



UCF Board of Trustees

Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee

September 27, 2024

Agenda Item

DISC-2: Faculty Senate Chair Report

Proposed Action

There is no proposed Board action. The discussion will provide an opportunity for Trustee Stephen King, Faculty Senate Chair to present a summary of the Senate's mission, structure and priorities for the academic year, and allow trustees to engage in discussion with the elected representative of the faculty.

Authority for Board of Trustees Action

N/A

Supporting Documentation Included

Attachment A: Faculty Senate Chair Report

Facilitators/Presenters

Stephen King, Faculty Senate Chair and Trustee

Summary of Key Observations/Recommendations

For the 2024-2025 Academic Year, the Faculty Senate will focus on the following priorities:

1. Strengthen collaboration and communication channels between faculty, department chairs, deans, and university leadership.
2. Modernize our curriculum to embed AI skills, ensuring our graduates are equipped for the technological demands of the future.

The campus's ability to adapt to the evolving higher education landscape, both within the state and nationally, depends on effective shared governance. Faculty and administrators must collaborate to address the challenges we face. Although mechanisms for communication and collaboration exist, internal constraints remain that need attention. Our goal is to strengthen shared governance within academic units, empower Senate committees to address campus issues, provide faculty with clear access to data and information, and optimize how senators represent and engage with their academic units.

To stay competitive in an AI-driven world, our academic programs must evolve. This includes developing new courses that focus on AI literacy, expanding existing programs to incorporate AI-related topics, and offering hands-on experiences with AI tools and technologies. By equipping them with these critical skills, our graduates will be prepared to make meaningful contributions to their communities, pursue advanced studies, and drive the future of technology.

By focusing on collaboration, shared governance, and curriculum modernization, this proactive approach will uphold and strengthen our commitment to academic excellence and innovation, and further support multiple aspects of our strategic plan.

Additional Background

Through collaborative efforts, innovative ideas, and steadfast leadership, the Senate aims to be the catalyst for change, facilitating a nurturing environment where faculty can excel in research and employ groundbreaking teaching methods.

The Faculty Senate was formed in 1967 to provide faculty voice in shared governance with the administration at what was then Florida Technological University. Since that time the name of the university changed to the University of Central Florida, and the Senate changed, too. The UCF Faculty Senate currently has 75 members, chosen proportionally from the academic units on campus.

The main work of the Senate is performed by over 30 different Senate committees, which fall into four main classes. The Senate has two operational councils, undergraduate council and graduate council, which break out into 6 committees to focus on areas including curriculum, course and program review, and policy related to the faculty teaching mission. These councils report to the Senate at the monthly meetings in the fall and spring semesters. There are four Senate operational committees (Budget and Administration, Information Technology, Personnel, and Research) that provide faculty input to the university administration in core areas of the academic mission, and also report to the Senate monthly. Seventeen Senate joint committees are led via joint partnerships with university administrators. These committees are comprised with Senate appointed members, but the committees report to their university administrator, and not the Senate. Examples of these committees include the Faculty Senate Campus Safety and

Security Committee, the University Athletics Advisory Committee, and the Faculty Senate Student Success Council. Four ad hoc committees make up the last group of Senate committees. These committees are charged in response to timely faculty and university needs and are focused in specific areas. The Senate formed an ad hoc Faculty Senate Teaching Evaluation Committee in March of this year to immediately provide faculty input into better ways to evaluate how effective UCF faculty are at teaching our students.

Implementation Plan

The Senate chair's role will be to lead the Senate and the faculty in finding innovative solutions to the problems facing UCF. The Senate is the mechanism of change for faculty and can help the faculty and administration adapt to the changing needs of the University.

The Senate, through its committees and full Senate meetings, is set to undertake a range of initiatives this year as outlined above. As the year progresses, the Senate will delve into other pressing issues, with developed plans and initiatives being escalated to the president and provost for consideration.

Resource Considerations

N/A