

Faculty Senate President's Report
March, 2013

This report is for informational purposes only, and is not intended for Senate action.

Senate Constitution – The changes approved by the faculty in the Senate Constitution were brought before the DBOT at its February meeting on February 25 in Winter Haven for the first read. The second reading and vote is scheduled for the March 18 meeting. Until that time, we are still operating under the previous Constitution.

Forums –The Spring Faculty Forums are scheduled for March, 2013. Refreshments will be provided by the College. Faculty are invited to attend either or both of the meetings to be held March 19th in LAC1133 at 3:30 and March 21st in WLR108 at 3:00. The November Forums were very successful, resulting in the resolution of many issues of importance to faculty. Please encourage all your colleagues to attend.

Fingerprinting – In order to comply with Florida statutes, the College is about to begin an update of its employee fingerprint records. These records will then be held in an electronic file by the State of Florida, and the College will be notified if any of its employees violate any of the statutes which would cause them to be unqualified for employment. Any employee who has been employed for five years or more by the end of 2013 is subject to this re-fingerprinting (more recently hired employees already have current records).. This is a HUGE task, and, although the College has one such electronic fingerprinting machine, in Winter Haven, it would be extremely difficult to schedule all employees for fingerprinting in Winter Haven before July 1. All faculty should be aware that they will be receiving an email from the President of the College this week regarding the procedure for fingerprinting, along with alternative sites where they can accomplish this task at the expense of the College. It is possible that, as a result of this fingerprinting, some current employees might become disqualified for employment. A list of the offenses which might result in an employee's dismissal will be circulated prior to fingerprinting so that this will not come as a surprise to anyone currently employed by the College.

Operational Issues –The President's Team meets monthly to discuss strategic plans and to update each other on current operational issues. In the spirit of better communication between the administration and the faculty, I will be distributing the agenda together with the update of operational issues to all faculty after that meeting. The most recent meeting was held Friday, March 8th, and the update is attached and will be sent out to all faculty at the start of this week.

SPD/EEF Funds - We, as a College, have grown larger in recent years, while the State of Florida's contributions to our budget have not kept pace with this growth and with inflation. One of the areas which has felt the strain is Professional Development funds, which include funds for college courses for employees, as well as for conference attendance, and special approved SPD projects. By January, 2013, we were already more than \$100,000 over budget in this area for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. In the interest of keeping our focus on education, the President has stated that she does not want us to have to cut back on this employee benefit, but we might consider making up the difference by redirecting funds from our EEF budget. EEF funds are used for Polk State College enrollment of employee dependents. The faculty is asked to consider how we can best rein in these expenses, while still encouraging educational and professional development pursuits of our employees.

The Human Relations Department will be sending out a Qualtrex Survey this week to try to determine, from those who have participated in screening committees under the Open Hire System, what advantages and what problems they are seeing under this system. The survey is short, but the department asks that faculty please take the time to fill out the online survey, and to give them this valuable input to help improve the system!

Faculty will be taking part in personal and departmental goal setting sessions regarding the 5 Core Values. These will be led by the academic deans. Departmental meeting will be held within the next several weeks to accomplish this.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dodie Cowan, President