

Department of Public Relations
Faculty Meeting Minutes
April 24, 2017

Members Present: Mary Ann Ferguson, Linda Hon, Kathleen Kelly, Spiro Kiouis, Moon Lee, Rita Men, Mickey Nall, Deanna Pelfrey, Kay Tappan, John Wright and Marcia DiStaso

- 1. Matt Sheehan:** Matt visited the meeting and talked about the College's Hatch program, a content and product incubator, which completed its alpha year this past year. Matt explained that Hatch is designed to drive real-world experimentation that combines story-telling, science and social good across the various disciplines in the College's four departments. The current foci are immersive video, story-telling tools and narrative content. A major goal is to employ experimental methodology to allow our students to help us be innovative. Matt emphasized that his goal in visiting the faculty meeting was to make sure we were all well-aware of Hatch and its mission. The faculty thanked him for coming in.
- 2. Discussion of Candidacy of Dr. Carma Bylund** – Faculty members discussed the position as well as Dr. Bylund's expertise and achievements and role and impact in the department. Marcia clarified that the position is funded by the UF Cancer Center and the Office of the Provost. It was noted that after three years a portion of the salary will be paid by grants. The conversation shifted somewhat to focus on expectation for research productivity in the College, then shifted to the varying roles of faculty and differential grant possibilities and student/teacher ratios. Wright mentioned that Tom Kelleher had expressed to him that having Dr. Carla Fisher, who works with the STEM Translational Communication Center, join the faculty in the Dept. of Advertising has worked out very well.
- 3. Election of Department Representative for the Salary Equity Committee** – The faculty members elected Dr. Rita Men to represent the department on the College's Salary Equity Committee for the 2017-18 academic year.
- 4. Second Methods Course for Graduate Program** – Mary Ann informed the faculty that approximately 25-30 applicants had been admitted to the master's program thus far this year. Four were confirmed and 10 have declined. The number of applicants is down significantly and Mary Ann suggested we will have a small class coming in this fall, perhaps as few as four or five students. Faculty members acknowledged that graduate applications were down across the nation, partially due to political climate. Faculty members reached general consensus that we need a comprehensive overview of our master's program given declining interest based on applications. Mary Ann suggested, and others agreed, that we always find ourselves back to

the basic question of whether we want to offer a professional or thesis/research master's program. It was expressed that due to interest in the new Pro-master's program the faculty may want to consider designing/offering an actual track in that program.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 am.