

University Faculty Meeting

November 1, 2024

Agenda:

1. Comments from President Chris Roellke
2. Comments from Provost Elizabeth Skomp
3. Comments from Faculty Senate Chair Steven Smallpage
4. Discussion of National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results (Colin Hilton-MacFarlane, Assistant Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness)
5. Introductory presentation of faculty governance reform proposal (Steven Smallpage and Faculty Senate)

The meeting was called to order at 12:00pm by Provost Skomp.

Provost Skomp welcomed the faculty, outlined the agenda for the session, and then introduced President Chris Roellke.

Comments from President Chris Roellke

President Chris Roellke expressed gratitude to faculty members for their strong engagement during the recent Board of Trustees meetings and homecoming celebrations. President Roellke acknowledged that his original remarks were intended to cover a range of topics discussed with the Board, including strategic planning initiatives and institutional priorities. However, to allow time for more in-depth comments from Provost Skomp and Faculty Senate Chair Steven Smallpage, he chose to keep his comments brief. President Roellke highlighted that recent university activities were in line with goals for student engagement, alumni relations, and academic excellence, setting a positive tone for the academic year.

Comments from Provost Elizabeth Skomp

Provost Elizabeth Skomp provided an update on information shared with the Student Experience and Success Committee at the recent Board of Trustees meeting. She noted the alignment of Academic Affairs strategic priorities with the University's Forward Together strategic priorities. In the Student Experience and Success Committee and in a plenary entitled "The Future of University Marketing: Academic Programs and the Stetson Experience," she provided information about Hatter Ready and aspirations for the University's graduate programs. Provost Skomp also highlighted other academic initiatives for Board members, including the Quality Enhancement Plan, current and future activities connected to academic freedom and free expression, and Generative AI. Each academic dean also had the opportunity to present their vision and strategic priorities for 2024-25 and beyond to the Board.

Comments from Faculty Senate Chair Steven Smallpage

Faculty Senate Chair Steven Smallpage offered insights into recent Faculty Senate efforts, with a primary focus on enhancing faculty governance and representation. He acknowledged the

importance of collaboration with administration and conveyed optimism about the Senate's initiatives to foster constructive dialogues. Dr. Smallpage highlighted recent successes in advocacy, as well as ongoing matters of faculty interest, including faculty workload, budget transparency, and institutional support for academic research. He encouraged faculty to participate actively in Senate activities and provide feedback on governance proposals.

Discussion of National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results (Colin Hilton-MacFarlane, Assistant Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness)

AVP Colin Hilton-MacFarlane presented the latest NSSE data, including a snapshot of student engagement across several key metrics, including academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and campus environment. The results showed areas of strength, such as high levels of student satisfaction with academic support and accessible faculty, as well as areas where there is room for growth, particularly in enhancing the depth of academic interactions. AVP Hilton-MacFarlane noted that peer comparison data could help identify specific strategies to foster engagement, such as strengthening first-year academic experiences and increasing opportunities for collaborative research. The presentation led to a brief discussion among attendees, and faculty expressed interest in further analyzing the data to inform potential curricular adjustments and co-curricular programming.

Introductory presentation of faculty governance reform proposal (Steven Smallpage and Faculty Senate)

Faculty Senate Chair Steven Smallpage introduced a preliminary proposal aimed at reforming faculty governance to create a more inclusive, transparent, and efficient decision-making process. He outlined the proposal's goals to restructure certain committees to streamline operations and to establish clearer channels for faculty input on major decisions. Dr. Smallpage invited faculty to review the proposal closely and attend upcoming Senate sessions dedicated to gathering feedback and refining the plan. He expressed a strong commitment to building a governance model that reflects the diverse perspectives within the faculty body.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:15pm.