

Senate Steering Committee Minutes
January 13, 2022
3 p.m.
Tigert 226

Present: David C. Bloom, Taylor Rose, Sarah Lynne, Paul Duncan, Amanda Phalin, Juan Nino, Richard Scholtz, Keith Diem, Kent Fuchs, Charlene Luke, Marsha Currin McGriff, Joe Glover, Jason Byrd, Rick Stepp, Laurie Bialosky, Keith Rambo, Walter O'Dell, and Ariele Pomputius.

Call to Order

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate Chair David C. Bloom at 3:01 p.m.

Approve [December 9, 2021 Minutes](#)

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The minutes were approved.

Reports

• **Chair's Report**

David C. Bloom, Chair

- Chair Bloom provided an update on the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom, which has been charged to complete its work by February 15. Its work will then transition to the Academic Freedom, Tenure, Professional Relations and Standards ([AFTPRS](#)) Committee for consideration.

- See [Chair's Report](#).

• **President's Report**

Kent Fuchs, President

- The legislative session has commenced and UF is monitoring its activities and discussions. COVID heat maps are showing that all states are currently at its highest COVID-19-positive levels except Maine. UF epidemiologists predicted that the Omicron variant would peak and then flatten, as in the UK, which is ahead of the US in case numbers and which is currently experiencing a decline per hundred thousand cases, which is a good trend for us. The variant seems to be closely following the academic modeling. Particularly for those boosted and fully vaccinated, the Omicron wave has resulted in much fewer hospitalizations than the Delta strain.

- UF's capital campaign ends in October and has raised \$3.8 billion, exceeding the campaign's original goal of \$3 billion.

- Following an inquiry pertaining to the effectiveness of wastewater testing, it was clarified that while COVID-19 testing is available, it is not required.

• **Provost's Report**

Joe Glover, Provost

- Provost Glover reported positive feedback from the college deans regarding the transition from fall to spring semesters, including student participation and faculty instruction and activities.

- Dr. Glover would like to recognize the first anniversary of the HiPerGator AI initiative and provide a comprehensive project overview at Senate to highlight the outstanding work of staff, students, and faculty.

Introduction to the Chief Diversity Officer

Marsha Currin McGriff, Chief Diversity Officer & Senior Advisor to the President

- CDO McGriff joined UF December 6 and will introduce herself, office, and strategic plan at next week's Faculty Senate meeting.

Graduate Council

- [Close Master of Arts in Teaching with a Major in Latin](#)

- This is a proposal to close the Master of Arts in Teaching with a Major in Latin. There are no currently no dedicated faculty teaching in this major and no current students. This item was approved.

Paul Duncan, Sr. Associate Dean
Graduate School

[University Constitution & Regulations Committee \(UCRC\) Report](#)

- UCRC Chair Charlene Luke presented new constitutional and bylaw verbiage which aims to clarify that a special meeting can be called by 25 Faculty Senators and provides for how to do so, including how public noticing, timelines, and proposed agenda items would be handled. Following an inquiry, it was clarified that the petitioners can, with consent by a majority of Faculty Senators attending a special Faculty Senate meeting, override the agenda-setting authority of the Steering Committee (as the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate) and also the current supermajority needed to add an item to a Faculty Senate agenda.

Charlene Luke, Chair, UCRC
Merritt McAlister, Chair, UCRC
Subcommittee on Constitutional Revision
Related to Special Meetings

Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee Report on the Dr. Ladapo Hiring Process

- This Ad Hoc Committee's current primary mission is gathering enough information to establish a hiring timeline of Dr. Ladapo. Kevin Clarke, College of Medicine HR Director, has referred the committee to the information portal to collaborate or counterfute the information being gathered, much of it provided through news media outlets. The official HR-related dates continue to be gathered for further scrutiny and to obtain greater clarity. The official position was posted, and Dr. Ladapo's offer letter was signed in a two-week window. Grand Rounds (hosted by and held in the College of Medicine) was changed to offer Dr. Ladapo an opportunity to speak. The position taken by Dr. Ladapo was one which was intended to inject a clinical asset into the department, but those faculty were not allowed an opportunity to talk with candidate Ladapo. The official job number or position is currently unknown and a brief outline of known information will be shared at next week's Faculty Senate.

- Following an inquiry, it was clarified that this Ad Hoc Committee is not examining the tenure and promotion processes within the College of Medicine or the university, but rather the adherence to university hiring practices and protocols in the hiring of Dr. Ladapo

Richard Scholtz, Chair, Ad Hoc Committee

Council Reports

Welfare Council

- The Welfare Council met prior to the last Steering Committee meeting and meets again at the end of this month.

Sarah Lynne

Academic Policy Council

- APC met prior to the last Steering Committee meeting and meets again at the end of this month.
- A brief update was provided regarding Quest classes dealing with misinformation in social media. While a number of UF courses touch on this topic, none that focus solely on it, and it would be most appropriate for faculty to propose such courses for UF Quest 1 (Humanities) or UF Quest 2 (Natural Sciences or Social Sciences).

Richard Scholtz

Research and Scholarship Council

-Council meets next week. No funds are committed for UF Open Access Publishing or for UF campus-wide Electronic Lab Notebooks and council will instead focus on assisting in resolving IACUC and EH&S research and scholarship-related issues. Council Chair Byrd suggests a fact-finding mission

Jason Byrd

be undertaken by the Research & Scholarship Council to document issues in a single document. Council previously discussed other options such as the university conducting a multidisciplinary internal or external review process.

Infrastructure Council

Keith Rambo

- Faculty as well as The League of Women Voters of Alachua County have voiced concerns over UF's new central energy plant and infrastructure to handle steam and chilled water requiring the use of natural gas. At its December meeting, Infrastructure Council Chair Rambo shared a [Spectrum thermal solar article](#) showing massive alternative energy projects. The enormous amount of land needed for solar options to power the entire campus as well as fossil fuel alternatives, such as nuclear options, were discussed by council with Mark Helms, Assistant VP for UF's Facilities Services Division and Sustainability.
- There was an inquiry if the analysis of (current contractor) Jacobs Engineering could be reviewed and utilized to compare the merits of other power plant and energy alternatives. It was noted that the UF Climate Action Plan (CAP) is in the final stages of review and is a long-term project which has considered these items.
- The Steering Committee (as well as council, at its meeting yesterday,) discussed the power plant construction timeline and how feasible any delay might be to provide time to further study the matter.
- A motion to add this resolution as an Information Item on next week's Faculty Senate agenda carried unanimously.
- The Steering Committee asked Council Chair Rambo to contact Assistant VP Helms to obtain information on the status of the project with the timeline from current to completion of this project (with milestones). To assist in Senate review of the resolution, particularly in reference to timelines, he was also asked to please obtain the Jacobs Engineering report in which they evaluated and developed the optimum solution. While recognizing that Assistant VP Helms has been charged with making UF steam independent by 2027, knowing the 'drop dead date' of when the current plant goes off-line would be helpful.

Other committee discussion included:

- Chair Bloom has added to officer transition protocols, notes, and training that trustee agenda items must be passed along between outgoing and incoming Faculty Senate Chairs to aid in securing institutional and transitional knowledge between each Faculty Senate Chair. This will also increase the effectiveness of service to the faculty and the ability of the current Faculty Senate Chair to compellingly serve as a voting member of the Board of Trustees. Such actions could also help avoid the need for conducting urgent interventions or immediate agenda actions in the future.
- It was suggested that the list of open committee/council/board seats (possibly via a hyperlink, due to the very lengthy list), be added within the university committee's solicitation email to faculty. This list is currently only viewable on the nomination form itself (alpha in the drop-down menu.)
- It was suggested a statement of gratitude to Dr. Fuchs for his service as UF President and efforts in setting a positive tone during challenging times be made.

Approve [January 20, 2022 Faculty Senate Agenda](#)

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The agenda was approved as amended to include the power plant resolution and amend the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee "Report" on the Dr. Ladapo Hiring Process to "Update".

Adjournment

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.