MEMORANDUM

TO: All Faculty
FROM: Faculty Senate Office
DATE: March 15, 1996
SUBJECT: Minutes of Faculty Senate Meeting of February 22, 1996

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Naval Modani, Chair, at 4:05 p.m. The roll was circulated for signatures. The minutes of Senate meeting of January 25, 1996 were approved. Guests present included President John Hitt, Vice Provost Frank Juge, Vice Provost Joel Hartman, Dean Marty Wanielista, Dean Kathryn Seidel, Dr. Stephen Rice, Ms. Anne Marie Allison, Dr. John Dietz, Dr. Ray Fisk, Dr. Jose Fernandez, Dr. David Dees, Dr. Jack Ryalls, Dr. C. Harpole, and Mr. Miguel Torregrosa.

Dr. Modani welcomed the guests and indicated the need for continuing today’s meeting to February 29, 1996 if sufficient business was not addressed at today’s meeting. Dr. Cunningham moved that Resolution 1995-1996-11 (Student Perception of Instruction form) be moved to the front of the agenda. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Resolution 1995-1996-11 (Student Perception of Instruction form) was introduced. Dr. Wanielista said that after the last Senate meeting he met with additional faculty for input and some of the suggestions were incorporated in the form. Dr. Davis asked about the wording of questions #7 and #9. He suggested testing the questionnaire on a subset of students before adopting the new form. Dr. Modani said that the new form was tested during the Fall semester and asked for suggestions to improve wording. Dr. Taylor commented that the Resolution allows for changes after one year of testing. Dean Wanielista reported that the Committee had looked at over 700 questions and had a lot of faculty input. He said there would always be faculty who would not feel comfortable with all the questions. Dr. Modani reminded the Senate that the last eight questions are mandated by the Board of Regents and cannot be changed. Dr. Davis moved to amend the first two sentences of the first paragraph of the Resolution as follows (changes are in italics): Be It Resolved, That a new student perception of instruction form (attached) be tested on a random subset of classes. The questions on the form should be tested for reliability and validity over a one year period of time and at the end of that period of time, recommendations on any changes be made to the Faculty Senate. After considerable debate a vote was taken and the amendment was defeated.

Dr. Hagan asked why question dealing with “precautions to prevent cheating” was deleted from the list. Dr. Wanielista answered that some faculty were concerned over misinterpretation of the question and negative publicity. Dr. Tucker moved to delete question #7 and renumber the following questions. The motion was seconded and after some debate, the motion was adopted. Dr. Hagan suggested that faculty use the blanks at the bottom of the form for other questions and questions regarding cheating if they wish to use them. In response to a question about the Teaching Learning Center, Dr. Juge explained that many institutions use Teaching Learning Centers to improve teaching.
effectiveness and that Dr. Dziuban is in the process of reviewing the format and the organization of such a center at UCF. A vote was taken and the resolution was adopted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Modani invited President Hitt to address the Senate. He commented on the upcoming legislative session and some of the issues related to last year’s legislative actions and initiatives. He briefed the Senate on the proposals to charge additional tuition for “excess” hours taken by students. He urged faculty to guard against outside intrusions in matters dealing with the curriculum. The Central Florida legislative delegation is very supportive of UCF. However, it is too early to predict the outcome during the upcoming legislative session. He asked faculty to say something good about UCF when they interact with legislators. He also said that some of the legislators and others do not understand the importance of tenure and faculty should be ready to defend tenure when it comes under attack.

OLD BUSINESS

Dr. Davis, Chair of the Personnel Committee, introduced Resolution 1995-1996-4 dealing with overload compensation and explained the rationale for the resolution. There was considerable discussion on the need for the resolution and whether this resolution will solve the problem. Dr. Davis called for a secret ballot vote on the resolution. The resolution was adopted with 21 for and 12 against the resolution.

Dr. Carole Scott-Kassner, representing Dr. Diane Wink, Chair of the Undergraduate Policy Committee, introduced Resolution 1995-1996-6 dealing with plus/minus grading and explained the committee’s thinking on the resolution. She stated that five of the SUS institutions have plus/minus grading. In response to a question whether this policy would lead to grade inflation, some members stated that this policy is likely to be neutral in this regard. Dr. Kassner assured the Senate that the Committee had researched the question and had discussed the resolution extensively. Dr. Cunningham moved to exclude the “plus” designation for grades A and F. The amendment was seconded and adopted. Dr. Barsch asked if there was a standard way to assign numeric values for pluses and minuses. Dr. McBrayer asked when the plus/minus grading would be implemented. Dr. Frank Juge answered that since this has to go in the catalog, it may not be effective until academic year 1997-1998. A vote was taken and the resolution was adopted.

Dr. Carole Scott-Kassner introduced Resolution 1995-1996-7 dealing with withdrawal deadline and explained some of the motivation for the resolution. Dr. Cunningham questioned if the earlier withdrawal deadline would allow students enough time to evaluate a course. In response to a question, it was stated that this policy also would be effective for academic year 1997-1998. After some additional discussion, a vote was taken and the resolution was adopted.

A motion was made to recess the meeting till February 29, 1996. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously. The meeting recessed at 5:15 p.m. The recessed meeting was called to order by Dr. Naval Modani, at 4:05 p.m. on February 29, 1996.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Dr. Carol Bast reported for Dr. Diane Wink, Chair of the Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee. Two resolutions dealing with catalog choice for students and with GPA for transfer
students were sent to Steering Committee and are likely to be on the agenda for the next Senate meeting. Dr. Wendell Lawther, Chair of the Undergraduate Course Review Committee, will have a report at the March 21, 1996 meeting. Dr. Richard Tucker, Chair of the Graduate Policy and Curriculum Committee, reported that the Committee plans to continue discussion of procedural changes. Dr. Modani stated that Dr. Stephen Goodman, Chair of the Graduate Council, will report at the next meeting. Dr. Duane Davis, Chair of the Personnel Committee, reported that the Committee had met twice. Two resolutions dealing with teaching responsibilities for department chairs and with the tenure system were sent to the Steering Committee. Dr. Walter Johnson, Chair of the Budget and Administrative Procedures Committee, reported the Committee will meet on Friday, March 1, 1996 at 1:00 p.m. in BA 472.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Bast introduced Resolution 1995-1996-8 regarding the length of a semester. She stated that a lot of faculty were dissatisfied with the varying lengths of semesters and with the shortened semesters not giving enough instruction time. Dr. Modani stated that Provost Whitehouse sent back the initial proposal for 1996-1997 calendar to the Academic Calendar Committee as it did not have enough instruction time. Several members agreed with the sentiment behind the resolution but questioned if the impact of a longer semester on other things such as summer schedule, orientation, final exam period, and the break between semesters has been adequately studied. Some members stated that the number of instruction days at UCF meet the BOR requirements. Dr. Modani commented that the BOR requirements are for minimum number of instruction days and UCF can have a longer semester. Dr. Malone asked if Saturday classes are included in the calculation of the calendar. Dr. Dees replied that UCF does not include Saturdays but some other institutions do. Mr. Miguel Torregrosa, President of the UCF Student Body, stated that the shorter semester breaks would not work for students who have outside or part time jobs. A motion by Dr. Cunningham to send the resolution back to the Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee for further review was seconded and adopted.

Resolution 1995-1996-9 regarding American Sign Language to meet Foreign Language requirement was taken up for discussion. Dr. Modani stated that the Student Government Senate had urged the Faculty Senate to consider this resolution at the end of last year. Mr. Miguel Torregrosa reported that last year's Student Senate was concerned with students graduating and hoped this change would help them graduate sooner. But this year's Student Senate held a meeting two weeks ago and decided that American Sign Language should not be a substitute for Foreign Language requirement. He outlined the reasons for the Student Senate Action. Several of the Senate faculty agreed fully with Mr. Torregrosa. Dr. Rautenstrauch said similar resolutions have been defeated three times in the past. Dr. Jack Ryalls, spoke in favor of the resolution. He stated that a bill adopted by the Florida legislature on May 31, 1990 allowed American Sign Language to be substituted for a foreign language requirement. He stated that American Sign Language constitutes a foreign language and has a culture and grammar like any other language. Dr. Dees commented that the law deals with American Sign Language for admission to the SUS. Dr. Modani stated that the chairs in the College of Arts and Sciences were unanimously against the resolution. After a lengthy and heated discussion, a vote was taken and the resolution was defeated.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.