# FACULTY SENATE MEETING

**December 10, 2024**

**1008 Nursing**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**Attendees:** Caryl Cooper, Jeffrey Lozier, Rachel Cajigas, Serena Blount, Susan Williams, Aislinn Riley, Ellary Draper, Laura Erin Watley, Christy Adams Paulo Araujo, Xabier Granja, Matthew LaFebor, Diane Tober, Marysia Galbraith, Kim Colburn, Soledad Sanches Valdez, Sheila Black, Jenni Cox, Theodore Tomeny, Matthew Valasik, John Giggie, Rona Donahoe, Gayle Faught, Shanlin Pan, Margaret Peacock, Edith Szanto, Carl Hancock, Matthew Hudnall, Karen Epermanis, Shane Stinson, Jacob Humphries, Jennie Northam, Mallory Scogin, Dale Dickinson, Miller Wright, Meenakshi Arora, Anneliese Bolland, Bharar Megra, Dimitrios Latsis, Jihoo Kim, Cynthis Peacock, James Hardin, Stacy Surman, Nirmala Erevelles, Cailin Kerch, Nicole Swoszowski, Amy Smith, Shreyas Rao, Qiang Huang, Mark Weaver, Sree Patiballa, Weihua Su, Dawen Li, Babs Davis, Jeri Zemke, Kim Boyle, Courtney McGahey, Maria Hernandez-Reif, Darren Surman, Gary Sullivan, Benjamin McMichael, Anil Mujumdar, Brian Clark, Lindsey Lowry, Sarah Robinson, Kim Parker, Kristi Acker, Connar Franklin, Brenda Smith, Carrie Turner

**Absent with an Alternate:** Bryan Hockstein/Jim Karrh, John Petrovic/ Colleen Geary, Kimberly Tomeny/Alison Hooper, Patrick Hung/Semih Olcmen, Abby Horton/Kunwal Scott, Shameka Cody/Keri Barron

**Guests:** None

**Guest Speaker:** Dr. Claire Major, Faculty Director, UA Teaching Academy

* Discussion centered around UA Teaching Academy’s goals and upcoming events, emphasizing faculty development in teaching excellence, assessment, and scholarship. The academy aims to enhance faculty knowledge of teaching, assess and document teaching excellence, and support scholarship on teaching.

### Roll Call/Quorum Check – Quorum confirmed.

### Approval / Correction of the Minutes for November 19, 2024

### Minutes from November 19, 2024, were reviewed and approved. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes: Approved unanimously.

### President’s Report (*Matthew Hudnall*)

* The University is exploring AI integration for faculty and students, focusing on course content generation, student support, and general AI chatbots. The University is behind peers in AI generation.
  + Efforts are underway to establish an AI infrastructure similar to other universities.
  + Blackboard’s AI offering is limited to content generation without student support.
  + Working to develop a homegrown AI solution for student support and course content generation. UA is developing a chatbot to assist with common student inquiries.
* Discussion on the impact of SB 129 on academic freedom, the importance of teaching objective facts about racial injustice, and the challenges faced by faculty in navigating divisive topics. Faculty are encouraged to teach from a scholarly perspective, using citations and documented sources.
  + It was noted that SB 129 does not delete academic freedom but raises concerns about teaching objective facts about racial injustice. There is a need to comply with the law while continuing to teach objective facts.
  + Concerns were voiced about a dystopian present where academic freedom is questioned. There is unclear guidance on how to teach divisive topics objectively.
  + UA general counsel will be invited to speak to faculty about guidance on decisive topics in the spring semester.
* RCAP notes:
  + Dr. Hudnall noted that the College of Business has no RCAP faculty.
  + 2024/2025 promotion notes: existence or absence of research in a portfolio was not a deciding factor last year nor will it be this year.

### VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT – (*Serena Blount*)

* Dr. Blount attended the A&S Faculty Committee meeting in November. A letter to the Dean is being written and will be disseminated for feedback.
* RCAP resolution discussion. The third version of the RCAP resolution was disseminated to everyone prior to the FS meeting.
  + Wording from the second resolution that focused heavily on the handbook language will be adapted and included in a letter to the provost so that the explication of the handbook language and how and what it means will be readily available to him. It will also request that he adhere strictly to the language of the handbook and not do anything that is in violation of that handbook.
  + A motion was made and seconded to accept the resolution as presented. There were 2 abstentions. The motion passed.

**SECRETARY’S REPORT** – (*Kim Parker*)

* No report

**Senate Committee Reports:**

**Community and Legislative Affairs** (*Katie Grayson & John Giggie)*

* No report.

**Academic Affairs** – (*Rona Donahoe & Babs Davis*)

* The recommendation regarding the grading system was discussed, revised, and voted on. The decision was to forward the recommendation to the Graduate School and Graduate Council, that Graduate Faculty should be given the option of using a +/- grading for their graduate courses with the stipulation that an A+ should not exceed a 4.0 GPA.
  + The recommendation from the Academic Affairs Committee, with endorsement from the Steering Committee and the full Senate, was discussed.
  + A motion was made and seconded to accept the recommendation. The recommendation was approved with one abstention.

**Student Life –** (*Carrie Turner & Dale Dickinson*)

* No report.

**Research and Service** (*Natasha Dimova & Shreyas Rao*)

* + Discussions were held on reducing training time and redundancy in faculty training materials. The need for streamlining export control training was highlighted.

**Faculty Life** – (*Kim Colburn & Stacy Hughey Surman*)

* No report.

**IT and Strategic Communications** – (*Patrick Kung and Connar Franklin*)

* I sent a survey to you all regarding the forthcoming changes on which systems can be used to externally send bulk emails from the UA domain. Please share the survey so we can collect feedback.

**Financial Affairs** – (*Shane Stinson & Aislinn O’Donohoe Riley*)

* + OIRA has not disseminated salary data at the department level since 2019. Public access data was suggested as a compromise. A next step could be creating a statement or resolution to request salary data.

**Faculty and Senate Governance – (***Jeri Zemke & Ruth Ann Hall*)

* No report

**Opportunities, Intercultural Connections, and Success** – (*Anil Mujumdar & Sheila Black*)

* No report.

**Reports from Other Committees:**

* **Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee** (*Rona Donahoe*)
  + No report.
* Compliance Committee (Babs Davis)
  + Will discus with Jennifer Clark the possibility of adding SB 129 to compliance training.

**Old Business**

* **None**

**New Business**

* Specifically related to DEI: it is the Provost and Counsel’s opinion that email falls within the ancillary services, which is safe from SB 129. Counsel did note that if you are sending out anything political, such as a change.org ballot, it cannot be used for those types of correspondence.

Meeting Adjourned