

Welfare Council

Minutes

Friday, November 22, 2024

9:30 a.m.

***202 Tigert (Business Affairs' Conference Room)**

(*Zoom Link, if needed: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/92492401419?pwd=EG6gbPfbm9wTbDrFnmQwNNkSxf6Npp.1>

Meeting ID: 924 9240 1419 / Passcode: 043965 / Dial in: +1 305 224 1968)

Present: Breann Garbas, Heidi Radunovich, Laurie Bialosky, Amelia Dempere, Raymond Issa, Sean Trainor, Lauren Berkow, Christopher Hass, Hélène Huet, Crystal Marull, Brook Mercier, Alex Bitton-Bailey and John Jordi.

1. Call to Order – Breann Garbas, Welfare Council Chair

- The meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m. by Welfare Council Chair Breann Garbas.

2. Approval of October 1, 2024 Minutes

- The minutes were approved

3. Update from Contributing Chairs

- **Academic Freedom, Tenure, Professional Relations and Standards (AFTPRS) Committee Update**
– Ray Issa, AFTPRS Chair provided update: met last month session for new and returning members of committee – went over bylaw changes to make process more smooth.
- **Compensation & Equity Committee Update**
– Sean Trainor, Compensation & Equity Committee Chair provided update:
Went through the faculty, staff, grad student exit survey, line by line, feasibility of implementing changes, making survey stronger. Week after Thanksgiving UF HR will present 2024 data related to faculty departures from the university.

4. Old Business

- **FEA System Updates** – Chris Hass, Associate Provost for Academic & Faculty Affairs
System is coming along, around 92% integration. In January will start testing again for people who will be going up for tenure. Working out a plan B just in case doesn't work well or isn't ready in time.
- **University-wide Milestones/recognitions** – updates from Steering Committee meeting
 - i. New policy was presented at Faculty Senate yesterday. Policy is consistent with staff recognition. Discussion of what some other universities do – many do small tokens, some provide financial incentives. Maybe we should keep working on this issue. Another concern raised: staff concerns regarding needing more money – leave to grow, get more money. HR is working on strategic priorities for career development, and leadership development

However, sometimes not allowed to attend trainings if desired. May feel pressure not to do this, pay for staff roles not great so side hustles; in office might be a little burnt out because spread thin. Rent and housing going up so people needing to work multiple jobs. University put on table 12 week paid parental leave for bargaining unit faculty.

- [Strategic funding request for communal faculty spaces](#)—Bre Garbas
Talked to Chair Lynne – still in progress.
- **Post Tenure Review Updates**
In addition to the faculty members who are required to participate, an additional 50 faculty members have volunteered to participate across 11 colleges, up from 9 last year 9). Packets will become available beginning Dec. 15. Research criteria can be updated – 2 colleges have sent forward updates for review. Question was asked whether there is a limit to how many people are allowed to go up. The preference is to keep it consistent from a workload perspective, but at this time there is no official limit. In general, evaluative criteria of the faculty – needs to put into bylaws and will be a process for review, similar to tenure and promotion criteria. Can be revised over time as the department decides changes are needed, in the same way that tenure and promotion criteria can change over time.

5. New Business

- Please remind colleagues to complete a [nomination form for university-wide committees](#); more details [here](#) including the list of [open seats](#) this election cycle; view the Welfare Council roster and terms [here](#).
Please nominate people. Note that at Faculty Senate yesterday, Dr. Fuchs announced that what were previously called presidential committees will be renamed university-wide committees.
- **Gator Evals Committee Proposal – John Jordi**, Instructional Assessment Coordinator, Center for Teaching Excellence & **Alexandra Bitton-Bailey**, Director
-- [GatorEvals Comm Proposal on MLY Alerts Evaluation Language Options](#)
Potential language for landing page and free response page regarding MLY proposal discussed. Suggested language updates. Some examples of what other institutions do were provided. One change is to add links to university resources for students who may need help. Maybe some persuasive messaging regarding how the evaluation is used, the importance of response rates. Discussion of what can be done to increase response rate. Issue raised that student evaluations are confidential but not anonymous. Suggested that language be added on the page where instructions are given making this clear to students, using wording approved by council. It is possible that AI technology will be used to flag worrisome comments and consider making the student non-anonymous if deemed necessary (e.g., suicidal or homicidal threats). There are so many comments and can't necessarily monitor them closely.

References:

- i. [GatorEvals Committee Proposal Slides](#) [discussed by Academic Policy Council Aug 29 2024]

- ii. [GatorEvals Committee Proposal on MLY Alerts Model](#) [discussed by Academic Policy Council Sept & Oct 2024]

- **Open Floor**

Question regarding status of inquiry as to whether UF insurances can cover costs of gym membership, or if this can be negotiated. Brook is looking into this issue. Discussion of faculty use of UF gym, pool, and fees.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

Minutes Submitted by Welfare Council member Heidi Radunovich.