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## FSEC Minutes November 7, 2022

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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**Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC)**

**November 7, 2022**

**8:30 - 10:30 AM**

**MINUTES**

**In person - Pastore Conference Room RM224  
(remote option via ZOOM)**

1. Call to order - President Rice called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM. VP Nassersharif and Senators Maier Speredelozzi, Echevarria, Forrester, and Gindy were present.
2. Guest: CIO Kaugars arrived at 8:40 AM. FS President Rice noted a concern recently came to the Faculty Senate about students being penalized in a large lecture class when they could not log in for real time assessment. CIO Kaugars asserted this was more likely the result of a wifi inadequacy, which is spotty, or a Brightspace capacity issue rather than an actual server insufficiency. He will investigate the complaint and noted that Brightspace capacity can be adjusted for specific instructors and this could be a simple fix. He added that the University is set to receive a significantly higher one-time budget allocation this year to deal with some wifi issues and address some deferred maintenance. In addition, there is some ARPA money trickling down which could further augment connectivity improvements. His office is also currently working with Google on a new contract for expanded Google Drive space which brings expanded analytical tools with it. Certain kinds of data have different storage needs, however, and there may also be a contract with Amazon for data storage. Most grant funding requires that the source data be available and the Amazon solution usually makes the data "available on request." IT staff is working to ensure this meets the requirements of funding sources like NSF and others. It was noted that open access to data is an expectation for researchers at the University and should probably be prioritized as a best practice regardless of funding source requirements.

There was a discussion about the need for enhanced cell phone support. Service inside many buildings is unreliable and landlines are increasingly unavailable. This is inconvenient and impacts productivity, and could also be a serious liability in an

emergency situation. CIO Kaugars noted he does not have the budget to deal with the problems described but is optimistic that going forward, new academic space will have superior wifi infrastructure built into development costs. While this doesn't solve problems in existing space, he did add that there is nothing precluding cell carriers from proposing new antennae or other signal boosters in the area.

The group discussed the roles of the IT Gov committee staffed through CIO Kaugars' office versus the Senate's Technology committee. It was noted the Senate Committee is less predictable as their priorities in any given year tend vary widely depending on the membership and Chair. The IT Gov group has a much more prescribed set of expectations and is required to look at big-picture technology issues campus-wide. Their priority in the coming year will likely involve developing an action plan to support the University's new strategic plan.

There was an inquiry into whether or not the IT-related "Councils" described in the University Manual are all still active and meeting. The FSEC is happy to work with IT services to make any necessary updates. Examples include Data Governance, the Web Policy Council and the Tech Standards Committee. CIO Kaugars noted some of these groups are active and productive and others are not. There are current efforts to improve data sharing campus-wide and a couple of the committees that were somewhat dormant during the pandemic are reconfiguring and gearing up to tackle this challenge. CIO Kaugars agreed to compare the working groups on the ground to the descriptions in the Manual and get back to the FSEC with necessary updates. He also agreed to examine the IT web pages in general to make sure the various Committees and sub-groups are described there. Transparency around memberships and meeting schedules was encouraged so that faculty members know who to contact with questions or problems.

### 3. Announcements

- a. Tuesday 11/1 Meeting of the President's Stewardship Council: Items discussed included: a) legislative efforts ; b) update on enrollment and demographics; c) revisit of remote work & general consensus of full return to in-person; d) overview of CEPS and Providence Campus by Dean Dennis; e) the Interfolio

Faculty 180 system received as an 'add on' to the Interfolio P&T dossier system (Interfolio RPT) for data collection for accreditation and creation of custom CVs & Biosketches; f) The 'Yes on 1' \$100 million bond campaign had a \$220,000 expenditure by the Foundation. RE: the Interfolio 180 system, there was discussion regarding some faculty's dissatisfaction with the program and agreement that it is likely not going to be well-used. Some members felt this might be mitigated by better training or a more user-friendly roll-out of the modules. Perhaps the system should be demonstrated at a Senate meeting or at various college meetings. FS President Rice and VP Nassersharif agreed to address these concerns in their next meeting with Provost Beauvais.

- b. Tuesday 11/1 Meeting of the policy stakeholder group. Policies newly under review included: Policy on COVID-19 and Campus Health and Safety; Policy on Collection and Use of COVID-19 Related Health Screening and Safety Information; Policy on Student-Athlete Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL). Several other policies were recently approved by the APC. There was a general discussion about the way policies are promulgated and FSEC members agreed that not enough faculty members are involved as stakeholders.
- c. Wednesday 11/2 Meeting of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee - involved review of the plan prior to presentation to the Board of Trustees and discussion of implementation plans and initial discussion of action committees.
- d. Thursday 11/3 Centennial Celebration of the College of Business - FS President Rice attended and enjoyed the event.
- e. Friday 11/4 All day meeting of the Board of Trustees (agenda); w/ prior requests by Pres. Rice to place elements of Manual Chapter 2 relevant to BoT & Appendix A on BoT Agenda. FS President Rice considered bringing a set of specific concerns directly to the Board at the meeting. Concerns included the proposed revisions to Chapter 2 of the University Manual, the need to revise Appendix A of the Manual and the section on Administrative Appointments. President Rice had a ZOOM session with President Parlange and BOT Chair Cook and agreed instead to

work on these issues together and perhaps bring changes to the BOT at their next meeting. Appropriate revisions to Chapter 2 and Appendix A should result from effective collaboration among the FSEC, CBUM and the personnel in the President's office, including the Chief of Staff and legal counsel.

4. Approval of Minutes

- a. FS minutes of 10/20/22 - the minutes were approved on a 5-0-1 vote with member Maier-Sperdelozzi abstaining since she was not present at the meeting.

5. Old Business

- a. Joint Committee on Online & Distance Learning (Info); update on staffing attempt to deal with the Proctoring Policy - President Rice has succeeded in adding members to the Committee so that they can address the Proctoring policy. It was agreed that the policy should apply to all remote assessments, whether for online courses or not. Staff will communicate this goal to committee staff.

6. Discussion Items

- a. Student Senate Resolution on Attendance Policy - FSEC members appreciated the opportunity to review the resolution but highlighted a few areas of concern. They agreed that it would be important to hear the VP of Student Affairs perspective on it and there was speculation that following the students' recommendation could result in over-burdening Health Services. There was also concern that such practices seem to encroach on faculty's ability to set their own attendance expectations and requirements. It was agreed that where certain faculty may be demonstrating a lack of understanding about absences, or if they are behaving inconsistent with their own attendance policies, the students should bring those concerns to the relevant department chairs or deans. Concluding the discussion, it was agreed that FSEC members should try to alternate attendance at student senate meetings as was done last year.
- b. President Parlange's continuing recommendation to review existing courses across campus for enrollment numbers and possible sunseting of under-enrolled courses or less frequency of course offerings with the goal of freeing-up faculty

time for increased engagement in research and creative activities. President Rice would like to discuss this in more detail as the FSEC has time. Restructuring curriculum will be a monumental undertaking and the Senate's curriculum committees will need to be involved.

- c. Setting agenda for November 17 Senate Meeting
  - i. Meeting locations going forward and in-person vs. remote attendance –
    1. Tabled discussion & FSEC Recommendations for VP's Report - following considerable discussion, it was agreed the agenda will include, under Old Business, the continuation of the discussion that started in October. At the conclusion of all comments, a vote will be taken on whether the Senate continues with remote meetings or requires in-person attendance beginning in December.
  - ii. Presentations - The 11/17 agenda will include a budget presentation as well as an enrollment presentation from Associate VP Libutti and a presentation by the Office of Innovation in General Education. Several Committees also have reports pending.
- d. Advance planning - Fall FSEC agendas:
  - Transition plan for Joanne Lawrence 's retirement
  - Chris Hunter - UCAS curriculum committee discussion - 9AM on 11/14
7. Call for New Business - None
8. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM.