

Senate Steering Committee Minutes

February 1, 2024

3:00 p.m.

135 Tigert Hall (Student Affairs Conference Room 142), or if needed, via Zoom:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/93351231856?pwd=NkthSk41NVhrWnZnY01aZkpBSGpWdz09>

Meeting ID: 933 5123 1856 Passcode: 217185 Dial in: +1 646 558 8656

Present: Danaya Wright, Laurie Bialosky, Jeremiah Blanchard, Rick Stepp, Melissa Johnson, Taylor Rose, Joe Little, Sarah Lynne, Catherine Striley, Amanda Phalin, Stephanie Bogart, Catherine Striley, Walter O'Dell, Chris Hass, Jorg Peters, Tom Kelleher, Hans van Oostrom, and Nancy Clark.

Call to Order

Danaya Wright, Chair

- The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Faculty Senate Chair Danaya Wright.

Approve [January 11, 2024 Minutes](#)

Danaya Wright, Chair

- The minutes were approved.

Reports

• **Chair's Report**

Danaya Wright, Chair

- The governance structure of UF Health is being reorganized to be overseen by a unified board.
- History Professor and Pulitzer Prize winner Jack Davis will present the next Distinguished Professor lecture *Coming Ashore: Wonder, Creativity, and the Environmental Humanities* immediately before the February 15th Senate meeting (at 1:00) in the Reitz Chamber. It will also be livestreamed and recorded: [Faculty Senate - Distinguished Professor Lecture Series \(ufl.edu\)](#)
- The 2024 homecoming date has been set for October 18-19. (No Faculty Senate approval is needed since it is in October. This is an annual consultation among the University Athletic Association, Student Activities, Registrar, and the UF Foundation.)
- Nominations for the next Faculty Senate Chair-Elect opens this month and closes March 31. Email nominations to the Faculty Senate Secretary @: FacultySenateChair@ufl.edu.
- Nominations are open for Honorary Degrees. Closes March 1. Details @: senate.ufl.edu under the Honorary Degrees & Distinguished Awards Committee tab: (<http://fora.aa.ufl.edu/FacultySenate/Committees/Honorary-Degrees-and-Distinguished-Awards-Committee>). The faculty is responsible for nominating all candidates.
- CLAS Dean Richardson relayed that the posthumous promotion for Patricia Hilliard-Nunn has been finalized by Provost Angle and is now completed, effective August 16, 2021. Ways to acknowledge faculty in memoriam were discussed, such as [Purdue University's](#), which has a policy of awarding post death promotion for tenure track faculty. (UF doesn't have a policy as of now.) A Faculty Senate *In Memoriam* site was shared with Deans in 2021 alerting them of this resource which required their staff to input all faculty death notices and materials into the website for it to function and exist; the following academic year, the site and information were discussed and shared with then-Strategic Communications and Marketing Director Nancy Paton for any practical implementation as a university *In Memoriam* resource.
- Implementation of electronic voting for all Senators was discussed and further review will be made by Chair Wright and the Steering Committee regarding the resource allocation of dollars, time, and staff effort. Two staff must be present to include a Zoom panel option.

Items of assessment include maintaining the culture of the organization; prioritizing seeing the Designated Offsite Senators, who have responded positively to having a Zoom panel option; comparisons to ACFS colleagues' Senate meetings; and recognizing the Senators' annual Senate meeting time commitment of ten months for two hours maximum. The format of the Distinguished Professor lecture series may need adjustment to accommodate the new and significant time needed for the Senate meeting set-up by Academic Technology. Some Steering members voiced favor in requiring that screens must be on for all Zoom panelists. Voting logistics pertaining to using the orange voting card in the Reitz Chamber (for those present at Reitz) and raising an electronic hand (for Zoom panelists) versus requiring all Senators to vote via electronic ballots were discussed. Chair Wright favors facilitating Senate meetings by the former and will run the February Senate meeting with card/hand votes for all senators (offsite and in person).

- The BOG passed and recommended that all Faculty Senates and Boards of Trustees adopt the [State University System Free Expression Statement](#). This was completed by each of the SUS BOTs and a number of SUS Faculty Senates, while other SUS Faculty Senates voted it down. In an effort to recognize that freedom of expression is a tool for the UF broader mission, Chair Wright drafted a resolution on civil discourse. Following discussion, a motion to approve [the resolution as amended](#) carried.
- Chair Wright provided an update on the administrative burdens project and its HR Action Team progress. Information pertaining to trainings added and reduced could be presented to Welfare Council annually as a check and balance.
- Chair Wright traveled to Tallahassee to attend Gator Day yesterday and Tuesday.
- The General Education Committee & the General Education Audit Committee will vote tomorrow on the adoption of a survey being distributed to UF faculty who teach a Gen Ed course. The Steering Committee discussed the components of and the context of compliance with [SB 266](#). Dr. Bogart discussed how CLAS approached syllabus coordination relative to this bill.
- Chair Wright will ask Provost Angle to address DEI prohibitions at the senate meeting.
- Governor Phalin asks the committee to help educate faculty about her role on the BOG and the actions and scope of actions which she is able to take.
- Concerns about faculty departures were raised, including the effect on the tenure clock for faculty, and the allowability of any state or federal funds with a DEI criteria or funding component. Allowable exceptions (such as for classroom and student clubs except for accreditation) should be clarified to all faculty.

- **Provost's Report**

Scott Angle, Provost

- Provost Angle was out of town and unable to attend today's meeting but requested that the committee endorse a civil discourse statement.

Introduction of VP for Jacksonville Programs

Kurt Dudas, VP for Jacksonville Programs

- Chair Wright provided a preview of VP Dudas' Senate presentation on his behalf, as he was unable to attend due to a schedule conflict. At Senate, he will discuss UF's plans for academic offerings and holdings in the city of Jacksonville.

University Honors Program Update

Melissa L. Johnson, Interim Director
University Honors Program

- Director Johnson will provide Senate with a broad overview of the honors program and discuss who their students are in and outside of the classroom, and how faculty can partner with the program. Following an honors housing inquiry, Director Johnson noted that UF Housing is best equipped to talk about and answer those inquiries.

[2028-2029 Academic Calendar](#)

Hans van Oostrom, Interim Chair, UCC
and Chair and Associate Professor, EED

- Dr. van Oostrom reviewed the calendar. Spring Break will be added once Alachua County Public Schools' Spring Break is known. There are no classes the week of Thanksgiving, consistent with Faculty Senate's previous approval vote of the academic calendar. Spring classes commence on January 16th.

Council Reports

Academic Policy Council

Nancy Clark, Chair

- Emily Butler shared resources of the Public Speaking Lab. Council approved a motion to add a public speaking lab paragraph to the campus syllabi to identify their available resources.

Budget Council

Jorg Peters, Chair

- Council meets next week.

Infrastructure Council

Walter O'Dell, Chair

- Council has not met since the last Steering Committee meeting as it meets the first Monday of the month. Council will continue its safety discussion on electric scooters, pedestrians, and cars, as well as parking and facility planning.

Research and Scholarship Council

Ashley Ghiaseddin, Chair

- Dr. Ghiaseddin submitted his report of the council's last meeting, held on January 22nd. 2021-22 Faculty Senate Chair David Bloom attended the council meeting to discuss efforts to improve Biosafety, EH&S, IACUC. Significant improvements in processing IRB requests and review process have been made, including:

- IACUC committee members receive small compensation to acknowledge effort provided (performance based) - \$1500 annually.
- Relationship building meetings are occurring between committees and PI's to better understand individual researchers' workflow.
- Two regulatory agency liaisons are hired/being hired.
- 2 FTE from IACUC to EH&S are available to help with review processes.

Based on the improvements that have occurred, Dr. Bloom recommended to remove his prior [resolution](#) that has remained in ongoing Faculty Senate discussions. The Research & Scholarship Council is requesting another Office of Research update at the end of Fall 2024.

- Council liaison Michael Mahoney discussed the Contact Program. The Nurse Practitioner who met with PIs and laboratory personnel regarding animal contact has left the position and is not going to be replaced. However, there is a transition plan that is being worked on. The Office of Research is aware of potential impacts on PIs following a resignation such as described may include delays in animal contact approvals and for individuals with allergies. Additional delays may include research that requires entering animal care facilities, or that includes the use of animals in any way. The Office of Research will work minimize impacts to PIs research.

- Council liaison Dr. Tom Kelleher reported that Graduate School has developed a less formal way to invite special members to participate on graduate student committees, and that both the existing method and new method are now posted at <https://graduateschool.ufl.edu/work/faculty/special/>.

- University Libraries Dean Judith Russell reported that UF libraries exceed the averages of public universities with fewer resources compared to peers, and now have submitted the largest budget request from their division in the last 16 years, including funding for market equity and operations efficiency. Dean Russell will provide a brief UF Libraries presentation at council's February meeting.

Welfare Council

Stephanie Bogart, Chair

- Council is working on a [request](#) to increase faculty and staff across-unit collaborations. The budget

request was reviewed by the Steering Committee. Council proposes three small community spaces be erected across campuses. Proposed new infrastructure areas include the Keene Faculty Center, and the College of Journalism and Communications, and Health Science Center areas. Complimentary or reduced snacks, coffee, and potentially sandwiches could be available. Cost calculations discussed would cover staff and food products. Council seeks feedback on requesting \$360,000 of staffing and operating costs, but no costs will go towards upgrading the current Keene Faculty Center space, which was overseen by CLAS. The need for these to be long-term venues was emphasized. Some colleges may already have identified faculty needs (such as baby-nursing space, etc.) One consideration is UF's new food and beverage contract with Chartwell. The Keene Center previously utilized Aramark. It was noted that such spaces utilized by UF's aspirational peers is beneficial. Facilitating face-to-face intentional collision and innovation spaces, with an intentional space for spontaneous interaction, is already being done across campus for students (such as in Malachowsky Hall.) Welfare Council would like input from other Senate policy councils, such as Infrastructure and Budget and views this proposal as a way to optimize faculty and staff space to further break down barriers and inequities. Governor Phalin also suggested inviting the UF trustees to participate in creating this faculty and staff space. Dr. Bogart will send the proposal to Chair Wright who will look into potential funding avenues and sources.

- Welfare Council discussed the possibility of drafting a resolution or statement to call for the Faculty Senate to reaffirm our support for all individuals affected by the legislature's new DEI policy. This was a suggestion raised by council when they were asked to look at the UF student senate bill requesting support for a LGBTQ+ Institute and due to the recent closures of DEI centers at UNF. It was agreed that there be collaboration with the [LGBTQ Presidential Advisory Committee](#) and Faculty Senate. The Steering Committee also suggested that including a list of resources or ways that faculty and shared governance can help in a practical way may be most impactful. It was also suggested that the [Charles T. Woods fund](#) or a similar option be utilized, and the role of shared governance could be to introduce the students to a private funding source.

- The Steering Committee also discussed how to increase communication about collaborative Faculty Senate efforts across campus. An update is sought from VP Kratzer following his [November Faculty Senate presentation](#) and the follow-up presentation questions which were raised by Faculty Senators regarding bathroom access and updates to the campus map.

Approve [February 15, 2024 Faculty Senate Agenda](#)

Danaya Wright, Chair

- The agenda was approved as amended to add the [Resolution on Civil Discourse, Free Expression, and Academic Freedom](#) as an Information Item before the academic calendar.

Adjournment

Danaya Wright, Chair

- The meeting adjourned at 4:53p.m.