

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Agendas
and Minutes

Faculty Senate

9-14-2021

FSEC Minutes September 14, 2021

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/facsen_execcom

Recommended Citation

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate, "FSEC Minutes September 14, 2021" (2021). *Faculty Senate Executive Committee Agendas and Minutes*. Paper 307.

https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/facsen_execcom/307

This Meeting Minutes is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Senate at DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Senate Executive Committee Agendas and Minutes by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC)
Special Meeting with President Parlange
September 14, 2021, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., via WebEx

MINUTES

Faculty Senate President Cardany called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Vice President Rice, Senators Maier-Sperdelozzi, Meyerson, Nassersharif, and Welters were present. University President Parlange was a special guest.

FS President Cardany expressed the Committee's gratitude to President Parlange for attending the meeting.

Discussion Topics:

- In response to FS President Cardany's query on the status of the URI Budget, President Parlange stated that while the student fees have increased, tuition has not significantly increased. He explained that during the COVID-19 pandemic, no jobs were lost and URI remained stable. With respect to the budget, he explained that pursuing currently available federal funds, as well as carefully watching for other federal funding opportunities are key to increasing revenue.

FS President Cardany expressed concern that the rising costs of building materials may impact the work on the Fine Arts Center that was approved in a RI Bond. President Parlange said he is committed to getting additional funding in order for the renovation of the Fine Arts Center to continue and to be done properly.

- FS President Cardany relayed that she had received inquiries from faculty on the notification process if a student tested positive for COVID-19 and what happens if a student refuses to wear a mask. President Parlange explained that since the increase of COVID cases, the policies for concerts/events and visitors to campus have had to be reevaluated. Currently 99.2% of students have responded to the vaccination mandate, with 91.7% fully vaccinated and 1.7% partially vaccinated. Of the 6.6% of students not vaccinated 98% of those are for religious beliefs. President Parlange reiterated that non-vaccinated students are still required to be tested twice a week, Monday or Tuesday and again on Thursday or Friday. The same policy is in effect for faculty and non-classified staff. President Parlange has spoken with the Department of Health regarding a state mandate for classified employees. Currently, 17 students tested positive, 6 of whom were not vaccinated. Twelve of the students were off

campus and 5 on campus; the students are quarantined on campus. President Parlange explained that events planned in June may have to be postponed. He feels strongly about the need to include the student senate, as students need a voice in the discussion. Senator Welters asked about the 2020 Commencement Ceremony scheduled for October. President Parlange responded that per Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines, events with more than 250 attendees and a room occupancy greater than 35% require everyone to be vaccinated. The Commencement Ceremony is scheduled to be held in the Ryan Center which has a capacity of 9000; with 800 graduates and 2 guests each, occupancy will be less than $\frac{1}{3}$ therefore, social distancing along with a mask mandate should be achievable.

Senator Meyerson asked if faculty will be contacted if a student tests positive for covid-19. President Parlange responded that both faculty and the students in the class should be informed, but that he would follow up with the Director of Health Services.

Senator Maier-Sperdelozzi inquired about bringing visitors and young children to campus for an event. President Parlange said he has been working on this and it is dependent on the number of people and the occupancy. He stated that all visitors, as well as URI community members should be masked, and he understands the urgent need for clarification.

- FS President Cardany updated President Parlange on the work being done regarding URI Policies. She explained that the FSEC is working with Vice President Rider, Assistant Vice President Larsen and Assistant to the Vice President Moos, in aligning information on policies in University Manual Appendix G with the policy website.

FS President Cardany thanked President Parlange for including the Faculty Senate President on his new University Stewardship Council. She mentioned that these new councils and the Administrative Policy Committee will be incorporated into the University Manual.

- FS President Cardany informed President Parlange that a faculty member had contacted her requesting the issue of Lt. General Flynn's Honorary Degree be revisited by the Honorary Degree Committee.
- FS President Cardany discussed the Op-Ed piece regarding Juneteenth in which President Parlange had been quoted. Senator Meyerson stated that, while the OpEd published in the Providence Journal was a good start, Juneteenth is still not a state holiday in Rhode Island. Adding that it was important that URI follow up and continue to work to make Juneteenth a state holiday. President Parlange noted that any work in this direction must involve speaking to the new Director of Legislative and

Government Relations Carlos Lopez Estrada to ensure a unified voice from the University.

- FS President Cardany updated President Parlange on the progress of having the IT Gov Committee listed in the University Manual. She explained that she had meetings over the summer which included Chief Information Officer Kaugars. She will work on a proposal to bring to CIO Kaugars and the Provost.
- Senator Maier-Speredelozzi discussed two items of concern. She remarked that as sustainability is an important issue at URI, all electric charging stations on campus should be in working order. Currently the electric charging stations in the Higgins Welcome Center and Green Hall parking lots are inoperable. President Parlange offered to contact Vice President Rider about this problem. Senator Maier-Speredelozzi also mentioned that the issue of the University removing access to parking spots for the Kingston Free Library has the potential to harm the relationship URI has with the community. President Parlange acknowledged that parking is a problem on campus. He confirmed that a short-term solution has been reached with the Kingston Free Library but a permanent solution is still being sought.

President Parlange discussed the process for developing the new University Strategic Plan which will begin in October and assured the FSEC that they would have a key role in the process. He also mentioned that he would be having an outdoor “thank you” day for faculty, staff, and students. FS President Cardany thanked President Parlange for attending the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.