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Faculty Senate Minutes September 17, 2020

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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Minutes of Faculty Senate Meeting #1
Thursday, September 17, 2020 Via WebEx

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:06 PM by Senate Chair Echevarria after the adjournment of the General Faculty-Graduate Faculty meeting. All senators were in attendance except for Senators Akanda, Haile, Kaskosz, Kovarsky, Mok, Pearson-Merkowitz, Sheinin, and Zhang. Ex officio members in attendance: President Dooley, Provost DeHayes, Vice President Collins, Vice President Snyder, Vice Provost Bodah, Vice Provost Libutti, Vice Provost Veeger, Dean Boughida, Interim Dean DeBoef, Associate Dean Reynolds representing Dean Riley, and Dean Rolle. Also in attendance: Board of Trustees Chair Margo Cook, Associate Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Almandrez, Athletic Director Bjorn, CIO Kaugars, Dean Graney, Associate Dean Mosley Austin, and Director of Community & Organizational Development Ravello.
2. **MINUTES** A motion to approve the Faculty Senate Meeting minutes of May 7, 2020 was made, seconded, and approved.
3. **REPORT OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
 - a. **Announcements and Welcome Remarks**
 - i. Senate Chair Echevarria welcomed Senators and guests to the Faculty Senate's first meeting of the new academic year and thanked people from across the University community for all of the heroic efforts that made it possible for our campuses to reopen safely this fall. She applauded the faculty and all those who have supported us for their remarkable work done preparing excellent academic experiences for our students.
 - ii. Chair Echevarria spoke about shared governance, noting that the opportunity to work in direct partnership with the President is a faculty right that is codified in Rhode Island State law. She explained that serving as a member of the Faculty Senate is a privilege and an honor. She also stated that, with the privilege of direct participation in shared governance also comes the responsibility to represent all faculty voices while we carry out the will of the faculty and work in the best interests of our institution.
 - iii. Chair Echevarria acknowledged the difficult challenges that we currently face and referred to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee statement of June 30, [Racial justice is the business of the URI faculty](#). She then presented the [Senate standing committees' charges](#) focused on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.
 - iv. Chair Echevarria presented a [motion from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee](#) to change the Faculty Senate By-Laws to allow, in the sole case of online meetings, for extension of Faculty Senate meetings beyond 5 PM. In

accordance with the rules for making changes to the By-Laws, the motion was introduced so that Senators may reflect on the changes and discuss them with constituents. The formal vote on the motion will occur at the next Faculty Senate meeting on October 15, 2020.

b. Activities of the Executive Committee

- i. Senate Vice Chair Cardany presented [the minutes](#) of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee meetings of May 13, 20, and 26; June 2, 9, 16, and 25; July 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29; August 19, and 26; and September 2. She asked if there were any questions. There were none.
- ii. Senate Vice Chair Cardany provided an update on the work of the Special Committee for a Catalog and Curriculum Management System.

c. Recommendations of the Executive Committee

- i. Senate Vice Chair Cardany presented committee appointments for 2020-2021 to the Faculty Senate for consent. There was no discussion.

4. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

- a. **Announcements** The President thanked Chair Echevarria for her inspiring opening remarks and indicated how pleased he is with our shared governance. He reported that since March URI leadership had worked collaboratively with faculty, staff, and students to prepare for the fall reopening amid the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that URI has worked more effectively than most institutions in developing plans that responded to students' and faculty's priorities and needs while maximizing health and safety. Through this planning, the University has made important investments in advanced technology which will have long-lasting positive impacts on the URI community. The President commended the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for their collaborative work throughout the summer with both the President and the Provost, expressing his appreciation for their dedication to faculty and students. He was proud of their efforts as well as those of Student Affairs and Health Services in the implementation of the fall reopening plans. The President also noted that this was a historic Faculty Senate meeting due to the presentation by Margo Cook, the first Chair of the URI Board of Trustees.

- b. **Status of Actions Pending Approval after the May 7, 2020, Faculty Senate Meeting:**
BILL #2019-20-13 from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate: New Program, Professional Master of Science in Supply Chain Management, and Applied Analytics (PMSCMAA) Approved with Notification to the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees.

BILL #2019-20-14 from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate: Curricular Changes, Approved.

BILL #2019-20-3 Joint Report of the Curriculum and Standards and Graduate Council Report to the Faculty Senate: Accelerated Bachelors/Masters Programs, Approved.

BILL #2019-20-4 Constitution, By-Laws, and University Manual Committee Report: Revision of University Manual Language Section 8.20.72, Approved.

RESOLUTION Honoring Faculty Senate Chair Bahram Nassersharif, Support.

5. PRESENTATIONS

- a. Associate Vice President & Chief Diversity Officer Mary Grace Almandrez gave a presentation with Community & Organizational Development Director Joanna Ravello focused on recent developments, initiatives and achievements relating to diversity, equity, inclusion and justice. Associate Vice President Almandrez reported on three main areas of interest that frequently arise during her discussions with different groups across the University community: recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff, diversity in the curriculum, and education and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. She invited the University community to consider how to address these issues and build institutional capacity for this important work. Dr. Ravello, the Community & Organizational Development Director, spoke about the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) 365 Symposium, a virtual “third space” where community members convene to have important conversations about diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Dr. Ravello reported on the success of the Symposium (including over 300 attendees at ten sessions) as well as other important achievements and initiatives, including the development of a micro-credential, the work of the University Diversity Council (UDC), and the upcoming Campus Climate survey. Dr. Ravello also highlighted a forthcoming announcement about the 2nd Annual CED Summit. Senate Chair Echevarria thanked Associate Vice President Almandrez and Director Ravello for their work and for their presentation, underscoring the complexity of the issues that the CED office is managing, and expressing gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate with them.
- b. The Board of Trustees (BoT) Chair Margo Cook greeted the Faculty Senate on behalf of the Board. She spoke as a proud alumnus of the University of Rhode Island who is honored to have been selected to lead the BoT at such a pivotal moment. Chair Cook commended all of the efforts throughout the entire University community that are making it possible for students to continue their education despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. She provided details about the process, firmly grounded in extensive research and best practices, by which the BoT has developed their Bylaws, committee structure and committee charters. Chair Cook also reported on the composition of the BoT, noting that the majority of the Trustees are URI graduates. She presented her vision for the upcoming work of the BoT, which is focused on educating the trustees

about URI and giving them the opportunity to meet and interact with members of the University community. Chair Cook also provided an update on the Presidential search, noting that Trustee Ryan is serving as Chair of the Search Committee and that the search process will begin in earnest in early October. She explained that in designing the approach to the presidential search process, the BoT has worked to balance the priorities of confidentiality and transparency. In order to attract the best candidates possible, important parts of the search process will be both private and confidential. Whenever possible and especially throughout the process of defining the presidential candidate profile, the process will be open and transparent, providing different ways for community members to contribute their concerns, priorities, and perspectives.

6. REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

- a. Vice Chair Audrey Cardany, 2019-2020 Chair of Curriculum and Standards Committee, presented the [Curriculum and Standards Committee Report #2019-20-12](#) which was approved.
 - b. Senator Meyerson, Chair of the Academic Calendar Subcommittee, presented [Curriculum and Standards Committee Report #2019-20-13](#) which was approved.
 - c. Senator Hicks, CBUM Chair, presented the Constitution, By-Laws, and University Manual [Committee Report #2020-21-1](#) with a motion to change the Faculty Senate Constitution, which was approved. The motion will now go to the General Faculty for a referendum vote.
7. Chairperson Echevarria asked if there was any Old Business. There was none.
8. Chairperson Echevarria asked if there was any New Business. There was none.
9. Chairperson Echevarria asked for a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m.