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FSEC Minutes November 20, 2017

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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**Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting #13
November 20, 2017
MINUTES**

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:07 AM on Monday, November 20, 2017, in Library Conference Room B, Vice Chairperson Leonard presiding. Senators Derbyshire, Gindy, Mahler, and Rice were present. Chairperson Conley was absent.
2. **ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**
 - a. FSEC members were asked to make a recommendation for a faculty appointee to the Alumni Association Executive Board.
 - b. FSEC members discussed their meeting schedule for January 2018 and the spring semester 2018.
 - c. Senators Mahler and Rice volunteered to be members of the Nominating Committee, the committee that will prepare a ballot for the February 22, 2018 election of the Senate Vice Chair/Chair-Elect. Eligibility for the office of Senate Vice Chair/Chair-Elect was discussed.
3. **ONGOING BUSINESS**
 - a. The FSEC reviewed the status of the standing committee restructuring initiative. The By-Laws language describing the new Committee for Research and Creative Activities will be presented for a vote at the December 7 Faculty Senate meeting. The By-laws changes describing the new method of selecting and appointing members and chairs of standing committees will be presented for a vote at the December 7 Faculty Senate meeting.
 - b. The FSEC discussed non-credit credentials referred to as badges. The FSEC had been apprised of the proceedings of meetings convened by Associate Dean Rusnock to discuss the development of digital badges. The Committee expressed concern for the need for broader representation (more faculty) in the group working to develop badges at URI. Additional concerns and questions included: the means of establishing/defining specific credentials, under whose authority would badges be governed, how credentialing activities would be delivered and by whom; payments, fees, and other costs associated with credentialing activities, and the impact on the URI brand. Vice Chairperson Leonard asked for a motion to create a 6-member ad hoc Senate committee to define digital

credentials. The motion was made, seconded, and discussed. The FSEC discussed the need to consult deans about their level of interest and the interest among their faculty to offer workshops or other credentialing activities. The FSEC discussed its intent to communicate with Associate Dean Rusnock about its concerns and plans to proceed. The motion was approved. Vice Chairperson Leonard asked that Committee members be prepared to suggest ad hoc committee nominees at the next meeting.

- c. Senator Mahler indicated that she had contacted the other members of the ad hoc committee to review the Administrator Evaluation process and hoped to be able to meet before the end of the semester.
- d. The FSEC discussed adding all Vice Presidents and Associate Vice Presidents to the administrator evaluation process.
- e. In the context of the efforts to develop an overarching process for proposing and approving interdisciplinary courses associated with programs not governed by an academic college, the FSEC discussed the course approval process for Honors Program courses. They referred to the process as described in [Bill #07-08--23](#) which includes these statements:

The Honors Program will use the HPR course code only for unique honors courses that do not have a regularly scheduled equivalent, such as HPR 124 Honors Course in Fine Arts: The Creative Process.

The approval process for new honors courses that do not have a regularly scheduled equivalent will remain unchanged. Interested faculty will submit a course proposal to the Honors Director. If the Honors Program and Visiting Scholars Committee approves this new course, the Honors Director will submit it to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, the Curricular Affairs Committee, and the Faculty Senate for further approval.

Senator Derbyshire, the Director of the Honors Program, explained that the process, as established in 2008, is no longer practiced. She reported that the Honors Program initiates the development of HPR courses. As a consequence of the course arising from the program not a department, the required signatures on course proposal form (department chair, college curriculum committee chair, and academic dean) are not always obtained due to organizational structure. The Director of the Honors Program signs the forms in place of the customary signing authorities. Senate Coordinator Neff reported that the proposals, subsequently reviewed for approval by the Curricular Affairs and/or General Education Committees, are often called into question by faculty members on the review committees because they lack the customary signatures that represent disciplinary approval, assurance of disciplinary integrity, and fiscal commitment to the delivery of the course. Senator Derbyshire said that, once courses are created and faculty members are identified to teach them, the courses are scheduled by the Honors Program. Vice Chairperson Leonard asked Director Derbyshire and

Coordinator Neff to document the issues associated with the processing of Honors courses to assist with future discussion. The Committee recognized the need for a university-wide workload policy for interdisciplinary programs and suggested that the issue be discussed with the Provost.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff