

Senate Steering Committee Minutes

August 19, 2021

3 p.m.

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Present: David C. Bloom, Taylor Rose, Richard Scholtz, Rick Stepp, Keith Rambo, Paul Duncan, Kent Fuchs, Jason Byrd, Joe Glover, Keith Diem, Sarah Lynn, Sylvain Doré, Amanda Phalin, Michael Lauzardo, Laurie Bialosky, Juan Nino, and Ashley Ghiaseddin.

Call to Order

David C. Bloom, Chair

- Faculty Senate Chair David C. Bloom called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

Approve [April 29, 2021 Minutes](#)

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The minutes were approved.

Reports

• **Chair's Report**

David C. Bloom, Chair

- Chair Bloom discussed his goals to revisit shared governance and move forward with processes which can strengthen and maximize faculty participation and voice. Another primary focus this academic year will be to increase communication between the Faculty Senate, its Chair, and the College Faculty Councils/Assemblies. Grass roots efforts to achieve shared governance goals will be made, including meeting monthly with the College Faculty Council/Assembly Chairs and visiting each College Council Assembly at their college meetings. Faculty communication channels will also be encouraged through the Committee & Council Chairs, who met for an orientation and meet and greet yesterday, and who will meet monthly with Chair Bloom.
- There is no Provost's Report or Council Chair's Reports this month to focus primarily on Q&A for both Dr. Fuchs' State of the University Address and Dr. Lauzardo's COVID update.
- Next month's Council Chair Reports can briefly touch on items of interest from the Senate and Council Chairs.
- New Deans have been invited to visit Faculty Senate:
 - *September:* Dean Nicole Stedman, Graduate School.
 - *November:* Dean Dana Zimmel, College of Vet Med and Dean Hub Brown, College of Journalism & Communications.
 - *December:* Dean Colleen Koch, College of Medicine.
- Nominations are open for Honorary Degrees and are due October 1. This notice appeared in yesterday's *Faculty Update Newsletter*. The [Call for Nominations Form](#) web link and email announcement will also be emailed late August to the UF Faculty listserv and is on the Honorary Degrees and Distinguished Awards Committee web page @:
<https://fora.aa.ufl.edu/FacultySenate/Committees/Honorary-Degrees-and-Distinguished-Awards-Committee>.
- This year's five Distinguished Professors are:
 - [Almut G. Winterstein](#)
 - [Mark Sherwood](#)
 - [Julie K. Levy](#)
 - [Sanjay Ranka](#) and
 - [Robert W. Knechel](#)

-Live-streamed and recorded lectures will follow a Senate meeting. Details @:

<https://fora.aa.ufl.edu/FacultySenate/Pages/Faculty-Senate/DistinguishedProfessorLectureSeries>

- Please join us at the reception immediately following Faculty Senate adjournment next week in the Rion Ballroom – West. The reception is sponsored by Curtis Reynolds, VP, Business Affairs and Faculty Senate.

- **President's Report**

Kent Fuchs, President

- President Fuchs extended his regrets that he will depart all Thursday afternoon meetings early so that he is able to participate in athletic conference presidential meetings. These meetings begin at 4:00 on Thursdays and have been occurring since March 2020.

- President Fuchs highlighted key points which he will discuss in next week's State of the University Address, including UF opportunities in South Florida, such as the university's potential partnership with the Scripps Research Institute and UF initiatives to formulate a set of graduate education programs in West Palm Beach, FL. He will also discuss advancing UF's physical and academic infrastructure.

- Dr. Fuchs will send a campus-wide welcome email message on Monday and will pen a column in *The Independent Florida Alligator* strongly encouraging all to be vaccinated and to mask.

COVID Update

Michael Lauzardo, Director

UF Health Screen, Test & Protect

- Dr. Lauzardo will discuss with Faculty Senate what the pandemic means to campus. There is currently an unprecedented number of cases in the community and it is being driven by the Delta variant. There is a salient difference in how this variant is affecting younger populations. The vaccine has provided remarkable protection against COVID.

- Dr. Lauzardo will provide: a ballpark figure of those on ventilators, the community's ICU capacity, and the number of people in quarantine. He will also discuss the on-campus strategy for the Screen, Test & Protect (STP) program, including the surveillance testing of unvaccinated individuals. He will review the tools at our disposal to protect faculty and the community, such as pushing for vaccinations and using N95 masks, since that is the standard used by medical personnel in ICUs, which is a virus-filled environment.

- Dr. Lauzardo also answered inquiries about the public schools' start last week and answered other data-related questions including that:

- At least 95% of those hospitalized are unvaccinated.

- More than half of the hospitalized are not from Alachua County.

- There is a 60 percent vaccination rate in Alachua County, and it is increasing about one percent per week.

- Many outlying counties are in the 20 percent vaccination range.

- Immune suppressed individuals or the elderly represent the 5% of those who are hospitalized and vaccinated, which mirrors national data.

- Dr. Lauzardo is still reviewing data regarding boosters.

- The Delta variant is nearly 100 percent of the current community spread.

- Student vaccine incentives are being reviewed with the Student Affairs Office to maximize all due to discussed tools at UF's disposal.

[Resolution Calling for Requirement of Safety Measures to Protect our Campus from COVID-19](#) **David C. Bloom**, Chair

- Chair Bloom presented this resolution, as passed last Thursday by the Advisory Council of Faculty

Senates (ACFS), an organization of the Faculty Senate Chairs in the Florida State University System (SUS). This ACFS resolution was unanimously passed by all 12 SUS university participants. The ACFS is a widely diverse faculty group, which runs the gamut from professors of law to medical and health professors and professionals.

- Chair Bloom provided an overview of the resolution's evolution and how it is germane in addressing how the state of Florida functions, specifically the relationships between the SUS, the legislature, and Florida's executive branch. This resolution ultimately calls on the legislature to give the SUS room to operate safely in the COVID environment based on science and on local factors and decision-making.
- All SUS universities are adding this to their Senate agendas as soon as possible.
- The next ACFS meeting is being held in two weeks in Orlando, where members plan to actively engage with legislators.
- Following discussion, a motion to approve this resolution carried unanimously.

Graduate Council

Paul Duncan, Sr. Associate Dean
Graduate School

- [MS in Applied Data Science](#)
 - The Graduate Council and Engineering Education Department propose a Master of Science with a major in Applied Data Science (MSADS) degree to provide students with a working knowledge of techniques and software commonly used in Data Science.
 - [Proposal to establish the Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies](#)
 - This proposal is to establish the Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies (GSWS) in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) at the University of Florida.
- Following discussion, a motion to approve the MS in Applied Data Science, and to refer the Proposal to establish the Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies to a committee, the Graduate Council, carried unanimously.

Approve [August 26, 2021 Faculty Senate Agenda](#)

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The agenda was approved with the removal of the above CLAS / Graduate Council proposal.

Adjournment

David C. Bloom, Chair

- The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.