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Faculty Senate Minutes April 15, 2021

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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**GENERAL FACULTY – GRADUATE FACULTY MEETING
& FACULTY SENATE MEETING #8 APRIL 15, 2021**

**Via Zoom
Minutes**

1. **CALL TO ORDER OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING** Faculty Senate (FS) President Echevarria called meeting #8 of the Faculty Senate to order immediately following the General Faculty – Graduate Faculty meeting at 3:06 p.m. All Faculty Senators were present except for: Senators Akanda, Amin, Chandlee, Leatham, Preisser, Sendag, Sheinin, Taveira, and Zhang. Ex Officio in attendance: President Dooley, Provost DeHayes, Vice President Collins, Vice President Snyder, Vice Provost Bodah, Vice Provost Libutti, Vice Provost Veeger, Dean Ebrahimpour, Dean Larrat, Dean Riley, Interim Dean DeBoef, Associate Dean Leveille for Dean Wolfe, Associate Dean Sartini for Dean Kirby, Associate Dean Smith for Dean Bontempi. Others in attendance were: Trustee and Professor Gindy, CIO Kaugers, Assistant Vice President Reynolds, Associate Dean Mosley-Austin, Associate Dean Reynolds, AAUP President Reumann, Ombuds Tyler, Executive Director Rogers, Director Burgess, Director Goldsmith, Director Khanna, Director Kroll, Director Stack, Senior Associate Director Humphrey, Assistant Dean Boisclair, Assistant Director Miller, Assistant Director Sisson, Assistant Director Torrens, Professor Betensky, Professor D’Hondt, Professor Honhart, Associate Professor Van Wyk, Assistant Professor Hartman, Assistant Professor Manuel, Assistant Professor Tracksdorf, Clinical Assistant Professor Olagundoye, Teaching Professor Romanow, Senior Lecturer Dupuis, Lecturer Kazakov, Lecturar Pisabarro Sarrió, Coordinator Rooney, Advisor Delaney, and Advisor Salomone.

2. **DISPOSITION OF MINUTES** of Faculty Senate Meeting March 18, 2021. FS President Echevarria announced the minutes of March 18, 2021 Faculty Senate meeting had been posted with the agenda. She inquired if there were any comments, additions, or questions. Hearing none, President Echevarria declared the minutes approved.

3. REPORT OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

a. Announcements

Faculty Senate (FS) President Echevarria reported that an invitation to Faculty Senators would go out soon requesting nominations for awards from the Senate Faculty Fund established by President Dooley and Rev. Lynn Baker Dooley.

FS President Echevarria presented an amended agenda and asked if there were any questions or objections. There were none, and the amended agenda was accepted.

FS President Echevarria explained that the FS By-laws calls for an organizational meeting of the Faculty Senate in May within two weeks of the new Senators being

named. Senators will be notified of the date.

b. Activities of the Executive Committee:

- i. Faculty Senate Vice President Cardany announced that the Executive Committee Meeting Minutes of March 16, March 23, and March 30, 2021 were available for review on the Faculty Senate website. She asked if there were any questions. The Senate did not have any questions.
- ii. Vice President Cardany presented the second reading of and vote on the proposal to amend the Constitution and By-Laws to modify the Senate apportionment system and to expand Faculty Senate membership.

Senator Izenstark moved to amend the proposal by adding a statement that each college or unit will have a minimum of two (2) senators. The amendment was seconded, discussed, and approved by the Senate.

Discussion returned to the amended proposal to amend the Constitution and By-Laws to modify the Senate apportionment system and to expand Faculty Senate membership. Senator Van Uffelen inquired if consideration had been taken for colleges who may be losing senators. FS President Echevarria explained the aim was to create a system where the numbers in senators would be equitable and proportional across colleges without significant increases in the numbers for some colleges. After further discussion, the amended proposal was approved.

4. FS President Echevarria explained that the approved amendment to the Constitution would require a referendum of the General Faculty. The referendum will be conducted by the Faculty Senate Office.

5. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

- a. President Dooley noted the numerous positive developments that have occurred over the course of this past year and remarked on the optimistic outlook for the immediate future. He spoke of the impact that the Federal Stimulus Bill will have on URI, noting specific investments including the construction of the Health and Counseling Center and replenishment of reserve funds. The President has engaged in discussions with state leaders about prioritizing a variety of building and infrastructure needs at URI, including the construction of a Center for Student Success and installing improved air handling systems for older buildings. The President will continue to share information with the community as it becomes available.
- b. **Status of Actions Forwarded to the President after March 18, 2020:** All bills forwarded have been approved.

#20-21-26 Recommendation of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Revision to

University Manual Section 7.10.11. Approved by President Dooley on March 26, 2021.

Bill #20-21-27B Curricular Report #2020-21-5 from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate: Curricular Proposals. Approved by President Dooley on March 26, 2021.

Bill #20-21-28B Curriculum and Standards Committee Report #2020-2021-7: Curricular Changes. Approved by President Dooley on March 26, 2021.

Bill #20-21-28C Curriculum and Standards Committee Report #2020-2021-7: Organizational Change, Transfer Landscape Architecture to College of the Environment and Life Sciences. Approved by President Dooley on March 26, 2021.

Bill #20-21-29B Curriculum and Standards Committee Report #2020-2021-8: Curricular Changes. Approved by President Dooley on March 26, 2021.

Bill #20-21-29C Curriculum and Standards Committee Report #2020-2021-8: Organizational Change, Transfer the Center for Non-Violence & Peace Studies to the College of Arts and Sciences for Administrative Purposes. Approved by President Dooley on March 26, 2021.

5. PRESENTATION

Professor Khanna, Professor of Physics and Director of Research Computing, reported that URI has begun multiple “pilot” programs with the Massachusetts Green High-Performance Computing Center (MGHPCC), which is a collaboration on research infrastructure consisting of Boston University, Harvard, MIT, Northeastern University, and UMass. Current projects include URI as a sub-awardee in Yales’s CyberTeam-CAREERS NSF grant, funding students for short-term projects to help faculty researchers with computational projects. URI launched the first CyberTeam project and anticipates two additional projects in the spring. Submitted projects seeking funding include NSF Major Research Instrumentation, NSF Harnessing Data Revolution, and NSF Campus CyberInfrastructure with UMass-Amherst. Director Khanna also spoke of projects which should be available soon. Projects include distributing support through experienced Graduate Assistants (GA) in each college, a new faculty-facing website which includes additional resources, and additional site-licensed software to enhance research activities.

Discussion topics with Director Khanna included his willingness to attend departmental/college meetings if requested. He expanded on the GA initiative explaining that, as it is often hard to find specialists in specific research areas; this initiative would identify graduate assistants with expertise in that area who could be hired, co-funded by the initiative.

6. REPORTS OF STANDING AND JOINT COMMITTEES

- a. FS President Echevarria presented the written report of the Learning Outcomes Oversight Committee (LOOC) to the meeting in lieu of an oral report.

- b.** Interim Dean DeBoef presented Graduate Council Report # 2020-2021-6 to the Faculty Senate. A motion was made and seconded and discussion ensued. Editorial changes to titles of two proposed new courses, NUR 530, Advanced Health Assessment Skills Across the Life, i) changing the last word to “Lifespan”) and ii) OCG 503, Hacking 4 Environment: Oceans, spelling out “four” in the title and address cross-listing were requested. FS President Echevarria presented the voting poll. Report #2020-2021-6 from the Graduate Council was approved.
- c.** Senator Kincaid presented Curriculum and Standards Committee Report #2020-2021-9 as moved and seconded. Before voting on the Report, Senator Kincaid, Chair of the Curriculum and Standards Committee, remarked that the faculty demonstrated care about seeking input from students. He was fascinated by faculty's swift response to student needs for courses that address topical issues, in particular the pandemic. FS President Echevarria presented the voting poll. Report ##2020-2021-9 from the Curriculum and Standards Committee was approved.
- d.** Senator Mead, Chair of the General Education Subcommittee, presented Report #2020-2021-6 as moved and seconded. With no discussion from the Senate, FS President Echeverria presented the voting poll. The report was approved.
- e.** Senator Hicks, Chair of the Constitution, By-Laws, and University Manual Committee, presented Report #2020-2021-4, which consisted of proposed editorial changes to the University Manual and first reading of proposed editorial changes to the Constitution and By-Laws. Report #2020-2021-4 also proposed the inclusion of language on the Accelerated Bachelor’s and Master’s (ABM) programs in the University Manual. FS President Echeverria presented the voting poll. The report was approved.
- f.** Senator Barbour, Chair of the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC), presented the annual report from the committee. Senator Barbour recognized Veronica Walsh, Executive Business Analyst of the Office of Institutional Research and thanked her for her assistance. Senator Barbour also explained that the language in the University Manual does not reflect the current processes used by the Committee. She presented revised language to the University Manual reflecting the correct review processes. FS President Echevarria presented the voting poll. The proposed changes to the University Manual were approved.
- g.** Senator Roman, Chair of the Research and Creative Activities Committee (RCAC), presented the Center Subcommittee’s report on the proposed changes to the University Manual. The revisions to the University Manual included updating the definition of centers and institutes, removing partnership language, modifying eligibility parameters, removing references to Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, procedures for establishing centers, removal of sections on temporary centers, defining reporting and reviewing procedures, and deleting specific centers listings and descriptions. Discussion included the role of the URI Board of Trustees in the Centers application and approval process. Vice President Snyder noted that in consultation with administrators, Board approval would not be necessary as most centers are research funded. Senator Roman reiterated that a list of centers would be

maintained on the website of the Division of Research and Economic Development Office. Senator Roman also discussed new Center application forms and renewal templates which will provide consistency to the Center process. FS President Echevarria presented five voting polls. The proposed changes to the University Manual were approved.

- h.** Senator Pearson-Merkowitz, Chair of the Technology and Infrastructure Committee, reported that a survey to assess equity in access to technology for teaching, research, and service at URI is linked to the Faculty Senate agenda and will also be sent to all faculty. Senator Pearson-Merkowitz requested all senators to ask their department faculty to participate in the survey. She explained that technology in this case refers not only to computer hardware and software but also the human support needed to use it.

7. OLD BUSINESS FS President Echevarria asked if there was any old business. There was no old business. She reminded Senators that the revisions to the Constitution must be approved by a referendum sent to the General Faculty, and that the changes to the Faculty Senate apportionment system and the expansion in Senate membership would not occur unless approved in the referendum. If approved, the changes would take effect for the spring 2022 apportionment reports and college elections, and that they would not impact the spring 2021 elections that were currently taking place.

8. NEW BUSINESS FS President Echevarria asked if there was any new business. Senator LaLuna asked if the Administration had decided about students, faculty, and staff requiring COVID vaccinations before returning to campus in the fall. Faculty Senate President Echevarria stated that she was not aware of a decision having been made on the issue.

9. ADJOURNMENT There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:59 PM.