

Committee on Educational Policy & Strategy Minutes
University of Florida Board of Trustees
November 30, 2006
2:45 – 4:00 p.m.
President's Room 215C
Emerson Alumni Hall
University of Florida

Committee Members Present: John Boyles, Cynthia O'Connell (arrived after voting), and Danaya Wright

Others Present: Manny Fernandez, Janie Fouke, Patricia Telles-Irvin, and Ilan Kaufer

Trustee Fernandez called the meeting to order at 2:45 p.m. and asked for approval of the August 18, 2006 and September 7, 2006 minutes. Trustee Wright made the motion, Trustee Boyles seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Trustee Wright motioned to approve all the action items at once, Trustee Boyles seconded, and the motion to approve the following was unanimously approved:

- 1) Tenure upon hire for Mark W. Rieger and Mark D. Shermis
- 2) Student, Health & Athletic and Activity Service Fees and Transportation Fees increases
- 3) Engineering Joint Degree Program with the University of the Virgin Islands

Discussion Items:

Admissions Issues:

Alternative Admission Program: Dr. Fouke gave a brief overview of alternative admission programs used at other institutions such as UT Austin where if students are denied admission, they may attend at a partner campus and if they do well they are admitted to main campus.

Additionally, Dr. Fouke informed the committee that Dr. Evans, Director of Admissions, is looking at a committee to review various models used around the country with UF data to see if a similar program could work for UF.

Trustee Fernandez commented that this is a good idea and would allow a win/win program with UF and other universities in the state of Florida.

Trustees Wright and Boyles asked questions and expressed concern about current community college transfer students and transfer student status in general fitting in with such a model, and Trustee Fernandez stated that it was good that UF was looking into these and other concerns.

Current Application Plans:

Dr. Fouke discussed how several prominent universities in the country have ceased their early admission programs which require a contract from the student. Also the early decision population is different from the rest of the student population. This is being used as a discussion tool to try to understand the current situation before making any decisions.

She continued by stating that currently there are 18,000 applications compared to this time last year of 15,300 and 5,000 early decision applications (4,500 last year). The early decision letters will be sent out December 8th.

For the regular admission, as of November 1st there were 10,200 applications compared to 8,500 from last year and then there is one more regular cycle in January and they will be notified in late March.

Student Government Tuition Update:

Trustee Boyles asked Ilan Kaufer to comment on the survey. Mr. Kaufer stated that they needed a sample size of 700 and they got ten times that many surveys received. 60% of the surveys found that the tuition increases should be used for additional course offerings, financial aid, smaller classes and additional faculty hires. Also, 43% of in-state students support academic enhancement (not the Academic Enhancement Program, as that was not available when the survey was developed), while 25% of out-of-state students support academic enhancement. 35% of in-state students stated no tuition increase is acceptable and about 54-55% of out-of-state students stated no tuition increase acceptable. Mr. Kaufer concluded by thanking UF for taking the time to get the students' opinions.

Trustee Boyles commented that there was about a 60/40 split in favor of willing to pay a higher tuition. He continued by saying that he received a lot of gratitude from students for the survey.

Minus Grades:

Trustee Boyles stated that the Student Senate passed a resolution to deny implementing minus grades. He asked where the process goes at this point.

Trustee Wright stated that due to academic freedom faculty are not required to use plus (+) or minus (-) grades. She also stated that she has asked two students to speak in favor of and two students to speak against the proposal at the next Senate meeting. She continued with commented that minus grades have strong faculty support and the Registrar cost would be approximately \$20,000 to reprogram the grading system. She closed with stating that Fall 2007 would be the earliest the minus grades would go into affect.

Trustee Boyles asked who makes the final decision. Dr. Fouke replied that the President does, no Board of Trustee approval is required.

Trustee Boyles also asked that the students to have a seat at the discussion since they are directly impacted by the decision.

Academic Enhancement Program:

The name has changed to the Academic Infrastructure Fee. The committee discussed in great detail the support of the fee and even though it received unanimous Board of Governors approval, there is still a long way to go. Trustee Fernandez commented that the resolution will be discussed at the BOT meeting tomorrow and it should move forward to next step, and will be a retreat agenda and how to deal with it during the Legislative session.

Student Alcohol Education Requirement:

Dr. Telles-Irvin gave the committee on the background of the 45 minute web-based course and informed them that a registration hold is placed on student record until s/he passes the course. She then gave the committee the following statistics:

97% have taken the course

78% stated the quality of the course is good

63% stated the course expanded their knowledge of use of alcohol

85% stated the course would cause them to pay more attention

78% stated it would influence them

35% of which said it would influence them very significantly

Dr. Telles-Irvin said she is pleased with the results and plans to continue the course.

There was no additional new business and the committee adjourned at 3:35 p.m.