

Welfare Council Minutes

2/9/23

2:30pm

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*or, if needed, via Zoom:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/93622608484?pwd=Y3d1K0c0bHZvNIJzRzBBZkEyTzBGQT09>

Meeting ID: 936 2260 8484 Passcode: 145777

Present: Hélène Huet (HH: Chair), Stephanie Bogart (SB), Amelia Dempere (AD), Peyton Harris (PH: *Alligator* reporter), Chris Hass (CH), Ray Issa (RI), Lisa King (LK), Crystal Marull (CM), Marsha McGriff (MM), Brook Mercier (BM), Amanda Phalin (AP), Sean Trainor (ST).

1. Call to Order – Hélène Huet, Welfare Council Chair

- Welfare Council Chair Hélène Huet calls the meeting to order at 2:32pm.

2. Approval of December 8, 2022 and January 5, 2023 Minutes

- Stephanie Bogart moves to approve both the December and January minutes. Lisa King seconds. The minutes are approved unanimously at 2:34pm.

3. Report from Chair / Steering Committee

- HH asks what we can do to support the CDO's office as well as colleagues whose names and courses were submitted to the state as part of governmental data collection efforts.
- CH says that faculty look to WC for support. Often, WC brings issues up to administration; WC can now reach out to faculty, express support, and acknowledge our colleagues' work to ensure that all member of the UF community succeed.
- After considering various way to express support for colleagues impacted by recent events, the WC drafts an email message to the faculty at large that reads as follows: "Dear Colleagues: Many thanks for the exceptional work you do to make the University of Florida a welcoming place for all the excel. We're grateful to have you as a colleague. If we can support you in any way, please reach out. Sincerely, the Faculty Senate Welfare Council."
- LK expresses reservations about this message, suggesting that many recipients will perceive it as an empty gesture.
- SB expresses frustration that opponents of DEI initiatives have dominated conversations around the value of institutional diversity and suggests including wellness resources in the message to faculty.
- CH argues that no action will please all faculty. Instead, we should focus on what a message like this one might mean to impacted faculty.

- SB moves to approve the draft message above. ST seconds. The message is approved unanimously.

3a. Update from Faculty Senate Chair

- AP mentions efforts by individuals, likely hailing from outside of the university, to intimidate UF personnel associated with DEI efforts and/or other controversial topics. AP has asked UF COO Charlie Lane and UPD Chief Linda Stump-Kurnick to issue a statement instructing faculty on how to respond to intimidation efforts. AP is seeking further clarification on when and under what circumstances individuals can be asked to leave a classroom or other instructional setting.
- AP praises President Sasse's recent comments at a Jacksonville regional Chamber of Commerce event and reports that these comments are emblematic of Sasse's vision for UF and higher education more broadly. AP further indicates that Sasse will likely join the upcoming Faculty Senate meeting.

4. Update from Contributing Chairs

- **Faculty Senate Ad hoc Committee on Academic Freedom Update** – Ray Issa, AFTPRS Chair
 - i. RI: No update.
- **Compensation & Equity Committee Update** – Sean Trainor, Compensation & Equity Committee Chair
 - i. ST reports that C&E Committee has requested additional information from Brent Goodman on faculty turnover and discussed recognition practices for long service in various colleges. ST also provides an update on the timeline for revising and seeking passage of the Faculty Senate resolution advocating more extensive use of multi-year contracts for non-tenure-track faculty.

5. Old Business

- Establishing University-wide Milestones/recognitions for faculty time employed at UF
 - i. WC agrees to create a working group that will focus on this initiative and HH agrees to contact the Honorary Degrees and Distinguished Awards Committee about possible involvement.
 - ii. AP mentions some potential financial issues around the end-of-year Faculty Senate reception and suggests raising funds from donors to support this event, as part of a broader fundraising focus on human capital.

- iii. SB suggests that investing in staff is a good way for UF to alleviate some of the administrative burdens that have fallen on faculty in recent years. HH emphasizes the importance of retaining members of the UF community. ST suggests ways that, when recognizing outstanding or long service, UF could bring the voices of the honored individual's colleagues into the recognition process.

6. Updates on Items of Interest

- Baby Gator Follow-up on Expansion
 - i. BM recently toured the Lake Alice Baby Gator center and was very impressed by the facility, which should open in August 2023. The facility is currently facing staffing challenges.
- Expanding Paid Parental Leave and Paid Medical Leave
 - i. BM: UFHR is ready to present a plan for expanding paid parental and medical leave to President Sasse but has yet to develop a timeline for expanding these benefits.
 - ii. LK points to differences in leave accessibility for out-of-unit faculty and TEAMS employees versus in-unit faculty. BM says that, in the future, we will have to determine whether we want to first expand leave accessibility or the number of weeks of available leave. BM also provides some information on rates of medical leave use and the cost of the leave programs: 1.7% for in-unit faculty; 0.8% for out-of-unit faculty; and 2.3% for staff. In 2023, the parental leave program cost \$7 million and the medical leave program cost \$3 million. HH asks BM if UFHR could present to the WC on expanding paid parental and medical leave.
- Building Naming Committee (VP Amy Hass) – *Chair Phalin has requested the report be shared at the January Senate meeting.*
 - i. HH reports that UF has limited control over building names, as many of these names are set by statute. AP acknowledges that building names are important but encourages us to focus on more timely issues.

7. New Business

- Providing compensation and recognition to faculty members serving on faculty senate committees and councils
 - AP is looking into how peer institutions compensate shared governance and would like to increase funding for UF Faculty Senate to support travel, staff, and stipends or course releases for shared governance work. AP also mentions a proposal to distribute merit raises based on service, but several attendees express reservations – both substantive and logistical – about this proposal. HH and SB applaud AP's efforts to seek greater funding for Faculty Senate; they also point to the importance of

changing UF's culture around service to better recognize and compensate this work, which often fall disproportionately on non-tenure-track faculty.

8. Open Agenda Items / Discussion from Floor - *Three-minute limit per speaker.*

- Council Members
- University of Florida Faculty

9. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourns at 3:59pm.

Minutes Submitted by Welfare Council Member/Contributing Chair (Compensation & Equity Committee), Sean Trainor.