Dear Colleagues,

As the semester winds down, I want to take this opportunity to update you all on the ongoing efforts to clarify and refine the shared governance processes at FGCU. Most recently, there was a good turnout and lively participation at the Shared Governance Forum prior to the last Faculty Senate meeting on December 2.

That session aimed to accomplish a couple of different purposes. First, it was intended to reinvigorate the discussion about shared governance here at FGCU among faculty. This is a foundational issue in many of the day-to-day activities where we work with our partners on staff and in the administration and student government. Having a chance to speak directly to this issue will help us all better accomplish our common mission of academic excellence, come to a collaborative understanding of the ways that we currently work with each other, and achieve a better perspective on how we hope to work together in the future. A sustained discourse among the faculty is necessary to make shared governance more than a one-time policy statement. Shared governance needs to be a lived process in order to effectively integrate the best capabilities of all partners in the accomplishment of the mission.

The second reason for convening this forum is to make sure that the representatives of the faculty accurately understand and advocate the faculty’s voice in the inclusive discussion among the partners that will be starting this week and continuing through the next semester, with the purpose of creating a shared governance policy that can be jointly presented to the Board of Trustees for consideration later this year. We have our first meeting, to define the deliberative process that we plan to follow this next semester, on December 15 with the President, Provost, SAC President, and other partners in the discussion. As we move into the next phase of this process, I have asked Halcyon St. Hill to join the Faculty Senate shared governance group in recognition of her leadership both at FGCU and in the development of the statement of shared governance adopted by the SUS Advisory Council of Faculty Senates earlier this semester.

The attached document describes the results from the forum on Dec. 2. Once we have met with our partners and jointly discussed the inclusive process for University-wide development of a statement of shared governance, we will keep you informed and involved in the continuing dialogue among the faculty.
In the meantime, please feel free to share any comments, thoughts, questions, or other feedback you have about this topic with one of the faculty leaders on this issue.

I wish you all a happy holiday season.

Sincerely,
Douglas Harrison

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Howard Smith, Faculty Senate Vice President and Shared Governance Coordinator for Faculty Senate
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