6. Parking

UFF

Ms. Gibbs transitioned the discussion on to parking, the last discussion topic of the day.

Deputy General Counsel Scoles reminded everyone that this setting was not the place to conduct bargaining, however if there were any general comments about parking she and the other members of administration are open to hearing them.

Vice President Clark interjected, stating that general comments in this forum are not particularly helpful. What is most helpful is informing him whenever an incident occurs, so he can help rectify it in the moment. He stated that he always replied to emails and has done so on a number of occasions concerning parking. If there is a situation, please email him about it immediately.

Dr. Michael Buchler replied that he only wanted to thank the administration for the improved parking on the Northeast side of campus. Since the new lot opened it has been a much better situation, and he felt that

the improvement was not getting enough recognition.

Vice President Clark responded that he is working on a number of other improvements that he hopes to implement before the fall. He continued that, as there had not been a tuition increase or a fee increase, it's difficult to add more parking spaces when there is not new revenue coming in. He is exploring ways to add new parking garages, but it's a slow process.

Dr. Buchler inquired as to whether there was any update on new exits leaving the Palm Court parking lot.

Vice President Clark answered that he is working on that and he thanked Dr. Buchler for the positive feedback about parking.

7. Other Business

UFF

Mr. Matthew Lata asked what President Thrasher predicts coming out of the next legislative session.

President Thrasher replied that it's impossible to predict. There's a range of things that could happen. The current leadership in the House and Senate, particularly the Senate, is very pro higher education. The House maybe not as much. He's optimistic about the possibility of having another good session. It's hard to predict until the actual individuals are there but overall he feels good about where things are.

Provost McRorie added that it's important to note that the University would have done better this year if the Parkland incident had not happened.

Dr. Hannahs asked if there was any indication or rumblings among the legislature about going after the University's carry-forward money as they did 3 years ago.

President Thrasher responded that there's always rumblings but he thinks those are being addressed as necessary and the University is making sure it is covered if that comes up. The last time there was a sweep, he remembers well, and will be more prepared if one were to happen now.

Dr. Hannahs responded that he remembers that event as well.

Mr. Lata asked his team if there was anything else, and concluded that they had nothing more.

Ms. Gibbs thanked everybody for coming and for their professionalism and adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourns at 2:45