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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Thursday, April 2, 2009

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes (April 2, 09)

In attendance: Wendy Brandon, Laurie Joyner, Jim Small, Steve St. John, Susan Lackman, Scott Rubarth, Jennifer Cavanaugh, Eric Zivot, Yusheng Yao, Alex Winfree

AAC will approve minutes from February 26, March 5 and March 19 after members make corrections on the drafts.

Announcement: Laurie briefed the members about the message regarding Maymester sent out on March 17. At the recent ACS Deans meeting, the Maymester idea was discussed as a way to meet students needs while generating revenue. Roger asked Laurie about the feasibility of the idea at Rollins. Laurie asked Toni to produce a list of courses and chose eight among them according to the ranks of students demand. The Maymester will be from May 12 to 28, three hours a day and four days a week. The links to students were sent out today. This was done during the last week and I didn't see any governance problem because these are not new courses; no new hires are involved; and these are parallel to intersession courses. Scott: There is no controversy about it but AAC's approval would be nice. Laurie: what do you [AAC members] suggest? Jim: intersession courses go through AAC. Jim asked about 12 weekly contact hours rather than 16. Laurie said it was normal practice in other schools. Laurie asked if the courses should be open to Holt students if not enough students registered. Susan: unless they are cross listed. Laurie: the response from students and parents are positive. Eric: historically, summer construction projects make such a program not viable. Laurie: we will be on "first come, first served" basis for housing arrangement. Scott: we already have courses similar [to Maymester] such as travel labs. Laurie: we should utilize our facilities from morning until night and hopefully think in more flexible way. This is an experiment: for bright students to catch up or go ahead with less tuition. Wendy: we need some communication to the faculty, informing them that we did this for these reasons. Laurie: we met last week and AAC did not have meeting. Jim: that is not controversial and we endorse it. Scott: we can say that it is a pilot project and in the fall we will evaluate it. The project was endorsed by AAC. Laurie: you [Wendy] will report to the Executive Committee for approval and then report to the faculty. Eric: this is an attempt to respond the students' demand for GE and no favoritism to any faculty members.

Discussion on Marvin's email regarding Communications curriculum change: Wendy: I was disturbed. This was bullying. Also the Palestinian thing [a Holt School course about Palestine and Israel relations]. Bob talked to me about it ten minutes before class. I didn't know anything except an email from Eric. I promised to AAC and get back to him. Then he came back and emailed Laurie and me, with different tones, about trying to get rid of this course. At first I thought he misunderstood it. Actually he didn't listen. We were considering the issue. This got blown out. Foglesong's email was threatening—"I know people [I got the media contact]...." Don Davison and others all supported Foglesong. Laurie: AAC didn't have improper conversations. Wendy: people just jumped on the emails. Ben. Steve wrote to Bob, who maybe misunderstand it. But no one respond to my email or to this committee. Jim: This is stupid. These are two totally different matters. Sharon mentioned it. That is the end of it. Wendy: What is the necessity to dramatize it? Making it a conspiracy? Laurie: this stuff is routine. It is

built into the culture. We should express [our opinions] in the Executive committee about the offensive emails every time. Eric: I move to ask Foglesong to explain to the AAC. Wendy: Marvin also. Laurie: We should go through the Executive committee and then to the faculty. Public pain should be processed publicly. Jennifer: What is the college policy about the verbal harassment? Some of my junior faculty have received threatening emails. Laurie: the Dean could remove the department head. Susan: I have concerns about Wendy running for president. A day before [the election] Fogleson came out. Women tend to be the targets of threatening emails. People should ask questions in civil and respectful way of their colleagues. Wendy: Sharon got bad emails. The poor adjunct faculty member got ugly emails. Scott: should we all write back to Marvin? Wendy: this is false assumption. We didn't discuss the course or faculty. My character was smeared. A lot of people got blindcopied [emails]. Eric: I stick to my original stand. I move both Marvin and Rick [Foglesong] to be called to this or other committee for this ill-advised collegiality. Wendy: I'll bring [the issue] to the Executive committee to start with. Why don't we address it—this bullying through email? Eric: I call a vote on my move: AAC ask Fogleson and Newman for using improper language...Scott: without first checking the facts. Laurie: to accomplish our goal I want a discussion about it. Why do a few people do it routinely? [To Wendy], you can express your concerns about the misrepresentation, to disabuse it on behalf of AAC to the Executive committee. It was never an issue and explain [why]. Scott: ask people to please check the facts. We don't want to sound bullying back. Wendy: a few full professors. I am not a full professor and I want to get there. Eric: then you face potential denial. Wendy: this is hierarchical. This is harassment. Out of their own interests and damage other people's reputation and psychological state. Jim: this is non-issue, unless to gain notoriety. Wendy: to neutralize other voices. Eric: I am inclined to bully back. Laurie: to shine spotlight on it. Scott: to check on the facts. Susan: this is toxic stuff. This is its distinctive value. Laurie: [we should be] careful, not to personalize it. Jim moved to table Eric's motion and Scott supported Jim's motion by saying that we should not legitimize their irresponsible behavior by giving them a forum. Eric's motion was vetoed by a vote of 3:1. Others were abstained. Susan: we have a host of people and we know who they are. Alex: I am here 4 years and from my experience this issue about Rollins' culture should be addressed to the Executive committee and then to the faculty. Jim: the premise is silly. Laurie: It hurts people and faculty need to hear about it. Otherwise people jump on it—we ask students not to do it. We operate it according to rules and above-board. Jennifer: this isn't collegial language in these emails--injustice, witch hunt. Do we have a college policy on harassment like this? Wendy: only on sex, race and ethnicity, according to the federal government guidelines. Eric: I'm a Jewish, the references to "anti-Semitism, witch hunt" suggest "Wicca." Laurie: how to make people feel safe? Eric: as the Dean, can you remove a full professor? Laurie: If I have multiple complaints and have proof, I can. We govern through peer pressure. Wendy: it bothers me. This is not shared governance. It is manipulation. My response is immediate. We never had improper discussion.

Scott: About Marvin's email about Communications. Wendy: I was informed [by Rick Bommelje] to have a meeting including Laurie, Marvin, you and me. Jim: AAC say no. This is programmatic issue. To be vetted it through AAC. Wendy: they have the notes [I sent them]. Scott: like the African-American minor. Jennifer: what about wording. Wendy: I wrote down AAC's decision and sent it to them. He [Rick] wrote it back. I think it a bit ugly. Laurie: he never wrote to my office about the meeting. Wendy: I try not to inflame it and didn't answer. I

checked with you guys. I was in London last week, giving a paper. You send your proposal like everybody else.

Discussions on RP pilot proposals: Susan: I will meet RP group this week. What do AAC want from us? Every proposal, rationale, ranking? Jim: we want top two proposals, rationales for choosing them. Laurie: what if there are suddenly problems with the faculty members in one of them? We should have ranking, confidentially, [if such things happen].

Discussion about the wording of Wendys' report to the Executive committee about the accusation without checking the facts. Others jumped on it and people got hurt. Scott: use of the word "bullying." Jennifer: based on falsehood. Laurie: not to tiptoe around it. [AAC] Committee wants to have the two issues discussed openly, on note. Informing the faculty. Setting the record straight. With Chronology [of what happened].

The meeting was adjourned.