

Senate Steering Committee Minutes

April 7, 2022

3 p.m.

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Present: David C. Bloom, Amanda Phalin, Kent Fuchs, Joe Glover, Paul Duncan, Juan Nino, Taylor Rose, Laurie Bialosky, Keith Diem, Stephanie McBride, Kati Migliaccio, Ariel Pomputius, Sarah Lynne, Jason Byrd, Sylvain Doré, Charlene Luke, Danaya Wright, Rick Stepp, Angela Lindner, and Richard Scholtz.

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 [March 3, 2022 Minutes](#)

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The minutes were approved.

Reports

• **Chair's Report**

David C. Bloom, Chair

- Chair Bloom has agreed to serve on the search committee for the next UF President and will ask Board of Trustees (BOT) Chair Mori Hussein to visit Faculty Senate in May or later to provide an update to the faculty. - The search firm SP&A Executive Search will be assisting the Search Committee which was named on March 29. It contains 15 members and as specified by Board of Governors (BOG) regulations is comprised of key stakeholders including faculty, students, alumni, UF foundation and athletic department and a member of the BOG. Four faculty serve on the committee and the Committee Chair, Trustee Patel, is committed to seeking active faculty input during the entire process.
- The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) will be sending a special committee to visit campus next Tuesday and Wednesday to examine academic freedom.
- It is anticipated that a number of resolutions will be heard at the final Faculty Senate meeting of the academic year (May 5) and Chair Bloom will also be presenting a report on the April BOT meeting.
- There are four Faculty Senate Chair-elect nominees: [Ashley Parham Ghiaseddin](#), Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Neurosurgery, College of Medicine ([video](#)); [Timothy Murtha](#), Professor, School of Landscape Architecture and Planning in the College of Design, Construction and Planning, and the Center for Latin American Studies ([video](#)); [Richard Scholtz](#), Senior Lecturer, Agricultural & Biological Engineering Department, IFAS/College of Agriculture & Life Sciences ([video](#)); and [Danaya Wright](#), Professor, Constitutional Law, Levin College of Law ([video](#)). A written vote will take place at this month's (April 14) Faculty Senate meeting.
- The Faculty Senate Reception will be held after this month's Senate meeting, starting at 5:30 at the Powell University House.
- Annual council reports are due May 1.

• **President's Report**

Kent Fuchs, President

- Commencements will begin three weeks from today. More than 8700 students are receiving degrees in more than 20 ceremonies. There will be college-specific ceremonies which will

recognize graduates individually, excluding the doctoral student ceremony, which is a single one which will be held on Thursday, April 28, when 450 students will be hooded in doctoral-specific ceremony. The university-wide ceremony is in the stadium that Friday evening and 50,000 guests will attend for the degrees conferral, the singing of Tom Petty's 'I Won't Back Down', and Tim Tebow's commencement address.

- Dr. Fuchs provided a West Palm Beach update. The Legislative budget includes funding of 100 million dollars for the West Palm graduate campus. The required additional private funding commitments needed has reached almost \$90 million.

- Following inquiries, President Fuchs clarified that: a report on the review of the namings on UF buildings and a summary of the college activities that have occurred over the past two years will be completed by May; and that we are not tracking wastewater on campus for COVID-19. The Shands and UF Health medical advisory committee have advised that the incidence of COVID-19 is currently very low, so while it is watching for rising variants and any signals that the tracking needs to re-start, all the infrastructure remains in place and can be quickly re-activated as needed.

- **Provost's Report**

Joe Glover, Provost

- Florida HB 7 has not been signed by the governor but is expected to be shortly. It defines discriminatory processes in FL and provides instruction on ways faculty can approach teaching controversial subjects including DEI and Critical Race Theory. Another section discusses how the university as a whole and colleges and departments can implement diversity training; all will need to be informed and because each faculty member is responsible for respecting the law, the Provost's Office will draft a training to help answer inquiries and provide clarity regarding the new law. It will be made available to faculty as a whole within about a month. The law asks faculty not to indoctrinate students.

- An AI Academic initiative update was provided. The AI Squared Center has been funded and is under the guidance of Dr. David Reed and the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Task Force.

- The searches for the Dean of the International Center and the Dean of the College of Engineering have commenced and have been announced.

- Dr. Glover fielded general inquiries pertaining to clarification of HB 7, the upcoming SACS visit, and topics related to academic freedom. It was noted that the GatorSafe app which had been used for complaints and kudos is no longer available and is under a committee review, and also that legislation was crafted to empower the BOG to adopt any tenure or post-tenure-review related regulations across the SUS.

- An inquiry was raised regarding if Faculty Senate or UF should recommend whether faculty should take the Employee Survey on Intellectual Freedom and Viewpoint Diversity which was just released and closes tomorrow. Chair Bloom noted that the [Advisory Council of Faculty Senates \(ACFS\)](#) agreed that they would not recommend either way, because the survey is voluntary and it did not want to endorse or protest the survey but instead, leave it as a decision to be made by individual faculty. Comments of concern which have been received include that the responses are being gathered in very short time which could impact response rates; questions can be skipped; the survey (allegedly) can be taken multiple times in multiple browsers and can be forwarded to survey-takers outside of the SUS. The ACFS plans to communicate a list of concerns to the BOG, including issues with the design and implementation of the survey as well as concerns regarding its analysis and use.

- It was noted that survey feedback can also be sent to the SUS Chancellors office.

- UCRC Chair Charlene Luke presented the new sentence added to the mission of the Academic Freedom, Tenure, Professional Relations, and Standards (AFTPRS) Committee. It aims to continue the fact-finding work of the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom. In consideration of this language possibly being too open-ended and if there may be a need for a filtering mechanism of some type, AFTPRS Chair Ray Issa has clarified that he is in agreement with the proposed wording and that the AFTPRS Committee is comfortable performing such filtering, which is not thought to be an undue burden.
- The proposal will move forward for Faculty Senate consideration.

Graduate Council

Paul Duncan, Sr. Associate Dean
Graduate School

[Department of Aging and Geriatric Research Merger with the Department of Physiology and Functional Genomics](#)

- This is a proposal from the College of Medicine to merge two existing departments into a single one. It was suggested by the faculty and has been assessed as having no negative impact on graduate students or faculty. It has received the support of the deans, chairs, and faculty in these department.

[Close Master of Arts in Teaching \(MAT\) - Political Science - International Relations](#)

- This program is targeted to training high school teachers who teach in this area and due to a lack of interest in enrollment, the department seeks to close this program.

[Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee Report on the Dr. Joseph Ladapo Hiring Process](#)

Richard Scholtz, Chair, Ad Hoc Committee
on the Dr. Joseph Ladapo Hiring Process

- Dr. Scholtz presented the report's content including its charge, findings, and the hiring timeline. Best practices for hiring within the college is being prepared by College of Medicine Faculty Council and The Department of Medicine has expressed enthusiasm and a commitment to prepare one as well.

- The Provost responded to an inquiry seeking clarification about the [tenure upon hire process](#), including the award letter and the submission of the tenure packet to the department, Department Chair, college committee, Dean, [Academic Personnel Board](#), and the Office of the Provost. Provost Glover also clarified the tenure approval authorization process, namely that the BOT votes on tenure candidates following endorsement by a college Dean and his office. Two things are authorized: consideration by BOT; and the chair of the dept places in the offer letter that the candidate must be considered by the BOT. The BOT does not consider a tenure until the faculty vote has occurred.

- Provost Glover noted that he is on the record that the Ladapo hiring followed the normal College of Medicine processes and that it was consistent with university hirings.

- The Ad hoc Committee noted that there was no official search committee (which appears to be a sporadic process in the College of Medicine) for Dr. Ladapo.

Honorary Degree Candidates

Rick Yost, Chair, Honorary Degrees &
Distinguished Awards Committee

- Honorary degree candidate Chris Malachowsky was approved by the Honorary Degrees & Distinguished Awards Committee to receive an Honorary Doctorate of Technology in the College of Engineering. The committee also approved four new Distinguished Alumni and one Stephen C. O'Connell Distinguished Service Awardee, Dr. Kathy Ewel.

- Efforts made to increase recruitment of diverse candidates were discussed and the committee welcomes suggestions to strengthen these efforts. It was clarified that you cannot donate money to 'buy' an honorary degree.

[Quality Enhancement Plan \(QEP\)](#)

Jane Southworth & Kati Migliaccio
QEP Task Force Co-Chairs

- The Senate will be introduced to the QEP and how it is attached to accreditation and how it is structured. The QEP Task Force Co-Chairs will also review the specific activities and initiatives being undertaken by the task force. The implementation and evaluation timeline is 2024-2029 and a draft document is expected to be ready for review in 2023.
- Following inquiries, increasing the number of PHD and Master degrees, including two new Engineering Masters degrees, was noted.

Council Reports

Budget Council

Ashley Ghiaseddin

- Budget Council member Ariel Pomputius presented the resolution on behalf of Dr. Ghiaseddin who was traveling.
- This resolution continues earlier Faculty Senate efforts to increase university employer contributions to the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) remain competitive with peer institutions and increase faculty recruitment and retention. Finite resources and funding, the benefits to faculty of salary increases and increased employer contributions, and the need for recurring funds for either or both was discussed.
- A motion to approve the resolution to add an increase in the employer contributions to ORP 'to ten percent' was [amended to 'at least ten percent'](#) carried unanimously.

Infrastructure Council

Keith Rambo

- Council met yesterday and the Lakes, Vegetation & Landscaping Committee provided an update of the Harn Museum project and the related tree removals. University Information Technology Committee Chair Ray Issa provided an overview on HiPerGator progress. The Sustainability Committee Chair, Ariele Pomputius, reported that the CAP2 project is on track to be completed next month. Office of Sustainability Director Matt Williams discussed UF meeting its CO2 reduction goals. The Parking and Transportation Committee is discussing how to replace 40 lost parking spaces. The Central Energy Plant discussion continued and included looking to the Reitz Union and how they cut their steam utilization. Assistant VP for UF's Facilities Services Division and Sustainability Mark Helms discussed the new plant's status and its stakeholders' conversations, including his emphasis that UF is doing its best to put all possible energy avenues and options on the table for discussion, including future use of hydrogen. He also replied to council's request to view the Jacobsen Engineering Report; because there is an ITN in place, there is a more limited ability to discuss details, so he will remain in contact with Faculty Senate Chair-elect Amanda Phalin and council chair Keith Rambo, who will also be chairing this council next academic year.

Welfare Council

Sarah Lynne

- At its last meeting, the Welfare Council discussed that: Faculty Senate Council Chairs should remain in touch with its reporting committee chairs who are welcome to attend Steering Committee meetings, where they can be acknowledged by the former; the multiyear contract resolution created by the Compensation & Equity Committee will be brought to Senate in May; faculty involvement in hiring searches and understanding the processes used are helpful to faculty, particularly during this time when multiple senior leadership searches are occurring; and even though the COACHE climate survey is due to be administered this Fall, we should continue to push for the adoption of the COACHE faculty retention and exit survey.
- [A resolution that had previously been presented at the Steering Committee has been updated with Welfare Council input](#) and which council voted to endorse the substance of, was discussed at the Steering Committee meeting. Dr. Lynne shared a [version with a few more minor modifications](#).
- The resolution advocates that UF not appeal the injunction of the Conflict of Interest lawsuit. Chair Bloom shared feedback and clarifications from the General Counsel's Office pertaining to the anticipated legal proceedings to which this resolution pertains. UF's rationale for appealing, as well

the next steps of a court mediation were discussed. In general, if UF does not appeal, the University is agreeing that the injunction and judge's statement has merit. UF argues that its reversal of the COI denials and the implementation of a new review process makes the lawsuits moot. UF's statement does not explicitly exclude viewpoint as a rationale for a denial of the ability to be an expert witness. However, UF/the General Counsel's Office is now expressing a willingness to modify this to more clearly state that viewpoint is not a reason for which participation in such a faculty activity / engagement would be denied. Discussion will continue with Faculty Senator Wright and the Steering Committee. A telephonic remediation is occurring at the end of April with the 11th Circuit Court, which is a positive development. The terminology 'Will not be' vs. 'a strong presumption to be' should be employed in the new/updated policy.

- A motion to table the resolution and obtain a follow-up from VP & General Counsel Amy Hass at the next Steering Committee meeting passed unanimously and was endorsed by Faculty Senator Wright.

Academic Policy Council

Richard Scholtz

- Dr. Scholtz presented the collated feedback from members of the APC and from the input provided to Chair Bloom by the Chairs of the College Faculty Councils/Assemblies.

- The degree requirements and rationale for adding the requirement were discussed, including the highest terminal degree.

- The resolution was unanimously approved as amended to replace 'a PhD, ScD, EdD, or LLM degree' with 'an earned terminal degree in their academic field'

Research and Scholarship Council

Jason Byrd

- Dr. Byrd is preparing the annual council report and has submitted to Chair Bloom the [Efficiencies Final Report](#), which incorporates final germane comments and edits to the [Efficiencies Draft Report](#) which was reviewed by council at its last (March 16) meeting. A resolution is expected to be drafted requesting an outside review and increased resources.

Approve [April 14, 2022 Faculty Senate Agenda](#)

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The agenda was unanimously approved with the removal of the Conflict of Interest Resolution.

Adjournment

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.