

2011-12 FGCU Faculty Senate Effectiveness Survey

The Faculty Senate Effectiveness Survey was created by the Executive Leadership Team to gather feedback from Faculty Senate and Senate Teams and Committees about certain aspects of the faculty governance system. To that end, Senators, Senate Alternates, Senate Leadership Team, and the members of Senate Teams and Committees were invited to participate in a brief survey that ask respondents to rate the effectiveness of Senate work in a cluster of areas. Respondents were also offered the opportunity to provide additional comments on each question in an unstructured response field. A final item at the end of the survey gave respondents the option of sharing any additional comments that weren't captured in the focused questions.

The results of this survey are below. Unstructured responses are summarized after each question; underlying data from which summaries were created is available upon request to the Faculty Senate Executive Leadership.

Question 1

Governance structure: This year, two new standing groups - the University Appointments Team and the Senate Planning and Budget Advisory Committee - were introduced into the Senate governance system to improve faculty participation and communication in shared governance. How well did these new entities accomplish their goals and improve Senate's effectiveness?

	1 = not effective at all	2	3	4	5 = highly effective	Not enough information to respond	Rating Average	Response Count
ANSWER:	3.3% (2)	3.3% (2)	6.7% (4)	31.7% (19)	13.3% (8)	41.7% (25)	4.73	60
						Other (please specify)		9

Summary of Comments to Question 1

Number of comments: 9

4 comments indicated support for the formation and continued operation of the two new groups described in the question. These comments cited increased effectiveness of Faculty Governance System, transparency, improved coordination between PBC and Senate, and the value of modeling the behaviors we seek in shared governance as benefits of the new groups.

1 comment indicated that it is too soon to tell how effective these groups will be.

3 comments expressed concern about the following: a lack of information regarding the formation of these groups, the need for more follow up to ensure that policies and procedures are being fulfilled in practice, and perceived lapses in administrative commitment to shared governance.

1 comment expressed respondent's view that Senate must be more active in coordinating with UFF regarding faculty rights and compensation.

Question 2

Focus and objectives: Did Senate spend time on the right issues and topics? That is, in addition to its regular business, how effectively did Senate respond to dynamics and matters that required Senate's attention as they arose?

	1 = not effective at all	2	3	4	5 = highly effective	Not enough information to respond	Rating Average	Response Count
ANSWER:	5.0% (3)	5.0% (3)	10.0% (6)	36.7% (22)	35.0% (21)	8.3% (5)	4.17	60
						Other (please specify)		8

Summary of Comments to Question 2
Number of comments: 8

3 comments expressed approval of Faculty Senate’s responsiveness to issues outside regular business and offered various additional comments:

- 1 positively commented on Senate’s response to the reallocation space in Ben Hill Griffin Hall
- 1 comment suggested recalibrating Senate agendas so that business items appear before standing reports
- 1 comment indicated a lack of direct evidence to comment extensively on this question, though the shared governance initiative and the presidential compensation information were singled out as valuable

3 comments were critical of some aspect of Faculty Senate’s response to non-regular business this year

- 1 comment criticized what the respondent perceived as the dominance of College of Arts and Sciences concerns in ways that proved counterproductive to Senate working relationships with Administration. Another respondent indicated concern about the tone of Faculty Senate communications.
- 1 comment criticized Senate for being overly reactive in general and a communication style that respondent perceived as inappropriate.
- 1 comment indicated that the addition of more committees adds to faculty workloads without providing sufficient governance results or change; respondent perceives this dynamic as distracting faculty from administrative actions.

2 comments suggested issues that require further attention: making the campus smoke free and addressing workload, service commitments, course size and perceived inequities in graduate vs. undergraduate instructional loads.

Question 3

Leadership initiatives: This year, beyond its regular business, Senate dedicated significant resources and political capital to three leadership initiatives: The Outcomes and Assessment Task Force, a faculty-led group that proposed revisions to the University’s Student Learning Outcomes; implementation of a survey of faculty perceptions of chairs’ and deans’ performance; and initiation of a process by which faculty, administration, staff, and students come together to define what shared governance means on campus. Given the results of these initiatives, how useful is the leadership-initiative model as a way to prioritize senate's time and resources over and above its ordinary work?

	1 = not useful at all	2	3	4	5 = very useful	Not enough information to respond	Rating Average	Response Count
ANSWER:	5.1% (3)	3.4% (2)	8.5% (5)	27.1% (16)	52.5% (31)	3.4% (2)	4.29	59
						Other (please specify)		8

Summary of Comments to Question 3
Number of comments: 8

3 comments indicated support for the importance and continuation of the shared governance initiative and the survey of faculty perceptions of chairs’ and deans’ performance:

- 1 of these comments and part of another also indicated concern that the significance of the issues being addressed did not translate into an effective response.
- The latter comment also singled out the composition of the OATF for representational imbalances among the colleges and the OATF process for fostering insufficiently vigorous conversations about the task force’s work within the colleges.

1 comment and part of another focused on shared governance:

- 1 comment expressed interest in how the shared governance initiative might inform governance matters in the College of Education
- Another comment expressed general support for long-term persistence in advancing the initiative while also questioning the administration’s investment.

1 comment and part of another comment suggested issues that require further attention: scheduling Senate Leadership Team meetings when all chairs are available and developing a university-level Student Learning Outcome assessment plan focused on course-embedded assessments.

1 comment indicated concern regarding the value of proposed changes to learning outcomes that will now require all colleges to make curricular adjustments.

1 comment criticized the Faculty Senate Leadership for what respondent perceived as self-serving characterizations by leadership that took undeserved credit for two leadership initiatives.

Question 4

Process and Workflow: This year, Senate used a reworked process for taking and organizing Senate minutes and for tracking and reporting Senate Teams' workflow. Based on your experience with either or both of these new systems, how useful were the revisions? Should we keep or change them?

	1 = not useful at all; don't do this again	2	3	4	5 = very useful; keep using these systems going forward	Not enough information to respond	Rating Average	Response Count
ANSWER:	3.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	8.3% (5)	16.7% (10)	40.0% (24)	31.7% (19)	4.85	60
						Other (please specify)		8

Summary of Comments to Question 4

Number of comments: 8

3 comments expressed support for the process and workflow changes introduced this year and their continued use.

3 comments criticized various aspects of these changes

- 1 comment indicated the process for tracking Senate Team work lacks the trust and investment of some team facilitators
- 1 comment characterized the tracking process as duplicative in light of the Senate Leadership Team minutes
- 1 comment encouraged greater transparency in sharing the workplans with SLT on Angel.

2 comments made suggestions in response to the question: streaming Senate meetings in real time online, and giving the new workflow tracking system more time to prove itself.

Question 5

Accountability: This year Senate leadership invested considerable time and energy into documenting faculty service to Senate, Senate teams, and Senate leadership. Is this work worth it, in your estimation?

	1= no, not valuable at all	2	3	4	5= yes, very valuable	Not enough information to respond	Rating Average	Response Count
ANSWER:	1.7% (1)	1.7% (1)	5.0% (3)	25.0% (15)	55.0% (33)	11.7% (7)	4.65	60
						Other (please specify)		11

Summary of Comments to Question 5
Number of comments: 11

6 comments and part of 1 other expressed support and thanks for the effort to document Senate service. Of these, 1 comment emphasized the value of systematically providing accountability and recognition as a way to make shared governance more effective by demonstrating to administration that faculty takes service seriously.

4 comments criticized certain aspects of the effort:

- 1 respondent questioned the documentary basis for the letters and a lack of transparency in the effort in general
- 2 comments indicated the letter came too late to impact year-end review of performance
- 1 comment expressed dissatisfaction that the letters did not take into account varying levels of faculty commitment to the same service obligation.

Part of 1 comment suggested that chairs and facilitators of Senate Teams and Committees draft letters for their group's membership as a way to redistribute the workload more manageably.

Question 6

Strategic Planning: Thinking both about the year that is concluding and the year that is ahead of us, what (beyond ordinary business) should Senate continue to carry forward as a focus? What issues or topics within the Senate's domain should receive more attention or energy?

Summary of Comments to Question 6

Number of comments: 29

27 of the responses clustered into two main types:

- Recommendations to continue one or another of this year's Leadership Initiatives;
- Recommendations on other issues or initiatives to undertake.

14 responses in part or whole indicated support for continuing one or more of the existing Leadership Initiatives; some comments addressed multiple initiatives.

- 5 comments and parts of 3 others expressed support for continuation of the shared governance initiative. 1 of these comments suggested that a common shared governance scorecard be created to measure the effectiveness of shared governance in line with the dashboard metrics provided to the BOT to indicate University efficiency and effectiveness; another respondent suggested defining how shared governance works at the college level.
- 3 comments and part of another expressed support for continuation of the survey of faculty perceptions of chairs' and deans' performance. 1 of these and part of another emphasized the need for defining how the results will be used or how they will matter; another supported revisions and improvements to the existing model; part of another comment proposed expanding the survey to cover all administrators and be available to all in-unit faculty.
- 4 comments expressed support for continuation of efforts to refine assessment of student learning outcomes and various related dynamics, including additional support and training for faculty in assessment and additional focus on the relationship of outcomes to institutional identity/sense of place.

14 responses in part or in whole addressed other initiatives or issues perceived to be of importance for Senate to address; some comments addressed multiple issues:

- 3 comments and part of another indicated support for addressing faculty workload, uncompensated work, and alternative forms of recognition for thesis/dissertation supervision.
- 5 comments expressed support for more engagement on the status of smoking on campus; 1 comment expressed called for Faculty Senate to support Student Government's position on a smoke-free campus.
- The remaining comments addressed a range of issues perceived to be of importance for Senate to address: recruitment and retention of quality faculty, salary compression and inversion; the autonomy of college governance; increased funding for Professional Development Fund Grants, adding a summer cycle to PDFG opportunities, and relocating PDFG review to the colleges; mentoring junior faculty for future leadership in Senate to address perceived limitations and inexperience of current leaders; faculty rights; the exercise of administrative power; bullying in the workplace; perceived problems in attitudes and behaviors of administration; more BOT exposure to faculty efforts and contributions; earlier notification for graduation ceremony times; alignment of FPED with CBA; level of faculty participation in Senate and Senate teams; the affordability, safety, and access of faculty parking; the possibility of Student Government funds supporting faculty development efforts.

1 response indicated satisfaction with the current type and topics of Senate's engagement.

1 comment criticized Senate for a perceived failure to engage more meaningfully with the effects of the Positioning and Alignment Task Force, particularly with respect to the growing size and a perception of the outsized influence of the College of Arts and Sciences as a result of PATF.

Question 7

Finally, what else would you like to share about Senate?

Summary of Comments to Question 7

Number of comments: 25

15 comments and part of 3 others expressed support for the focus and objectives and/or work of Faculty Senate and/or Faculty Senate Leadership.

- Those comments that elaborated beyond general expressions of support focused particularly on expressions of satisfaction with Senate Leadership Initiatives, transparency in Senate operations, the level of teamwork and cooperation among Senate leadership, respectful engagement of difficult or conflictual issues in Senate, the efficiency of Senate meetings, level of Senate organization, and willingness to address faculty issues not historically engaged by Senate.

3 comments and part 2 of others were implicitly or explicitly critical of various aspects of Senate operations or leadership:

- 1 comment emphasized the need for humility, compromise, and willingness to listen to different opinions
- 1 comment expressed dissatisfaction with the irregularity of representation from senatorial delegations at the college level and suggested agendas and meeting material be distributed to all faculty
- 1 comment in part indicated that action by Senate is more necessary and important than more meetings, procedures, committees, and policies for faculty
- 1 comment in part called for more direct contact between Senate and the BOT to inform the board about such matters as the university's response to the culture and climate survey; the results of the survey of faculty perceptions of chairs' and deans' performance; and presidential compensation. This comment expressed a larger concern based on the perception that the BOT has an insufficient appreciation of university leadership dynamics and campus culture.
- 1 comment expressed concern with what the respondent perceives to be an inappropriately strong influence of UFF in Senate business and actions; respondent indicated concern that continuation of this perceived dynamic would erode the credibility and effectiveness of Senate.

2 comments addressed concerns about perceptions of administration and its type of level of engagement with Senate.

- 1 comment referenced a previous provost's habit of joining Senate only for the provost's standing report and contrasted this practice to the incumbent's approach, which the respondent perceives as deleterious to the functioning of effective shared governance among Faculty and Administration.
- 1 respondent expressed concern about a perceived lack of professionalism in Senate decorum, particularly regarding the conspicuous use of electronic devices for non-Senate business during Senate meetings. Both faculty and administrators were referenced as demonstrating this behavior; administrators who engaged in these types of extraneous uses of electronic devices were particularly singled out on the basis of their visibility in the Senate chambers and the perceived disrespect for Senate indicated by these behaviors.

1 comment indicated the respondent's lack of information to provide additional feedback.

1 comment in part indicated frustration with the focus on outcomes and assessments on campus and further indicated that this focus interferes with respondent's ability to teach and do research; respondent expressed the belief that this opinion was widely held among faculty and expressed frustration that Senate has not opposed policies perceived by respondent to complicate faculty productivity and effectiveness.