
AAUP Meeting Minutes for 11/30/18

Call to order

A meeting of the Indian River State College chapter of The American Association of College Professors was held on November 30th, 2018 at 1:45pm, in the Kight Center for Emerging Technologies. There were 51 present at the meeting, and 39 people signed the attendance sheet. The current president (Leslie Sterrett), vice-president (Carl Clark), treasurer (Taylor Kilman), and secretary (Brian Siegle) were in attendance. The meeting was called to order and the meeting's agenda was introduced.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the last AAUP meeting, 9/28/18 were posted on the chapter website (<https://irsc-aaup.weebly.com/>). A motion to approve the minutes without a reading was made, the motion was seconded, and the motion carried with no dissenting votes.

Reports

The treasurer provided a current account balance of \$16,910.73. A donation of \$100 was made to the IRSC foundation and an additional expense of \$19 was made to Election Buddy. Our AAUP chapter membership increased to 154 members of AAUP at the college out of 246 full-time faculty (62.6%). This is a 4.46% increase since the last AAUP meeting. Since September, 28th, 2018 the chapter has gained 5 new members while losing 1 to resignation.

Continuing Business: Faculty Evaluation Workgroup

It was announced by Dr. Bruce Fraser that the Faculty Evaluation Workgroup plans to meet in January. Clarification was provided concerning new faculty with no review prior to the current 5-year evaluation process. The committee offered that the faculty member should provide a simple narrative to explain what they have been doing to present at the 5-year evaluation.

Continuing Business: Sliding Pay Scale

The conversation turned to the college's use of a sliding pay scale for IRSC instructors. It was noted that a sliding pay scale is used throughout the college, but it is not applied uniformly throughout the various departments. Faculty were informed that a meeting had taken place with administration to continue discussion of this ongoing issue. The meeting was intended to clarify how the sliding pay scale has been applied in the past. It was noted that just because an instructor is teaching fewer students, it does not mean that faculty are working significantly fewer hours on the class. It was stated that email exchanges have taken place noting that in the contract faculty members should be treated equally. At this point in time, answers to clarify the policy of payment on a sliding scale have not been provided. Faculty were informed that there is a possibility that a formal grievance may be filed in order to resolve the issue.

There were several comments and questions from the floor concerning the policies and pay for DIS (Directed independent Studies). Faculty members pointed out that they often worked the same number of hours or more on classes of less than 15 students as with larger class sizes. Smaller Honors classes were cited as a prime example. It was pointed out that the college is experimenting with a tiered system of course release to students based on how sections fill during registration. It was noted through empirical evidence that students who register early tend to perform better than students who register later for classes. Hence, classes fill in the first tier tend to have better rates of student success than classes that fill in the later tiers. Some bright spots of this system were expressed. It has the potential to prevent provosts from continuing to add new classes that duplicate previously established classes during the same time slot. Faculty members noted some examples of a provost who funnels students to instructors with higher success rates at the expense of instructors with lower success rates. A suggestion was made that a “closed” class should remain closed if there is identical class offered at the same timeslot. A faculty member noted that often express classes have been filling faster than regular classes within the same timeslot. It was posed that two fewer weeks of class may be attractive to many students at the time of registration. It was noted from the floor that department heads have greater access to course schedules in Workday than faculty members, so they can be instrumental in heading off potential issues. Department chairs and deans could jointly monitor student registration and identify lower than normal enrollment numbers early in the process.

At the time of this meeting, it was confirmed that enrollment is down significantly from previous semesters. One faculty member speculated that these numbers could be affected by the current economy’s low unemployment rate, or students were frustrated by the implementation of the new Workday Student registration process. Faculty members were encouraged to periodically check their enrollment numbers to see which classes are closed and which ones remain open. At this point in time, the process of opening and closing classes is a manual process. A faculty member told the group to double check Workday rosters since on various instructor roles there are some student names missing and some student names that have been added. Faculty members were instructed to not assign a grade to students that did not appear on their roster. If they did it could block the instructor of record from actually assigning the student’s grade. If they encountered this issue, they were instructed to call Ms. Elizabeth Russakis.

Questions from the floor were welcomed. The first question asked if a yearly contract employee of the college is “fired”, does the college need to offer rational. The response was that, “There must be ‘due cause’ and documentation to fire any contract employee.” It was also expressed, however, that yearly contract employees may be informed of nonrenewal by December 1st, which is technically not “firing.” If they are not renewed, they are still bound contractually to finish the spring and summer semesters. A “quick” termination (i.e., immediate separation) must have “cause”.

A conversation was started concerning negotiation items for next year. A proposed meeting will be held during the first month of January 2019 to discuss negotiations items. Faculty will write their priorities on notecards, and the results will be shared and tabulated. These suggestions will help focus the framing of possible negotiation items for next year. It was announced that a survey will be sent to faculty to take suggestions and priorities for upcoming negotiation items. It was stated that the overwhelming concern last year was the issue of how faculty were to be evaluated. This helped last year’s negotiations committee focus on a few key concerns of faculty. Members present were encouraged to talk to their colleagues to find important issues or concerns that could be potential negotiation items. The discussion pivoted to course evaluations. There is an issue with course evaluations if a teacher substitution has been registered within the online system. Duplications have occurred with multiple teachers listed for the same course identification number. In addition, the

current Blackboard course evaluation student link is listed as “Speak up, your opinion counts”, and not “Course Evaluation”. It was suggested that due to the heading, some students would not know that this is the proper link for their course evaluation. Faculty applying for promotion were reminded to send a letter of intent for promotion. Officers thanked faculty for taking the time to attend the Friday before final grades were due.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was proposed, seconded, and carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:28pm.

Secretary

Date of approval