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MEMORANDUM

To: Julio Frenk
University President

From: Tomás A. Salerno
Chair, Faculty Senate

Date: May 4, 2018

Subject: Faculty Senate Legislation #2017-49 (D) – 2018 Faculty Senate Student Affairs
Committee Report and Recommendations



The Faculty Senate, at its April 18, 2018 meeting, unanimously approved to accept the annual report and recommendations of the Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee.

This legislation is sent to you for your information.

TAS/rh

Enclosure

cc: Jeffrey Duerk, Executive Vice President and Provost
Tywan G. Martin, Chair, Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee



Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee

2017-2018 Annual Report

Committee Membership

Tywan G. Martin (chair), Ricardo Bascuas, Douglas Crawford, Mark Friedman, Sung Hee Joo, Joanna Lombard, Carmen Presti, Joaquin Roy, David Steinberg, Naoko Takao, and *ex officio* members Adrian Nuñez, Tatiana Perrino, and Jennifer Rau.

Committee Activities

The Faculty Senate requested the committee address the following issues:

A. Investigate the Concerns Associated with "Progress to Degree:

- a. The committee met with Ray Nault, Executive Director, Student Financial Assistance and Employment and discovered the issue of "progress to degree" could potentially have grave financial consequences for students from lower socioeconomic demographics and honor students.
- b. Since financial assistance is only granted up to the required credit hours to fulfill degree requirements, a policy such as academic forgiveness is not federally recognize and could lead to financial issues for some students that have used this policy during their academic career. Additionally, students enrolled in amendatory, baseline, and corrective courses that do not count towards progress to degree completion could potentially experience similar financial issues before graduating from the University.
- c. **Thus, the committee recommended Mr. Nault to develop a "wish list" designed to address this issue. The "wish list" has been attached to this file.**

B. Examine Changes to the Thanksgiving Break:

- a. Committee members determined there was no need to amend the Thanksgiving Break schedule. The committee felt the advantages of the week-long break outweighed the disadvantages and there is no significant evidence to suggest an adjustment be made to the current Thanksgiving Break format.

C. Latin Designation Concerns:

- a. The committee concluded changes needed to be made to CaneLink allowing students to view their cumulative GPA that includes any transferred credit hours from another college or university.

- b. While the committee agreed the previous semester's GPA before graduating should be used to determine honors candidacy at commencement, this information should be explicitly stated in the University Honors bulletin.

D. Investigate Changes to UM's Spring Break:

- a. The general consensus from the committee was that the University gives serious thought and consideration to altering UM's Spring Break to coincide with Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Spring Break, for this impacts a number of UM faculty, staff, and graduate students with children enrolled in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.
- b. If an amendment to the Spring Break schedule cannot be reasonably made, the committee recommended accommodations should be extended to individuals within the UM community that this impacts.**

E. Early Notification for Students Experiencing an Illness

- a. Based on a grade appeal this semester, the committee recommended faculty to include information in their syllabi that explains what a student should do if they experience an illness precluding them from completing the course.
- b. If there is a policy, document, or language the University encourages faculty to use in their syllabi for situations such as this, the committee recommended it circulate to faculty before classes commence in the fall semester.**

F. Other business

- a. Two academic appeals were received and heard by the committee. The committee reviewed and made a recommendation to the Provost for one of the appeals, and the Provost's decision was communicated to the student appellant. The second appeal was recently received and the committee is in the process of deliberation.

Top Five Wishlist

- A. **Institutional and Leadership Support** – Financial aid and student employment are challenged with supporting student success while maintaining compliance with regulatory requirements. Supporting student success is a primary priority for Student Financial Assistance and Employment (OSFAE), and we take all allowable opportunities to support student success while considering regulatory requirements. That said, not all areas of UM understand this balancing act. Having broad institutional support and understanding of the balancing act of OSFAE.
- B. **Greater Opportunity to Influence Out and Utilize All Tools Available to support Student Achievement** – Financial aid and student employment are tools that support tuition revenue while at the same time it is a primary expense for UM. Since financial aid and student employment touch such a broad scope of the organizational landscape (from academics to student affairs to enrollment and campus crime reporting), it is essential that OSFAE is engaged and involved in policy related decisions that impact UM's Title IV and state financial aid eligibility.
- C. **Formalized Process to Communicate Out Regulatory Changes and Updates to Institutional and School Leadership** – Over the last couple years there have been several notable updates (for example, Financial Aid Course Audit, Gifts/Awards, Fellowships/Trainee Scholarships), and while meeting individually with units on campus has helped, it is not an efficient way to communicate out to such a large organization. The communication from Deans and Associate Deans into the departments have not proven effective. The goal would be to formalize a process that allows OSFAE to communicate a more effective message to all the necessary stakeholders.
- D. **Centralized Pipeline to UMIT** – The process of improving system utilization means sharing coding and working through technical challenges as a cohesive unit. Over the last several years and many RFS attempts, we have not had much success with implementing some of the most significant enhancement requests. I would like to see greater collaboration between OSFAE and UMIT programmers to find solutions to existing challenges.
- E. **Additional Financial Aid Personnel** – Senior financial aid personnel spent considerable time analyzing workloads, understanding system limitations, as well as educating institutional leadership, given the increased demands on existing resources. In comparison to last year, date to date, the office has experienced a 55% increase (4,745 files) in the number of financial aid applications that need to be reviewed. This means that on average, each advisor of financial assistance has an increased workload between 500-700 more files that need to be examined; adding 980 additional hours towards to file review. This has led to turnover in the undergraduate financial aid area, and currently, the office is searching for an assistant director and two senior advisors. The Financial Aid EPN staffing survey conducted during the past year, based on the 2015-16 academic

year, has the University of Miami behind many of its peers with application and file review.

Institution	FA Application and File Review Personnel	Senior Financial Aid Administrators	Avg. FA App of ADMIT Students per FA FTE
Notre Dame	12	4	69
Emory University	13	2	58
Boston University	15	9	96
Boston College	11.6	12	51
University of Miami	10	2.5	215