



College of Engineering and Computing

Faculty Council Meeting

January 28, 2021

Committee members in attendance (Zoom): Joshua Hutcheson (BME), Trina Fletcher (SUCCEED, joined at 2:30pm), Vladimir Pozdin (ECE, joined at 2:11pm), Jessica Ramella-Roman (BME), Mohamed El-Zomor (MSCIS), Ibrahim Tansel (MME), Albert Gan (CEE), Xia Jin (CEE), Alexandra Strong (SUCCEED), Xuan Lv (MSCIS)

Meeting called to order at 2:07pm by Dr. Jessica Ramella-Roman

1. Dean Volakis joined at the beginning of the FCOG meeting.

The Dean noted that the 2025 Strategic Plan will be released soon. The Dean reiterated the need for PhD growth and faculty hires to increase our reputation and ranking (both discussed last meeting). He also emphasized teamwork and collaboration in the context of applying for proposals. We need to target large, collaborative grants as a way to grow our research programs. He is also going to continue to encourage faculty to increase our research output. This also means getting close to 4 PhD students per faculty member, which will need to come from RA support. The Dean noted that CEC lost \$500,000 in support form UGS last year because of a reduction in our graduate student population. CEC is committed to growing these numbers and is also involved in efforts to help GPDs get data more easily and quickly.

Question: How can biomedical engineering (and other departments) become more involved in large proposals?

Answer: Most of the larger proposals that have come from CEC recently have focused on quantum electronics, cybersecurity, and topics not directly involved in health-related research. There are, however, many calls in the biomedicine area, especially in the context of big data. We should be seeking these opportunities, and if we find some that could benefit from large, collaborative efforts, we should send them to Dr. Osama Mohammed and the Dean. CEC is also looking for more joint appointments to increase collaboration across the College.

Question: Many projects in some sectors are funded by the state and local agencies. Should we discourage these?

Answer: We should not discourage applying for these smaller funds, but we also need to look at the bigger picture. We need more name branding, and the larger projects help with this. We need to do both.

Question: There are some difficulties in hiring employees/staff (especially students). Do you have a solution?

Answer: This is due to the current situation, and all hires must go through the President's office. For temporary hires, we are currently working through some of the issues and trying to streamline the process.

Dean left the meeting 2:40pm.

2. Discussion regarding new building and space allocation on MMC.

Representatives in Tallahassee are interested in breaking ground on the building very soon, hopefully by summer. The discussion now is moving to whom (including across colleges) will have space in the building. Thus far, the plan is for this building to house CEC activities. Other colleges may have space on the ground floor, but the discussions are ongoing.

3. Discussion on planned CEC Faculty Assembly.

Dr. McGoron and Elizabeth Naranjo have asked the FCOG to help organize a Faculty Assembly, potentially on March 31st. The goal is to invite the Provost, Vice Provost Wilson, and President Rosenberg. The upper administration would discuss the state of affairs across FIU and then hold a Q&A session. The idea is to make this particular assembly faculty-centric. FCOG members were in favor of holding this Assembly. Potential topics to discuss: selection of chairs and directors; non-tenure track promotional guidelines; plans for CEC and FIU growth. FCOG members will poll faculty from individual units and compile a list of topics to discuss at the next FCOG meeting. We will then forward these discussion points to the administration before the assembly.

4. Discussion on time and minutes of future FCOG meetings.

For the Spring semester, FCOG will continue to have meetings on the last Thursday of every month at 2pm. We will invite the Dean to join for the last 15 minutes of each meeting. Moving forward, minutes will be posted on the website. The FCOG secretary will maintain the website, which will also be used to update awards announcements.

5. Discussion on evaluation of CEC and departmental administration.

The FCOG will create a list of evaluation questions using Qualtrics. Most of the discussion centered around how to distribute the survey and the results. FCOG will likely send the survey via email. A repository with the results will then be collected, and a link to this repository will be distributed to faculty via email as well. The survey will give faculty an opportunity to evaluate Chairs, Directors, Associate Deans, and the Dean. Faculty will only be able to evaluate Chairs/Directors of their unit. FCOG may also provide the results to the Provost's office. Only research, teaching, clinical, and tenured/tenure-track faculty will have the opportunity to complete the evaluations. FCOG will obtain the relevant email addresses for each unit from the Dean's office. The survey will be ready for distribution following the next FCOG meeting.

6. Discussion on courtesy appointments.

Courtesy appointments still need clarification. Prior to next FCOG meeting, members will review the minutes from December and the BME Policy. FCOG will draft the outline of a general CEC policy at the next meeting for distribution to the individual units.

7. Discussion on DEI efforts in graduate programs

There are ongoing efforts to evaluate diversity, equity, and inclusion in graduate recruiting and retention. An upcoming meeting will discuss issues and ways to improve current practices. All GPDs have been asked to attend the meeting. Faculty can reach out to Dr. Trina Fletcher for more details.

Meeting closed at 3:30 PM