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## FSEC Minutes March 29, 2022

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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**Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC)**

**Meeting #33, March 29, 2022**

**3:45PM - 5:15PM**

**Minutes**

**In person - Pastore Conference Room RM224**

1. Call to order - President Cardany called the meeting to order at 3:46 p.m. Vice President Rice, Senators Maier-Speredelozzi, Nassersharif, Meyerson and Welters were in attendance.
2. Guests: President Parlange, Senator Derbyshire, and Ryan Trimm, Chair, SCLC.
  - a. Resolution for Redressing Student Debt (revised) - A revised Resolution was presented. There was considerable discussion about the substance of the draft and about what such a document has the potential to say to the university community about current priorities. Senators Trimm and Derbyshire thanked the group for the thoughtful dialogue and agreed to take the comments back to their Committee for further discussion.
  - b. Land Acknowledgement - President Parlange described the process undertaken to arrive at a unified statement that can be made part of the University webpages, syllabi, signature lines, etc. The process involved gaining approval from the leaders of the Narragansett Nation. There was agreement that the statement reads less like a simple acknowledgment and more like a values statement and/or call to action. Implicit in its content is a charge to be better stewards of the University's resources. Faculty should continue to look for ways to derive appropriate actions from the statement, including ways to address the acknowledgement in the context of the values and themes contained in the long-range strategic plan.
3. Announcements
  - a. Update - URI Research Foundation (legislation for members) - A recent conversation between the FSEC and University VP for Research Peter Snyder resulted in consensus that the Research Foundation should have faculty representation. VP Snyder subsequently drafted some language to effect this

outcome. The language is currently under review by the CBUM and is expected to appear as a formal bill at a future Faculty Senate meeting.

- b. Senate March Takeaways were approved for distribution following some editing.
  - c. Honors Permission Numbers & Reading Day - Honors Presentations this year have been scheduled on Reading Day which is inconsistent with the policy that such days are set aside exclusively for students to study. The Provost's office has been invited to explain or comment. FSEC members would also like to hear from the Director of the Honors Program. It was suggested that the Director be invited to a future meeting to discuss the presentations and also to address another issue involving permission numbers. The program has issued correspondence indicating they will provide permission numbers for certain courses but this is the prerogative of the faculty involved. This seems like an infringement on faculty rights and also like a logistical problem when the Honors Program does not necessarily have information on prerequisites and other requirements. Some FSEC members observed that there are other issues with permission numbers, unrelated to Honors, that need to be addressed and they would like to continue that conversation in the near future.
4. Approval of Minutes -
    - a. FSEC March 22, 2022 Meeting - Approved unanimously as presented.
  5. Old Business
    - a. University Manual and Sexual Harassment and Nondiscrimination BOT Policies -

The Board of Trustees has promulgated newer policies on these topics and the University Manual should comport. President Cardany presented two options for revisions to Chapter 5 to address any hearing panels convened around these types of violations. FSEC members preferred “option B” which overtly references the BOT policy and reinforces the fact that Title IX procedures must be followed in certain instances. Motion by Senator Rice, seconded by Senator Maier-Speredelozzi to forward the “option B” language to the CBUM for formal consideration with instructions to review it in time for formal docketing at the 4/14/22 FS meeting.

b. University Manual Maintenance Schedule Proposal - Discussion of the proposed Maintenance Schedule began at the last FSEC meeting when members agreed that the Manual should include the assignment of responsibilities for each chapter and appendix and a schedule of how often they should be reviewed/updated by the responsible parties. There was a discussion about whether or not said schedule should actually be inserted into the Manual or whether it should be referenced, and then be published separately and linked. The latter approach provides greater flexibility should deviations need to occur in special circumstances. The discussion led to consideration of other Manual appendices which are essentially stand-alone webpages. The group agreed there should be some standardized treatment of such cases and reconciling these sections (particularly Appendices D and E) in the near future should be a priority. Motion by VP Rice, seconded by Senator Maier-Sperdelozzi to approve the Chapter 11 language revision with a friendly amendment that it include a link to the maintenance schedule table. Motion unanimously supported.

#### 6. Discussion Items

a. URI Faculty Webpages - Maintenance of faculty web pages is a significant and on-going issue at the University. FSEC members have learned that some Colleges are using an errant policy (undated, not residing on the University's Administrative Policies website, and promulgated by the "Web Policy Council" which does not appear to exist) as a tool to deny faculty the ability to manage their webpages. In theory, if a functioning system wherein competent staff members maintained webpages for faculty existed, it could be highly effective and desirable, but since that is not actually happening, faculty are frequently embarrassed by their online profiles and frustrated by their inability to change them. FSEC members feel the situation is so bad that it harms recruitment and negatively impacts faculty grant and speaking opportunities. Some action is called for to rectify the situation as faculty rights under the umbrella of academic freedom are being taken away when members are unable to promote current projects and research online. Various remedies were brainstormed and it was agreed that the errant policy - which is both administrative and academic in

nature - should be voided or rescinded and the APC should be approached about this right away. Perhaps one of the Senate's standing committees can work with the APC to design better policies and processes.

- b. Space Allocation Committee charge to include Bay Campus, Providence Campus etc. It was noted at the last Faculty Senate meeting that there is substantial general purpose classroom space at campuses other than Kingston. A question was raised about how improvements to those spaces are programmed and whether or not the University's Space Allocation Committee should be involved. Faculty members have learned that the other campuses have their own space committees and budgets. This information will be shared at the next FS meeting.
7. Call for New Business - None
8. Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 5:56 PM.