

10-21-2021

## Faculty Senate Minutes October 21, 2021

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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## **Faculty Senate Meeting #2 via WebEx**

**Thursday, October 21, 2021**

### **MINUTES**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 3:02 PM by Senate President Cardany. All senators were in attendance except for Senators Costello, Haile, Hatfield, Martin, McGough, Strubel, Uchida, and Zhang.  
Ex officio members in attendance: President Parlange, Interim Provost Beauvais, Vice President Collins, Vice President Snyder, Vice Provost Bodah, Associate Vice President Libutti, Vice Provost Veeger, Dean Boughida, Dean DeBoef, Dean Kirby, Associate Dean of Nursing Leveillee, Dean Wolfe, Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences Reynolds representing Dean Riley, and Associate Dean Smith of the Graduate School of Oceanography representing Dean Bontempi. Also in attendance: Associate Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Almandrez, Athletic Director Bjorn, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs Ciccomascolo, CIO Kaugars, Dean Graney, Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences Krueger, Associate Dean of CELS Sartini, BOT Faculty Representative Gindy.
  - a. **Welcome & Announcements:** Senate President Cardany welcomed Senators and guests to the Faculty Senate's second meeting. She requested that the Senate approve changes to the published agenda: The resolution regarding Academic Freedom, proposed by the Service and Community Life Committee, would be postponed until the November meeting, to allow more time for feedback. There were no objections; the changes to the agenda were approved by unanimous consent.
2. **DISPOSITION OF MINUTES:** Senate President Cardany announced that the minutes of Faculty Senate Meeting # 1 on September 30, 2021 have been posted with the agenda. She asked if there were any proposed additions, corrections, comments, or questions. There were none. President Cardany ruled that in the absence of any corrections or changes, the minutes were approved.
3. **REPORT OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
  - a. **Announcements:** FS President Cardany outlined the activities of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC). FSEC is working on updating the University Manual, collaborating with the Constitution, Bylaws, and University Manual Committee (CBUM) as well as Dan Moos and Kara Larsen. Additionally, FSEC is participating in developing the University Strategic Plan and action items based on the Campus Climate Survey. In collaboration with the Teaching, Advising, and Assessment Committee, FSEC is considering revisions to the academic integrity policy and reorganizing the Learning Outcomes and Oversight Committee. FS President Cardany described President Parlange's approach and vision to be one of inclusion of faculty voices and a clear sense of acknowledging and actively participating with the Senate in the spirit of shared governance. She highlighted FSEC's purposeful efforts to strengthen the relationship with Student Senate by committing to attending their meetings monthly. Finally, FS President Cardany updated the Senate on progress to implementing the curriculum and catalog management system (CMS). The CMS project begun in 2018 is targeted to go live in early December.
  - b. **Activities of the Executive Committee:** Senate Vice President Michael Rice then presented the following items:
    - i. Minutes of the Executive Committee Meetings #17B, September 14th, #18, September 17th, #19 September 24th, #20 October 1st, and #21 October 8th.

There were no questions or comments.

- ii. An Informational Report on behalf of the University President on the ITGov Committee. The report added University Manual language on the IT Strategic Governance Committee. There were no questions or comments.
- iii. A proposal to revise the Honorary Degree Committee University Manual language regarding membership and procedure information.

During discussion of this item, Interim Provost Laura Beauvais added two friendly amendments which were accepted: the first to specify that the Provost chairs this committee, and the second to clarify that an honorary degree may be rescinded if the recipient violates any stated standards for receiving the degree. The proposal was restated containing the two friendly amendments and a vote was held. Results: 44 votes, 39 yea, 1 abstention, 1 blank, 3 unable to vote.

#### 4. **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

President Parlange noted that he is enjoying his time at the University more and more as he settles into his role and then explained that he would be providing updates today in four broad areas: COVID-19 Response and Preparedness; the Organizational Structure of “One URI;” the Culture of the University Community and Core Values; and Government Relations activity.

Concerning COVID-19, President Parlange praised the work of the Task Force, established last year, and its reliance on science-backed strategies to protect peoples’ health. He then noted a COVID Advisory Group has been newly added and he provided details on the membership and charge of that group. His hope is that it will promote transparency and expand the information available to the community on this subject and he requested that everyone make use of the Tracker and other information now available on the web page to learn more.

Regarding Organizational Structure, President Parlange noted that to the outside world, URI is one student body, one faculty body, and one community with one set of shared values and this should be reflected in its one unified budget, one strategic plan, etc. To help advance this objective, he has structured his advisory Councils to provide effective big-picture guidance. As an example, he has created a 30-member Stewardship Council that is designed for balance between administrative and academic perspectives and which includes the Faculty Senate President. His office has also restructured the Administrative Policy Committee and he provided an update on the membership and official charge of that group. This is now a stand-alone Committee that meets monthly and has added opportunities for faculty engagement.

On the subject of Community Culture, an overview of the recent climate survey was provided. The results of the survey have yielded a great deal of data to unpack and have highlighted a number of positives but also several issues that will need to be addressed. As a logical starting point, President Parlange has suggested that it might be time for the University to look anew at its adopted “Cornerstone Values.” Given that they are dated, his office has asked the Provost and Faculty Senate Executive Committee to assess how the values statement is written and assess whether or not it truly encompasses all the values of a modern research university. President Parlange added that he believes it is time for the University community to recommit to Anti-Racism and to reaffirm its beliefs about Academic Freedom. Like the Cornerstone Values, he feels the policy on Academic Freedom is also due to be refreshed. The Provost’s Office and Faculty Senate Executive Committee have been asked to look closely at this as well, together with the Faculty Union, including the way the policy is articulated in Chapter 6 of the University Manual.

Finally, in a brief update on Government Relations, President Parlange outlined funding opportunities through Federal and State government. In terms of American Rescue Plan funding, URI has prioritized the Narragansett Bay Campus, Life Sciences and Student Success. The EDA's "Build Back Better" program should yield funds from the Statewide Blue Economy initiative and an even broader planning grant being pursued by Vice President Snyder's office.

There were no questions for President Parlange and he was thanked for his report.

- a. Status of Actions Forwarded to the President. The following bills were signed by the President:
  - Bill #21-22-1 Recommendation of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee: Bereavement Policy and Revisions to University Manual Sections 8.39.11 and 8.51.13. Approved by President Parlange on October 14, 2021.
  - Bill #21-22-3B Special Summer Curriculum Committee Report #2021-2022-1B: Curricular Proposals. Approved by President Parlange on October 14, 2021.
  - Bill #21-22-4B Curricular and Standards Committee Report #2021-2022-1: New Program: Undergraduate Minor in Interdisciplinary Neuroscience. Approved by President Parlange on October 14, 2021.
  - Bill #21-22-5 Constitution, By-Laws, and University Manual Committee Report #2021-2022-1 Clarify and Expand Language for Emeritus Status. Approved by President Parlange on October 14, 2021.
  - Bill #21-22-6 Constitution, By-Laws, and University Manual Committee Report #2020-2021-5: Proposed Changes to the University Manual, Constitution of the Faculty Senate, and the By-Laws of the Faculty Senate: Gender Neutrality. Approved by President Parlange on October 14, 2021.
  - Resolution #21-22-1 RESOLUTION Honoring Provost Donald DeHayes. Approved by President Parlange on October 14, 2021.

## 5. REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

- a. **Curricular Report No. 2021-2022-1** from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate. Dean Brenton DeBoef gave the curriculum report with notice of changes and the new courses, which needed to be voted on. As no questions were presented, the poll was administered. All program changes and new courses were approved.
- b. **Curriculum and Standards Committee (CASC)** - Chair Kincaid reported on the goals of the committee for this academic year to determine best methods for efficient review of course/program proposals for the year, as well as continuing discussion of possible strategies for advancing JEDI initiatives within the URI curriculum, and building on discussions from Spring 2021 between CASC, General Education Committee and Bryan Dewsbury. One topic of discussion was on ways to couple the incentives for faculty training in best practices for adding JEDI content to courses with dynamic/ interactive advertising of URI courses with JEDI content. The committee will also work with Professor Mead on ways to test the Quali system for fine tuning/improving software for the new curriculum management system. They will also continue to work jointly with the General Education Committee to provide continuity between the curriculum committees.

The Curriculum and Standards Report 2021-2022-02 concerned moving two courses online to

increase access. Also brought forward two simple course changes.

- c. **General Education Committee** - Chair Rarick presented the items that the General Education Committee will be working on: They will be continuing discussion on how to advance JEDI initiatives identified by the Faculty Senate and the University within the scope of general education. Best methods for efficient review of course proposals for the coming year and pilot/quality testing for new Quali course management system. This may require future procedural additions or modifications of existing practices. Review post-approval procedures involving shell and topics courses and their general education learning outcomes. This may include amending new topics forms to seek approval for meeting general education learning outcomes associated with the shell/topics course. Review and analysis of effectiveness of the current general education program and consideration of proposals for modification, including those associated with rubric language, evidence-based practices and assessment (in conjunction with other units at the University). Continuing to work jointly with the Curriculum and Standards Committee to provide continuity between the curriculum committees.
  
- d. **Constitution, By-Laws and University Manual Committee Informational Report** - Chair Barbour presented the committee's goals for the year. Overall Goal: Ensure that the University Manual is accurate, consistent, inclusive and up to date in all chapters and appendices, including the By-Laws and Constitution. Streamline processes for correcting mistakes and making editorial changes to the University Manual, By-Laws and Constitution. Additional Goals: (1) Facilitate the incorporation of University Manual changes based upon presidential action as per section 11.10.14 of the University Manual. (2) DEI Goal: Ensure all 2020/2021 approved changes to the University Manual, By-Laws and Constitution, as related to gender-neutral language and faculty equity are fully represented within the chapters and appendices. (3) DEI Goal: Review Constitution, By-Laws and University Manual for consistency with DEI promotion and recommend appropriate changes as needed to the Faculty Senate. (4) DEI Goal: Facilitate the incorporation of approved University Manual language changes related to DEI proposed by Faculty Senate Standing Committees, following Faculty Senate procedures. She also presented Report No. 2021-2022-2a to add language to the University Manual allowing for editorial changes suggested by the CBUM Committee. This report was voted upon and approved. Chair Barbour presented Report # 2021-2022-2b, to add language to the Faculty Senate By-Laws allowing for editorial changes. The report was presented at the October meeting and will be voted upon at the upcoming November meeting. Report No. 2021-2022-2c, to add language to the Faculty Senate Constitution allowing for editorial change was presented. This report was voted on and approved; a referendum will be sent out to the General Faculty.
  
- e. **Service and Community Life Committee Informational Report** - Chair Trimm presented the committee's focus for the coming year: (1) Service: Regarding ensuring faculty from underrepresented groups are not overwhelmed with DEI service work. The Committee is talking to the AAUP and looking at policies at other universities. A possible resolution may be calling for individual colleges to be mindful of the DEI service load for faculty of color. (2) New Faculty and Mentoring: The Service and Community Life Committee (SCLC) have begun conversations with the Multicultural Center about existing mentoring programs, and have also begun researching mentoring programs at other schools. Possible areas for proposals on the SCLC are considering include cross-institutional and group mentorship; training for mentors; developing and publicizing opportunities to form better social networks and funding/support opportunities; fostering the creation of affinity groups. (3) Faculty/staff development: The SCLC is talking to the Community, Equity, and Diversity office (CED), and the Office for the

Advancement of Teaching and Learning about the DEI training they offer. The Committee has also talked to the Multicultural Center and the General Education program about the awards they offer. We have already found there are opportunities to expand these programs to encourage and recognize JEDI work in the classroom.

*The resolution regarding academic freedom was tabled until the November meeting.*

- f. **Academic Calendar Committee** - Chair Amin reported that the Academic Calendar Committee met in September and their focus area for the upcoming year will be to cross-reference other calendars on campus to promote recognition of holidays and celebrations from diverse cultures. The Committee will review the draft of the 2027-2028 academic year calendar at the October meeting.
- g. **Teaching, Advising, and Assessment Committee** - Chair King reported that the overall goal of the Teaching, Advising, and Assessment Committee (TAAC) is to review Teaching, Advisement and Assessment practices at the University in cooperation with other interested parties. Other goals include: (1) Follow up on previous TAAC work to revise and clarify the University Manual (UM) language on Academic Integrity and submit a proposal to the Senate for review. (2) Review the charge for the joint Learning Outcomes and Oversight Committee (LOOC) and consider a reorganization, revision or deletion of the committee and submit a proposal to the Faculty Senate for review. (3) During AY 2020-2021, the TAAC gathered significant information regarding DEI practices at URI and other schools. For AY 2021-2022, the TAAC recommends that other parties at the University follow up on the reported information to consider integration into URI practices.
- h. **Committee on Technology and Infrastructure** - Chair Izenstark reported that in the spring of 2021, the Committee on Technology and Infrastructure distributed a survey to URI faculty to assess equity in access to technology for faculty work as it relates to teaching, research, and service. The committee also interviewed deans of each college to learn how the process for acquiring and maintaining technology worked in their respective colleges. While most of the deans indicated there were technical support staff and plans for purchasing and replacing computers, across colleges, the number of staff was small, and the responses from faculty indicate that plans for computer replacement are not uniform across colleges. The Technology and Infrastructure Committee is continuing to review the data and for the February meeting, they will present, in accordance with its charge, recommendations for future improvements.
- i. **Committee for Research and Creative Activities Informational Report** - Chair Roman and Subcommittee Chair Eaton presented a summary of goals for 2021-2022: (1) Update the Facilities and Administrative (overhead) funds process. (2) Update the charge for the committee as presented in the University Manual. (3) Complete a list of active Centers and Institutes (C&I); invite those C&I reporting this year to submit their report in Jan 2022.

## 6. CALL for NEW BUSINESS

President Cardany called for any new business. She announced that there is still time to register for the upcoming 34<sup>th</sup> Transportation Forum on the URI website, per Senator Lee.

## 7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01pm