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Faculty Senate Minutes November 18, 2021

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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Minutes
FACULTY SENATE MEETING #3
Thursday, November 18, 2021
3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. via WebEx

- 1. Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:04 PM by Senate President Cardany.

All senators were in attendance except for Senators Amin, Ying Chen, Krieger, Martin, Roman, Sendag, Uchida, and Villa Nicholas, Zhang and Zosula.

Ex officio members in attendance: President Parlange, Interim Provost Beauvais, Vice President Collins, Vice President Rider; Vice Provost Bodah, Associate Vice President Libutti, Vice Provost Veeger, Dean Boughida, Dean DeBoef, Associate Dean of Nursing Leveillee, Dean Wolfe, Associate Dean Smith of the Graduate School of Oceanography representing Dean Bontempi, Student Senate President Bolu Taiwo. Also attending: Associate Dean of Arts & Sciences Krueger, Associate Dean of CELS Sartini, Graduate Student Association President Joshua Gyllinsky and various presenters as indicated below.

2. REPORT OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- a. Announcements - Senate President Cardany welcomed various guests, including Student Senate representatives, as well as the newly hired Faculty Senate Coordinator. Announcements included a note about November being Native American Heritage Month with a number of related events happening on campus. A highlight would be the exhibit entitled “Away from Home,” which addresses the history of the Native American Boarding Schools. Senate President Cardany then read the University’s Land Acknowledgment Statement which addresses the location of the URI campus on land traditionally serving as homeland to the Narragansett Nation and which further explains the relationship of the campus to the Niantic, Wampanoag, and Nipmuc Peoples as well as the Kiowa People.
- b. Activities of the Executive Committee - Senate Vice President Rice presented the following:
- i. Minutes of the Executive Committee Meetings: #22, October 15, 2021; #23 October 22, 2021; and #24, October 29, 2021. There was no further discussion.
 - ii. BIS Committees – The agenda called for a motion to abolish certain unnecessary committees, but on a motion by Vice President Rice, seconded by Senator Meyerson and receiving majority support, this matter was tabled to allow time to further assess internal consistency issues associated with this change.

3. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

- a. President Parlange explained that he would focus his comments on how URI, as the major research university for the State, can pursue activities and partnerships for maximum impact. He stated that the University should assess its role in both the campus community and the community immediately surrounding campus, as well as in the State as a whole. He called upon the University to look for ways whereby expanding scholarship and relationships with the business community might produce the most significant positive effects for Rhode Island. He started by highlighting community events for November, including the Campus-wide celebration of Native American Heritage month and his new initiative to

forge a relationship with local leaders in South Kingstown town government to ensure that the University is a good neighbor in its host community.

On the subject of scholarship, President Parlange outlined a recent retreat among Deans and others where the focus included looking for ways to accentuate PhD programs, as this is a fundamental way to build a reputation for academic excellence. He also highlighted potential partnerships with global universities – including in Australia and Canada – which are similar in size and in their “blue economy” focus, since sharing and aggregating resources can benefit all involved.

President Parlange also discussed the kick-off of the University’s Strategic Planning Initiative. This will be a 10-year plan covering 2022 through 2032. An advisory group consisting of the President’s Leadership Council and others is being formed and a consistent meeting schedule has been established. There will be opportunities to hear from the campus community more broadly as the project team collects data and begins to consider goals and objectives.

b. Status of Actions Forwarded to the President. The following bills were signed by the President.

Bill #21-22-7 Recommendation of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee: Revision of Honorary Degree Committee, University Manual Chapter 5, Section 5.60.10. Approved by President Parlange on October 27, 2021.

Bill #21-22-8A Curricular Report No. 2021-22-1 from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate, course. Approved by the Faculty Senate on October 21, 2021.

Bill #21-22-8B Curricular Report No. 2021-22-1 from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate, Curricular Proposals. Approved by President Parlange on October 27, 2021.

Bill #21-22-9A Curriculum and Standards Committee Report No. 2021-22-2, courses. Approved by the Faculty Senate on October 21, 2021.

Bill #21-22-9B Curricular and Standards Committee Report #2021- -2: Curriculum Changes. Approved by President Parlange on October 27, 2021.

Bill #21-22-10 Constitution, By-Laws, and University Manual Committee Report #2021-2022-2a: Proposed Changes to the University Manual, Chapter 11, Section 11.10.11, Procedures for Changing the Manual. Approved by President Parlange on October 27, 2021.

4. PRESENTATIONS

a. Update from the Office of Innovation in General Education - Director Rachel DiCioccio presented her review of the 2020 – 2021 General Education Program. Highlights included the addition of 19 new course approvals in the General Education Curriculum and a “Faculty Spotlight” Panel this Fall to present and discuss best pedagogical practices in General Education instruction. The presentation also included an overview of Assessment efforts in Spring, 2021. Data collected is still being packaged and it is expected that the FSEC, GEC and OIGE will use it in the coming months to make recommendations about specific action steps that the University should consider. Initial recommendations emerging from the process include: involving faculty earlier in the semester in hopes that meaningful participation rates

can be increased; working across colleges and departments to build support for General Education and further encourage participation in assessment; and offering more time and support to faculty to assist in alignment of assessment activities. The presentation included an announcement to congratulate the “Excellence in General Education Award” winners: Kris Bovy, Department of Sociology and Anthropology and Cheryl Foster, Department of Philosophy. Dr. DiCioccio concluded by inviting some students to comment directly on the significant positive impact that specific General Education courses have had on their academic and personal development.

b. Enrollment Management update - Associate Vice President Libutti began his presentation by noting that college enrollments across the nation have plummeted over the last year and recruitment challenges continue during the COVID-19 era, wherein live tours and high school visits were/are still limited or not possible. URI, on the other hand, managed to see a record number of applications for Fall, 2021 and undergraduate enrollment expanded in both the First-year and Transfer-In categories. New Graduate Student enrollment also landed above target, with a growth in applications of 12% over the prior year. Total enrollment now stands at 17,609 and is very evenly split between in-state and out-of-state. Associate Vice President Libutti highlighted the success of programs like dual enrollment for high school students and the “finish what you started” program for adult learners. He then shared data on the demographics of the student body and retention rates and wrapped up by praising the community for exceeding expectations in a year where only about one-third of colleges and universities appeared to meet their enrollment targets. He attributed this success to a variety of factors, including the University’s ability to innovate (like hosting virtual events, as an example) and to remain flexible (test-optional policies and sliding deadlines as examples).

c. State of the Budget Address to the Faculty Senate - On hand for the presentation were: Abigail Rider, Vice President, Administration and Finance; Cheryl Hinkson, Interim Budget Director; Kelly Slocum, Interim Associate Director. VP Rider provided an overview of the FY2022 budget as enacted as well as the FY 2023 budget request and process for adoption. It is hoped that RI’s Governor will recommend a budget in January at which point the State legislature will begin deliberating. State budget adoption typically occurs in June. URI’s current year budget totals about \$870 million, of which \$485.7 million is unrestricted. It was noted that revenue projections at the moment are fairly optimistic, especially given the slow emergence from the pandemic and there do not seem to be any budgetary “alarm bells” ringing at the broader State level. Addressing on-going strategic initiatives, VP Rider highlighted an academic enhancement program to expand teaching assistant and faculty positions as well as a large investment in cyber-security and IT upgrades to protect the University’s assets. Responding to questions from the floor, VP Rider noted that patents and licensed intellectual property represent a small but growing number in University revenues.

d. Curriculum Management System - Senate President Cardany shared a glimpse into the user interface of the curriculum management system chosen by the Provost’s office. The system, called Kualii, is expected to be up and running on December 15, 2021. Faculty will be able to access the system using their Single Sign-On through Office 365. A quick demonstration of the Dashboard and a run-through of the workflow associated with course proposals and edits were presented. While the approval process for courses is pretty straight-forward, the work-flows for new and amended programs are still being worked out and they will need to be phased-in over a slightly longer timeline. A new email address for

information about electronic curriculum management is being created and it is hoped that everyone will use that for questions about Quali going forward.

5. REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

a. Curricular Report No. 2021-2022-02 from the Graduate Council of the Faculty Senate -- Dean DeBoef presented the Curricular Report which included five course changes and three new courses. Brief descriptions of each proposal were provided and there were no additional questions. A poll was administered and all changes/additions were approved unanimously.

Noting the time, Vice President Rice made a motion, seconded by Senator Derbyshire, to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. Motion approved without dissent or abstention.

b. Curriculum and Standards Committee Report No. 2021-2022-03 - Chair Kincaid presented the report which included one course change and six new courses. It also included an organizational change within CAS involving creation of the Data Science Program as an independent unit. A poll was administered and all changes/additions were approved unanimously.

c. CBUM - Second reading for edits to University Manual Faculty Senate Bylaws - Chair Barbour explained that the subject changes had been presented at the last meeting which yielded a motion for approval and a second. (The By-Laws do not allow for initial presentation of changes to the By-Laws and a vote on said changes to take place in the same meeting – so this matter had been continued for decision). To re-cap the travel of the matter, it was noted that there are small errors sprinkled through the Manual that are not substantive and have no bearing on legislative intent. The proposed changes allow for such “editorial changes” to the By-Laws to be made by the CBUM with a follow-up report to the full Senate. At that point, if there was dissent indicating the change might actually be substantive, there could be a motion to put the matter through the formal amendment process for changes to the By-Laws. There were some comments, including support for the proposal on the grounds that adoption will allow for more streamlined and efficient maintenance of the Manual. Questions were mostly procedural, addressing, for example, the possibility that an objector might miss a meeting where an editorial change is presented. Chair Barbour and President Cardany clarified that a measure can be rescinded later if the need arises. A poll was administered and the change was approved unanimously.

Chair Barbour then reported on the results of a similar proposal last month. At the October Senate meeting, a proposal to add language to the Faculty Senate Constitution allowing for editorial change was presented. This report was voted on and approved and a referendum was sent out to the General Faculty. The results were announced as follows: 129 total responses were received – 118 were affirmative, 8 were negative and three were abstentions.

6. CALL for NEW BUSINESS - Senator Kang-Won Lee asked for a moment to offer appreciation for all the support he received for the 34th RI Transportation Forum which was held at the Memorial Union on October 29. He emphasized that many of his colleagues and leaders from the Faculty Senate attended and he was especially grateful to President Parlange and Faculty Senate President Cardany.

7. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm