

Senate Steering Committee Minutes

September 3, 2020

3:00 p.m.

Via Zoom: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/95933758433?pwd=aEZMaDk2SmF1bUxCeFlckRyeU11Zz09>

**Represents an actionable item, as deemed by the Faculty Senate Chair.*

Present: Sylvain Doré, Leonardo Villalón, Chris Hass, Adam Polifka, Glenn Good, David A. Canton, David Bloom, Diane McFarlin, Katrice Graham, Michael Bowie, Hans van Oostrom, Juan Nino, Keith Diem, Keith Rambo, Michael Reid, Michele Manuel, Laurie Bialosky, Ray G. Thomas, Richard Scholtz, Rick Stepp, Sarah Lynne, Sean Trainor, Sharon Austin, Taylor Rose, David Nelson, Kent Fuchs, Ashley Ghiaseddin, and Joe Glover.

Call to Order

Sylvain Doré, Chair

-The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate Chair Sylvain Doré at 3:00 p.m.

Approval of [August 20, 2020](#) & [August 24, 2020](#) Minutes Sylvain Doré, Chair

-Both minutes were approved.

Reports

• **Chair's Report**

Sylvain Doré, Chair

- An announcement has been circulated noting that honorary degrees and university award nominations are due October 1st. Please encourage diverse nominations for consideration by the [Honorary Degrees and Distinguished Awards Committee](#).
- COVID-19 data for the university can be located on a publicly available portal from the [UF home page](#). An ordinance limiting indoor gatherings to ten was under consideration, but the current indoor occupancy limit for Alachua County is 50 people. To report COVID-19 policy violations and compliance issues, utilize the GatorSafe app to text and/or upload pictures 24/7 or use Alachua County's 311 Critical Information line.
- At the last Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting, a significant discussion was held on the new Artificial Intelligence (AI) initiative. Furlough discussion is pending at the next BOT meeting and will be reviewed by the Welfare Council at its meeting later this month. The chair proposed, and the Steering Committee agreed, that the addition of [Regulation 1.017 - Separation from Employment, Layoff and Furlough](#), be added as an Information Item to the September 17th Faculty Senate agenda. The chair has also suggested that the BOT members, in addition to engaging in conversations regarding the student experience, also give due consideration to the faculty experience. The Faculty Senate Chair also emphasized the need to address diversity issues.
- The Faculty Senate Chair is attending virtual Advisory Council of Faculty Senate (ACFS) meetings and heard from meeting guest State University System (SUS) Chancellor Marshall Criser, who addressed issues of interest to this group, including the response to George Floyd's death and the diligence needed to aid underserved communities. Additionally, the Florida Chamber of Commerce is helping to address Florida's low college-readiness after high school by assigning its members an adopted zip code to invest in improvements in underserved communities. Four area working groups have been created.

- **President's Report**

Kent Fuchs, President

- Working with the University of Florida Historic St. Augustine Board, UF has removed the monument to William Loring, a Confederate major general. The monument has been moved to Trout Creek Fish Camp, which is where St. Augustine's Confederate Memorial is also being moved. The Loring monument bears an image of a Confederate flag and the distant ancestors of the general agreed to take action to remove the monument.
- UF had announced the end of its usage of prison labor and the practice now appears to be ending across the state.
- A decision has been made not to have any in-person graduation ceremonies in December.
- UF looks forward to hearing the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, which will be announced shortly.

- **Provost's Report**

Joe Glover, Provost

- Opportunities afforded by the new AI initiative were discussed, including that a new general course and 12 and 15 credit hour certificates in AI are being made available. In addition to the new Data Science Building, the new undergraduate degree in Data Science is approved and underway.
- A new Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Senior Vice-President has been secured for UF. Bank of America executive Chris Cowen has been named.
- The search for the new Dean of the College of Journalism and Communications is ongoing. The search committee formed in the spring and is now finalizing a diverse list of candidates.
- UF classes started Monday, with professional schools beginning earlier. Plans are in place to address the expected and inevitable COVID-19 case increase, given the addition of +50,000 people in the community.
- The Provost screen-shared the COVID-19 case dashboard and quarantine information web page, which is navigable from [the UF home page: https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect-2/about-initiative/testing-dashboard/](https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect-2/about-initiative/testing-dashboard/). In an effort to maximize transparency to the community, the web page shows what percent of quarantine capacity is available and being used. UF-affiliated cases are identified daily.

Introduction of UF Health President & COVID-19 Updates

David R. Nelson, President, UF Health, Sr. Vice President for Health Affairs

- Dr. Nelson discussed UF Health's role in preparing the community and hospitals for the pandemic and steps being taken to maximize safety and information distribution. The UF Health Screen, Test & Protect Program was discussed, as well as UF Health's coordination with the Florida State Dept. of Health.
- UF's [COVID-19 dashboard](#) shows the test data of the entire UF community, regardless of where they were tested.
- Merlin serves as the state's repository of reportable disease case reports and all UF numbers are included in it.
- UF Health continues sharing COVID data with the public. Sufficient space for quarantine is a key element in UF's response and action plan. UF Health is well prepared with massive capacity in the areas of student health care and hospitals to care for the ill. There has been a steady decline in virus cases statewide; although, student gatherings are causing current national spikes.
- The 'return to work' campaign is nearly completed, and more than 50,000 students have been screened, so the campaign is expected to conclude by mid-September. Over 80 percent of the faculty has returned to campus.
- Hull Road is available to be converted into a vaccination area, and anyone who is symptomatic will keep systematically being tested. UF Health is in the process of switching from nasal to saliva-based testing.
- There is opt-in testing for students and employees and mandatory testing for anyone involved in any work with hospital patients or research subjects.

- The College of Medicine Dean search has been underway for six months and it has recently narrowed the candidate pool from 12 to seven. The final four candidates will come to campus in two weeks for a two-day campus visit and interview.
- Dr. Nelson discussed his new role as UF Health President and Sr. Vice President for Health Affairs. He has been in Gainesville for 28 years and has spent about one year in this position and one year in the interim position.
- UF Health is preparing to undergo major changes, including its \$4.8 billion investment in the clinical enterprise, while continuing to support the academic mission.
- Steve Sugrue, Associate Vice President for Research, has reviewed space allocation and the renovation of 10,000 sq. ft. An analysis reflects that 30 percent of these space-holders are strongly funded. Space which has been processed is primarily in the College of Medicine and other VP's handle various spaces within UF Health.

International Center Updates

Leonardo A. Villalón, Dean, International Center

- Dean Villalón discussed these extraordinarily challenging times in international engagement. Paradoxically, at a moment when global exchange and cooperation are most crucial, international exchanges are trending precipitously downwards. There are more questions than answers now as we move through the fall semester and gage the virus' changing numbers and impacts on international engagement. The CARES Act will provide assistance for this office. Pre-COVID, the office had been on target to have its highest international enrollment this year. Although it is a continually shifting situation, questions remain about the return of international students. Level four travel restrictions are now removed but travelers continue to use caution.

Faculty Titles Resolution

Sean Trainor, Chair
Compensation Committee

- This Compensation Committee resolution has been reviewed and approved by the Welfare Council and the Academic Policy Council. The faculty title change is suggested as a change in working titles, rather than the official Human Resources job titles. Research shows that students perceive the title of Lecturer to be of a lower status than that of their Associate or Assistant Professor colleagues. The resolution advocates for a more equitable title and addresses concerns about the ability to recruit non-tenure track candidates at UF and properly reflect the career opportunities available at UF for a recruit. The resolution seeks to bring the Lecturer rank into alignment with other non-tenure track faculty and reflects such academic trends recently taken at institutions such as at UNC Chapel Hill and Penn State. Health & Human Performance Dean Michael Reid expressed agreement with the above research and points of discussion. Additionally, feedback has been received that parents can erroneously gain a false perspective that their students aren't receiving top-notch instruction, and colleagues should have a more respectful and appropriate title. The resolution does not in any way relate to tenure or compensation, but its goal is to establish alignment with other non-tenure-track series and ensure consistent rights to faculty, such as consistent voting rights on curriculum matters. The Engineering Faculty Council has discussed this issue over the past two years and recognizes that some departments or faculty may be reluctant to embrace such a new title due to concerns that it may somehow degrade tenured faculty; however, both tenure and non-tenured faculty in the College of Engineering have generally expressed support. The Provost has expressed opposition to renaming a series title without due evaluation. For example, are there additional implications to consider for items typically reserved for faculty holding a Professor title, such as chairing a dissertation committee? UF has a Professor of Practice non-tenure track series, which requires considerable expertise and achievements within a discipline.
- A motion to bring the proposed resolution to September Faculty Senate as an Information Item, including some historical background, was unanimously carried.

Successful College Collaborations Series

Glenn E. Good, Dean, College of Education
Diane McFarlin, Dean, College of
Journalism & Communications

Deans Good and McFarlin provided an overview of academic collaborations and the historical backgrounds and missions of their respective colleges. *It was noted that Faculty Senate would provide an opportunity to address academic freedom and campus diversity and inclusion through a sponsored upcoming town hall.

Diversity: Review of Programs and Opportunities at UF

David A. Canton, Associate Professor
Director, African American Studies Program

-A moment of silence was held for UF Sr. Lecturer and historian, Patricia Hilliard-Nunn, who passed away last month, and whose research spoke to the grim history of racism and lynching in Alachua County.

-Dr. Canton will provide an overview to the Senate of available campus resources for faculty and black faculty and introduced three colleagues: Dr. Sharon D. Austin, Professor of Political Science and the former Director of the African American Studies Program; Dr. Katrice Graham, President of the Association of Black Faculty and Staff; Dr. Michele Manuel, Professor and Department Chair, Department of Materials Science & Engineering; and Dr. Michael Bowie, Clinical Assistant Professor & Director of Community Engagement and Diversity Outreach who discussed strategies to help UF recruit, retain, and reduce additional burdens placed on black faculty. Advocacy of a PhD program in African American studies was also discussed.

Council Reports

-The councils will meet later this month and provide an update in October.

Budget Council

Ashley Ghiaseddin

Welfare Council

Sarah Lynne

Research and Scholarship Council

Keith Rambo

Infrastructure Council

Richard Scholtz

Academic Policy Council

Hans Van Oostrom

Approve [September 17, 2020 Faculty Senate Agenda](#)

Sylvain Doré, Chair

-The agenda was approved with the addition of [Regulation 1.017 - Separation from Employment, Layoff and Furlough](#) as an Information Item, with the speaker being TBA.

Adjournment

Sylvain Doré, Chair

-The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m.