Faculty Senate Minutes May 4, 2023

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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MINUTES
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Thursday, May 4, 2023
Robert J. Higgins Welcome Center, Hope Room
Remote option via ZOOM

1. Call to order at 3:00 p.m. - The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate President Rice at 3:05 PM. All Senators were on hand except Senators Kaskosz, Kovarsky, Llorens, Quashie, Rollo-Koster, Vyas, Zhang, and Zozula.

Ex officio members and others in attendance included: President Parlange, Provost Wolfe, Vice Provost Bodah, Vice Provost Veeger, VP of Student Affairs Reynolds, Associate VP Libutti, Acting VP of Research Jenkins, Deans Rieber, Dennis, Hunter, Chen, Larsen, Marchese, Graney, DeBoef and Rambur, CIO Kaugars, and past President Cardany.

2. Reading of the Land Acknowledgement Statement - President Rice read the statement, found at the start of Chapter 1 of the University Manual, into the record.

3. REPORT OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

   a. Announcements - Senate President Rice

      i. Today’s reception is being sponsored by the College of Business - President Rice thanked Dean Chen!

      ii. Welcome new Senators and Farewell to all outgoing Senators - A list of new Senators by College was presented and President Rice welcomed the new members whose terms officially begin at the close of the meeting. A list of outgoing Senators was also presented and members were thanked for their service.

   b. Activities of the Executive Committee - Senate Vice President Nassersharif

      i. Minutes of the Executive Committee Meetings - April 17, 2023 - the minutes were presented and there were no further comments.

   c. Recommendations of the Executive Committee - Senate President Rice

      i. Proposal to reconstitute the Academic Program Review Committee with the goal of providing oversight and guidance for both academic program review and
program-level student learning outcomes assessment. President Rice explained that the subject proposal is conceptual and the goal would be to charge the CASC, CBUM and other standing committees as appropriate to bring back a firm legislative proposal in the future. A typographical error in the written proposal was noted (a reference to Chapter 15 in the University Manual which should be a reference to Chapter 5). Dean deBoef asked that the relevant committees specifically address graduate programs in any new draft legislation and ensure that they are differentiated from undergraduate programs. The conceptual proposal was approved.

d. Report from the Nominating Committee

i. Election to fill vacancies on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) - Committee Chair Welters including: one vacancy for a two-year term on FSEC and one vacancy for a one-year term on FSEC. Nominating Committee Chairperson Welters presented the committee’s report with two nominees to fill the two year term and one nominee to fill the one-year term. Nominations were also taken from the floor. Paper ballots were distributed to in-person attendees and on-line participants voted via electronic poll. Mary Healey Jamiel was elected for a two-year term and Graham Forrester was re-elected for a one-year term.

4. AWARDS AND HONORS

a. General Education Awards - Director, Office of Innovation in General Education Rachel DiCioccio - Director DiCioccio presented two awards for Excellence in General Education. The first went to Daniel Carpenter in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literature, and the second went to Christian Gonzales in the History Department. The winners were congratulated by the assembly.

b. Faculty Senate Awards

i. Presentation of the Fritz Wenisch Award for Exceptional Contribution to the Faculty Senate - President Rice presented this year’s award to William Krieger from the Philosophy Department for his dedication and service to the Faculty Senate, especially his work as Senate Parliamentarian. President Rice and VP Nassershariif honored Dr. Krieger with a poem.

ii. Presentation of the Sheila Black Grubman Faculty Outstanding Service Award - Provost Wolfe presented this year’s award jointly with President Rice to Linda Welters from the College of Business. Dr. Welters’ history of service to the Senate was outlined, including her term as Senate Vice Chair and as Chair of the Competitive Grants subcommittee.

5. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT - President Parlange offered a report that highlighted some changes in administrative personnel that are coinciding with the end of the academic year. He also offered an update on the strategic plan’s implementation and the status of the budget, noting that performance metrics for incentive-based budgeting are still being worked out.
a. Status of Actions Forward to the President - the following have been transmitted to the Office of the President for signature and/or Board of Trustees approval.

- Bill #22-23-38B, Curricular Report No. 2022-2023-7 from the Graduate Council, program changes.
- Bill #22-23-38C, Curricular Report No. 2022-2023-7 from the Graduate Council, new certificates.
- Bill #22-23-38D, Curricular Report No. 2022-2023-7 from the Graduate Council, new programs.
- Bill #22-23-39B, Curriculum and Standards Committee Report No. 2022-2023-08, program changes.
- Bill #22-23-39C, Curriculum and Standards Committee Report No. 2022-2023-08, new Environmental Education BS Major.
- Bill #22-23-40B, Curriculum and Standards Committee Report No. 2022-2023-09, program changes.
- Bill #22-23-43, Academic Calendar Committee Report 2022-2023-5, accelerated online and summer calendars.
- Bill #22-23-44, Center Review Subcommittee Report, Digital Forensics and Cybersecurity Center

6. REPORTS OF JOINT, STANDING, AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

a. Graduate Council Curricular Report #2022-2023-8, Appendices A, B, and C - Dean DeBoef presented the report which included one informational item along with several new courses, two new tracks or programs and one program closure (joint Education PhD). A question was raised about one of the course proposals (CSC 546). It was suggested that the course be cross-listed with applied mathematics. The proposer of the course noted no objection to the friendly amendment but added that the course is not taught like a math course (ex. no proofs). The report was approved as amended.

b. Curriculum and Standards Committee Report #2022-2023-10 - Chair Preisser presented the brief report that covered a single program change (International Studies BA). The report was approved unanimously.

c. Research and Creative Activities Committee and Subcommittee Reports – Chair Nassersharif and Subcommittee Chair Eaton for the Center Review Subcommittee and Chair Welters for the Competitive Grants Subcommittee (continued from 4/20/23). Nancy Eaton highlighted the activities of the Center Review Subcommittee including the new centers approved during AY 2023-2023 and the existing centers reviewed as required. The report was accepted without dissent. Chair Welters outlined the number of faculty development and other proposals received this year and added that all the career enhancement grants were funded but other proposal types were more competitive. The application forms are prepared by the Research Office and it was noted that the information can be retained in InfoReady which can provide good data on grant and
research trends. It was suggested that a “check box” for seed funding be added to the forms so that proposals can be tracked across their “lifespans.” The report was accepted. RCAC Chair Nassersharif summarized recommendations made by the full committee. The committee concluded that a number of issues deserved further consideration so that process improvements can be implemented in the future. Examples included placing a higher priority on supporting research faculty, streamlining purchasing, travel and graduate student hiring policies, and reconfiguring a Research and Engagement Committee to better represent the interests of research faculty. The report was accepted.

d. Annual Report of Service and Community Life Committee - (continued from 4/20/23) - Chair Martin outlined the charge of the committee and its significant activities for AY 2022-2023. She highlighted the work the committee did to respond to out-of-state threats to both legitimate academic inquiry and the building of equitable academic communities, including their well-publicized resolution in support of the United Faculty of Florida. Looking forward to next year, the committee hopes to consider ways to improve the classroom climate for diverse students and to ensure the university retains its diverse faculty members.

e. Committee on Technology and Infrastructure Report - Chair Walls explained that the CTI has been very busy this year and has been involved in IT strategic planning, Endpoint User policy development and implementation, and messaging around cybersecurity issues and related training, among other things. He presented a comprehensive report that highlighted on-going needs and areas of concern for faculty members where technology is concerned. The Committee concluded that, going forward, the committee should be utilized more in the development of IT policies which would represent a more proactive approach. The Committee also emphasized that all IT policies should be viewed as dynamic, working documents, subject to update and revision as opposed to rigid or static rules. In terms of specific action items, the committee recommended that the IT Endpoint Protection Policy be amended to recognize that faculty members require and deserve some flexibility when it comes to software downloads and administrative privileges. A proposed amendment to university policy 7.102.2 was offered and endorsed.

f. Teaching, Advising and Assessment Committee Report - Chair Lofgren presented an annual for her committee, outlining its standing charge, priorities and activities for AY 2022-2023, and ongoing issues she hopes the committee can continue working on next year. Much of the committee’s time this year was spent, at the request of the Provost’s office, on the issue of whether or not the APRC and LOOC can or should be combined or otherwise reconfigured for greater effectiveness.

g. Constitution, By-Laws and University Manual Committee - Editorial Report related to Undergraduate Certificates and Minors (Revisions to Chapter 8) - Chair Echevarria offered a report that provided some background on the language in the University Manual related to certificates and minors. She noted the committee members had heard from a number of faculty members who had concerns about potential impacts on their programs during the process of drafting amendment language. The CBUM therefore held back parts of their original proposal to allow for additional consideration. The subject report as drafted is editorial in nature and seeks only to clarify and clean up existing
language in Sections 8.20.52 and 8.20.73 of the University Manual. The report was accepted.

7. NEW BUSINESS

   a. Call for new business - President Rice called for approval of a resolution honoring Faculty Senate Specialist Joanne Lawrence who is retiring at the end of the month with more than 40 years of service to the URI community. The resolution was enthusiastically and unanimously approved and President Rice presented Ms. Lawrence with a gift on behalf of the Senate.

   b. Passing of the gavel – Outgoing President Rice ceremoniously passed the gavel to incoming President Nassersharif. President Nassersharif called for approval of a resolution, read into the record, honoring President Rice and thanking him for his service. The resolution was approved unanimously.

8. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM.