

2017

## Faculty Senate Minutes January 26, 2017

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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# January 26, 2017 Minutes of URI Faculty Senate

1. The regular meeting of the Faculty Senate was called to order at 3:06 p.m. in Room 105 of the Richard E. Beupre Center for Chemical and Forensic Sciences, Chairperson Sullivan presiding.

All members were present except Senators Akhlaghi, Cornillon, Djurdjevic, Lloyd, Meghani, Rynearson, and Thiem; *ex officio* members Vice President Collins, CIO Kubica, Vice Provost Beauvais; Deans Bonn, Ebrahimpour, Wright, and Zawia. Associate Dean Eaton represented Dean Brownell, Associate Dean Smith represented Dean Corliss, Associate Dean Veeger represented Dean Kirby, and Associate Dean Riebe represented Dean Ligouri.

2. Chairperson Sullivan announced that the minutes of Faculty Senate meeting #4, December 8, 2016 had been posted with the agenda. He asked if there were any additions, corrections to or questions about the minutes. There were none. Chairperson Sullivan ruled that, in the absence of any changes or corrections, the minutes were approved.

## 3. REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### A. Announcements

1. Chairperson Sullivan called on Director Goldsmith who announced that the Academic Testing Center (ATC) would be opening in February and that information would be available soon through the website of the Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. The Center (Chafee 202) would provide proctored exam space for student needs as defined by a letter from Disability Services and for students needing to complete make-up exams (as per the University Manual). Staffing and days and hours of availability were being finalized.

2. Chairperson Sullivan said that he, the Provost, and other colleagues had met with Commissioner Purcell in December to discuss the proposed changes to the Policy for Articulation and Transfer Between Public Institutions of Higher Education. As a result, revisions were underway that would reflect more reasonable and acceptable updates.

3. Chairperson Sullivan said that the Provost would provide updates on the ongoing searches for administrative positions at the February Faculty Senate meeting.

4. Chairperson Sullivan said that, at today's meeting, the Senate would be asked to approve a 3-member Nominating Committee to prepare a ballot for the February 23 election of the Senate Vice Chair/Chair-Elect.

5. Chairperson Sullivan called on the President to comment on the recent announcement by Governor Raimondo to expand the RI Promise Program to provide two years of paid college tuition at the state's public institutions. The President said that URI (through Vice Provost Libutti, Office of Enrollment Management) had provided much input into the development of the plan, part of the budget proposal announced in the Governor's State of the State address on January 17. He said that providing state support in the 3rd and 4th years of college was intended to build incentive to graduate on time. He added that there would be no penalty if students did not graduate in 4 years, and that 5-year programs would not be affected adversely. The President indicated that the University would continue to work closely with the Governor's team as the proposal moved through the legislative process. He commented that, because of the timing of the budget process in the General Assembly, families would have to make decisions about attending URI without

benefit of knowing if the program had been approved. Senator Harlow praised the concept but expressed concern that the students who were in most need of aid and were employed while attending college might not be eligible because they were not enrolled as full-time students. The President indicated that the University was sensitive to that argument but that, through significant financial aid and other supports, all students would be empowered to strive to graduate in 4 years. Senator Nassersharif asked about the financial risk of being committed to a program with no assurance of sustained funding. The President replied that the risk was no greater than in any other year. He indicated that the funding for the tuition program might be more secure because the Governor's proposal represented a commitment to Rhode Island voters, not to the institution. Senator Maynard asked if students transferring from the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) would be eligible. The President explained that students must start college at URI to be eligible for the program at URI. He added that URI has a program in place, the Joint Admission Agreement, which offers students transferring from CCRI up to 30% reduction in in-state tuition at URI. Senator Betensky asked if the program might have a negative impact on majors not associated with high-wage jobs. The President said that he had confidence that URI would achieve its performance-funding goals and that the Governor's tuition program would not affect academic decision-making at URI. Senator Leonard asked if the tuition rates might be impacted. The President said that the Council on Postsecondary Education determines tuition rates; the General Assembly cannot change tuition rates.

#### B. Activities of the Executive Committee

Vice Chairperson Conley announced that the Minutes of Executive Committee meetings #19, #20, #21, and #22 were available on the Faculty Senate website. He asked if there were any questions. There were none.

#### C. Recommendations of the Executive Committee

Vice Chairperson Conley announced that, at the February 23 Faculty Senate meeting, the Senate would elect a Vice Chair/Chair-Elect for the 2017-18 academic year. He said that it was a two-year leadership position and that the individual would remain a full member of the Faculty Senate even if the two-year position exceeded that individual's three-year term as a Senator. He added that any Senator whose term extended at least through Spring 2018 was eligible to run for the position. Vice Chairperson Conley recommended that the Faculty Senate approve the membership of the Nominating Committee: Senator Byrd, School of Education; Senator Euler, Chemistry; and Senator Sullivan, Plant Sciences and Entomology. The recommendation was moved, seconded, and approved.

### 4. REPORTS OF STANDING, JOINT, AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Chairperson Sullivan presented the 537<sup>th</sup> Report of the Curricular Affairs Committee. He said that Section I was Informational and asked if there were any questions. There were none. He reported that Section II required Senate approval. Eight new courses and 6 course change proposals from the College of Nursing were approved along with and 7 additional course change proposals from other colleges. Chairperson Sullivan moved approval of a proposal to create a minor in Japanese Language and Culture, a proposal to change the requirements in the BA and BFA in Studio Art, and a proposal for changes in the BS in Nursing that would reduce the graduation requirements by one credit. The motion passed.

B. Senator and Honors Program Director Derbyshire presented the 2015–2016 Report of the Honors Program and Visiting Scholars Committee. She explained that there were two paths to eligibility in the Honors Program for entering freshmen: by earning a cumulative high school GPA of 3.80 or higher or by earning a cumulative high school GPA of 3.50 or higher and a combined SAT score of 1250+ or higher in Critical Reading and Mathematics (or the ACT equivalent score or 27). She said that, because of concerns that SAT scores can be correlated with family income, the Program allows students to qualify based on high school GPA only. Senator Derbyshire reported that the percentage of students of color in the Honors Program had increased from 12% in 2013 to 16% in 2016. She reported that the 2015 Honors Colloquium, *The Power of Humor*, had been coordinated by Senator DiCioccio (Communication Studies, Harrington School of Communication and Media), and Associate Dean Quilliam (College of Pharmacy). The Colloquium had examined topics such as humor in the law, humor and diversity, and humor in science. The Fall 2016 Honors Colloquium, *Inequality and the American Dream*, had been coordinated by Professors Doerner (Sociology), Johnson (Political Science), Loomis (History), and Malloy (Economics). Senator Derbyshire said that plans were underway for the Fall 2017 Honors Colloquium, *The Origins of Everything*. Senator Derbyshire reported that, with the addition of a second staff member, there was an assistant director to facilitate the national fellowship program and a second assistant director to oversee the pre-health advising program. Both programs, she reported, continued to be successful and she enumerated the 2015–2016 national fellowship awards, scholarships, and medical program admissions. Senator Derbyshire presented proposed language changes to University Manual sections 8.60.10 – 8.65.13 describing the Honors Program and changes to the University Catalog. She moved approval of the changes. The motion passed.

## 5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chairperson Sullivan summarized the motion made by Senator Hume at the November 17, 2016 Faculty Senate meeting requesting that the Executive Committee make recommendations regarding the eligibility of full-time non tenure-track faculty for Faculty Senate and Senate committee membership. He reviewed the presentation and discussion that had taken place at the December 8 Faculty Senate meeting noting that the Executive Committee had proposed two separate motions that, if approved, would lead to Senate eligibility for Senior Lecturers, Teaching Professors, and Clinical professors with at least 5 years of service in their position. Chairperson Sullivan presented additional [power point slides](#) that included faculty data: numbers, type, and rank distributed across colleges; changes in numbers since 2013; promotion history of tenure-track and clinical faculty since 2013; and promotions of lecturers in 2016 and projected promotions of lecturers in 2017 and 2018. He projected the two motions, one proposing that the Senate provisionally approve that Senior Lecturers and Teaching Professors be eligible to serve on the Faculty Senate as well as on Faculty Senate committees and the other proposing that the Senate provisionally approve that Clinical Faculty be eligible, after five years of service in their positions, to serve on the Faculty Senate as well as on Faculty Senate committees. Both motions included additional similar language: that the Faculty Senate Constitution, By-Laws, and University Manual (CBUM) Committee be directed to draft, prior to the February 2017 Senate meeting, appropriate changes to the Senate Constitution, the By-laws, and the University Manual to be submitted to the Senate, and that the Senate vote, at its February 2017 meeting, whether or not the changes to the Constitution should be submitted to the General Faculty for a referendum and the implementation date of any approved membership and service changes shall be the 2018–19 academic year. Furthermore, at time of implementation the ratio of eligible faculty to senator shall be changed to 1:20.

Senator Williams asked why Lecturers and full-time Research professors were not included in the proposal. Chairperson Sullivan explained that the collective bargaining agreement allows for promotion of

Lecturers to Senior Lecturer in their 5<sup>th</sup> year of service and the opportunity for promotion to Teaching Professor in the 9<sup>th</sup> year. He further explained that Research professors differ from other non tenure-track faculty because they are hired contractually on grant money to perform only research. Senator Hume expressed concern about the minimum 5-years in service limitation on Clinical professors. Discussion followed. Some senators voiced concerns that, although well-intentioned from the perspective of representation, placing non tenure-track faculty in decision-making positions with tenure-track faculty would not necessarily assure equity in the decision-making process nor shield non tenure-track faculty from being compromised. Job security, fear of reprisal, the value of tenure, the roles of the different kinds of non tenure-track faculty, and the move by the faculty union to provide protection to non tenure-track faculty were discussed. Chairperson Sullivan directed Senators to the motions, as projected. Both motions as presented were moved and seconded in one motion. Senator Rice moved to amend the proposed ratio of senators to eligible faculty to 1:15. The amendment was seconded and approved. Senator Cooper moved to call the question. The motion to call the question was approved. Paper ballots were distributed and collected. The motion passed, 22 in favor, 14 opposed. Chairperson Sullivan said that changes to the Constitution of the Faculty Senate would be presented at the next meeting.

6. Chairperson Sullivan moved to adjourn. The motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff