

Department of Public Relations
Faculty Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2016
9:35 a.m.

Members Present: John Wright, Chair, Linda Hon, Mary Ann Ferguson, Rita Men, Moon Lee, Kay Tappan, Mickey Nall and student assistant Edward Ballester.

Dr. Wright started the meeting with a few announcements:

- A welcome to Lisa Burnett as the new Office Coordinator for the department. Lisa will be working all day Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and some hours on Tuesdays. Lisa, who comes to us from the dean's office in CALS, already knows the UF system.
- Wright clarified, in case there was any doubt, that he is not a candidate for the department chair position.
- Wright announced that Corky and Stephen Smeyak, Paul's wife and son, have created the G. Paul Smeyak Sports Journalism and Communications Internship Endowment in memory of Paul, and to provide a lasting legacy of his contributions to the College. This will enhance the ability of students to take advantage of internship possibilities.

Deanna Pelfrey announced that she is still accepting Bateman applications. Mary Ann Ferguson asked for more information to pass along to prospects.

Agenda Items:

1. Chair Search

Linda Hon updated the faculty on the chair search. She named a strong list of organizations through which the position has been and will be advertised, and Dean Kiouis has approved each. She also shared names of several people who are interested, including some excellent prospects, and asked for any other suggestions.

Hon expressed difficulty finding times the committee members can all meet. October 31, 1:40-3:50 pm will be the time for the meeting to review

applications. Phone interviews will be in November, possibly Nov. 4 and 8, and the on campus interviews will be conducted in January. The correct membership of the search committee is Hon, Pelfrey, Lee, Christiano, Nall, Sylvia Chan Olmsted and Rosanna Fisk.

Wright paused to introduce student assistant Edward Ballester, who was taking the minutes.

2. **SLO Assessment Data Discussion** – Wright stated that what UF and SACS is most interested in is how we adapt to the data. He has to file a report with Dean Weigold by Oct. 1.

In particular, there were high numbers in the “inadequate” category in three areas of the PUR 4800 data: Ability to describe importance of two theories; the function and components of formative research in the practice of strategic public relations; and the difference between formative and evaluative research and the role each plays in strategic planning for public relations.

The faculty suggested more emphasis on these topics in course work. Lee suggested particular emphasis on how theories are taught. The faculty also acknowledged that the instrument measuring these competencies was cumbersome. Rita Men suggested adoption of a new, more specific and focused multiple choice questionnaire which has already been designed. Hon suggested adoption of a higher quality PR Research textbook and suggested Katie Paine’s book, “Measure What Matters.”

Meanwhile, the data from PUR 4100 Writing and VIC 3000 looked very positive. The faculty agreed to keep up the good work in these courses. However, Kay Tappan asked whether should exclude non-PR majors in the data. Wright and others responded that this could be useful.

3. Graduate Enrollment in Public Relations

Pelfrey indicated that some of the students are taking more than two years to do the program.

Ferguson emphasized that there were a lot of incomplete applications this year. Tappan suggested that we review the application and see if there are any issues with it. The issue of lack of funding came up. Wright stated that with a large PhD program, funding for numerous master’s students is difficult. Ferguson stated that the PR MAMC to Pro MA transfers said that they didn’t feel like they had

enough time. Hon responded that the students don't really have to finish in one year. Members agreed that the online description of the PRO MA was now difficult to locate.

Wright suggested inviting Dean Treise in to the next meeting to discuss enrolment and other issues.

Hon suggested the need for clarification on course development goals. Tappan responded that perhaps we should invite Dean Weigold to a meeting.

4. Journal of Public Interest and Communications

Hon stated that people are interested in Frank Scholar. However, there is lack of funding and institutional support. UF has an online peer-review journal but this would require a supervisor. Joe Glover is interested in UF Press, but it's for profit. Hon said the librarians are supportive of online public platforms such as at Stanford University. Dean McFarlin is supportive, but we would need an editor, who would not have to be at UF. Lauren Griffin who works with Frank has indicated interest in managing the journal and Dean McFarlin agreed to provide salary for a year @ 20/hrs a week. Kiousis suggested \$2500 yearly stipend for an editor.

The meeting was adjourned 10:30 am.