

## **RESOLUTION OPPOSING UNIFYING USF CAMPUSES FOR ACCREDITATION**

**WHEREAS** the USF St. Petersburg Retired Faculty/Staff Association (RFSA) was founded and exists today to provide for the shared and mutual interests of retired faculty, administrators and support staff across all academic Colleges, Support Divisions and Departments and,

**WHEREAS** members represent the founding faculty and staff, including the founding campus Dean, and scores of dedicated faculty and staff since then who all share in the aspirations of initial and successor faculty and staff that USF St. Petersburg seek and achieve the highest academic recognition possible within Florida and U.S. colleges and universities and,

**WHEREAS** USF St. Petersburg has through the years grown stronger each year and in recent years achieved major acclaim for excellence as demonstrated by SACS accreditation for the campus as well as accreditation for its separate Colleges of Education, Business and several departments including the Department of Digital Journalism and Media Studies, an accreditation achieved even prior to its sister department on the Tampa Campus and,

**WHEREAS** the student body served by the campus has continued to evolve from a majority part time enrollment to the current student cohort of many more students comprised of full-time age typical college students, many of whom live in recently constructed residence halls on the campus, with additional residence hall construction on the horizon, and contributing to the resurgence and vibrancy of the downtown St. Petersburg Community and,

**WHEREAS** faculty have been recruited to USF St. Petersburg whose interests include both teaching and research, and new faculty may in the future be reluctant to risk their career at USF St. Petersburg if decisions such as promotion and tenure are vested in distant administration office on the Tampa Campus where academic performance is significantly less visible and priorities for teaching and research may vary and,

**WHEREAS** USF St. Petersburg Campus has flourished and presents a bright future under current separate accreditation and administrative and budget independence, the future of that prospect will be threatened with the proposed single accreditation under the Tampa Campus with resultant administrative control over decisions such as duplicate admissions criteria, campus hiring, promotion, tenure and budgetary control residing with Tampa Campus personnel.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

- The USF St. Petersburg Retired Faculty/Staff adamantly opposes the proposed unification of USF St. Petersburg under a singular Tampa One-Campus Accreditation.
- It is the strong belief of the RFSA that the best interests of USF St. Petersburg, its faculty, staff and students and the St. Petersburg and Pinellas County communities that the current separate accreditation with all the associated benefits is the best path forward. We also believe that additional independence in other aspects of the continuing relationship should be explored such as for example, appointment of a local independent USFSP Board.
- If the composition and degree time requirements and other aspects of the USFSP Student Body present an issue for USF Tampa, the answer would suggest that the criteria of the state governance body setting the parameters for Tampa achieving the desired outcome is where efforts should be directed.
- Many of our group feel that with the proposed accreditation unification legislative proposal, stagnation or benign neglect will again prevail for USF St. Petersburg as we feel happened from the Campus founding in 1965 until Pinellas Senator Don Sullivan proposed legislation in 2001 to separate USFSP from USF and the associated requirement for a separate USFSP budget and accreditation. These actions caused USFSP to dramatically increase its potential in faculty recruitment, student enrollment and facility expansion and budget freedom. We feel that is almost certain that the proposed action, if it becomes law, will derail the continued flourishing of USFSP.