# FACULTY SENATE MEETING

**September 17, 2024**

**1008 Nursing**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**Attendees**: Christy Adams, Stacy Alley, Sharla Biefeld, Sheila Black, Serena Blount, Ibrahim Cemen, Kim Colburn, Jenni Cox, Rona Donahoe, Ellary Draper, Gayle Faught, Renata Fuchs, Marysia Galbraith, John Giggie, Jessica Goethals, Xabier Granja, Carl Hancock, Matt LaFevor, Jeff Lozier, Aislinn O’Donohoe Riley, JoAnne Payne, Margaret Peacock, Laura Rubio, Soledad Sanchez Valdez, Harold Selesky, Edith Szanto, Theodore Tomeny, Matthew Valasik, Laura Erin Watley, Susan Williams, Tom Baker, Karen Epermanis, Katie Grayson, Ruth Ann Hall, Bryan Hochstein, Matthew Hudnall, Jacob Humpheries, Jennie Northam, Anneliese Bolland, Jihoon (Jay) Kim, Dimitrios Latsis, Bharat Mehra, Cynthia Peacock, Meenakshi Arora, Dale Dickinson, Mallory Scogin, R. Miller Wright, Nirmala Erevelles, Alison Hooper, James Hardin, Cailin Kerch, Stacy Hughey Surman, Nicole Swoszowski, Colleen Geary, Thang Dao, Xiaoyan Hong, Qiang Huang, Patrick Kung, Dawen Li, Sree Patiballa, Shreyas Rao, Weihua Su, Darren Surman, Kim Boyle, Barbara “Babs” Davis, Maria Hernandez-Reif, Courtney McGahey, Jeri Zemke, Anil Mujumdar, Brian Clark, Lindsey Lowry, Kristi Acker, Shameka Cody, Kim Parker, Sarah Robinson, Abby Horton, Connar Franklin, Brenda Smith, Carrie Turner, Allyson Holliday, Stephen Frost, Cassidy Matwiyoff

**Absent with Alternate**: John Petrovic/Colleen Geary

**Absent:** Paulo Araujo, Rachel Cajigas, Natasha Dimova, Shanlin Pan, Diane Tober, Rebecca Totten, Shane Stinson, Xiaoyan Hong, Mark Weaver, Benjamin McMichael, Robert Riter

**Guests:** Laura Braddick, Caryl Cooper, Johnny Foster

Mike Daria, Superintendent of Tuscaloosa City Schools, spoke at the September 17, 2024 Faculty Senate Meeting to discuss the upcoming property tax referendum.

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

### Approval / Correction of the Minutes for August 20, 2024

Minutes from August 20, 2024, were reviewed and approved. No correction or additions mentioned. Motion to approve: Approved unanimously.

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

* Motion made to suspend rules and vote on items related to SB129 due to legislative mandates effective October 1st. Motion seconded and passed with 2/3 majority (no abstentions or “no” votes).
* Changes in the Faculty Handbook were discussed to ensure compliance with SB129. Changes include removing DEI and added a new section to remove race, gender et al. and change to “broader campus community.” Motion to vote on issue was made and seconded. A 2/3 majority voted “yes”. Motion passed (no abstentions or “no” votes).
* Proposed new name for DEI Committee to “Opportunity, Intercultural Connections, and Success.” A motion was made to vote, there was a 2nd, and the vote passed with 2/3 majority (no abstentions or “no” votes).
* The Committee will draft the paragraph and present it for approval for a more well defined committee description.
* Identified a random “3” in the finance section of the bylaws that is contextually irrelevant. Motion to remove the “3” passed by a 2/3 majority.
* Fiscal year shows a $44 million surplus; however, a $39 million budget item significantly reduces the surplus.
* Threshold for equipment requiring a property tag increased from $5,000 to $10,000.
* Current UA indirect cost agreement with the federal government expires on September 30, 2024. Current indirect cost rate is 49% for contracts and grants. Do not have new rate at this time. Clarification needed on the implementation of the higher overhead rate for pending proposals.
* Crimson Concierge Service will not longer allow scheduled pick-ups.
* SOI discussion will reconvene, action items will be put into resolutions and then bring for vote at the next meeting.

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

* In-depth discussion of the A&S Reorganization.

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

* No report

**Senate Committee Reports:**

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

* Campus planning for possible protest events. Need clarity on UA’s stance on protests and how they intend to ensure safety. Need to reach out to Chad Tindol to discuss UA’s stance on protests and safety measures.
* Meetings set with Charlie Taylor about U.A. lobbying and upcoming legislation. Working with Serena to set up a meeting with the Higher Education Partnership, a student-focused advocacy group. Set up a meeting with the Higher Education Partnership.

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

* Plus / Minus grading survey has been modified and it will be disseminated soon to all graduate faculty.
* Expedited handbook changes
* Working on university-sanctioned event and make-up policy due to concerns from Intercollegiate Athletics.
* Discussed renewable contract (RC) faculty promotions and issues with faulty handbook rules versus what is implemented. Look for ways to change the language in the faculty handbook to improve RC faculty promotions.
* Collaborating with SOI task force on recommendations.

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

* No report

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

* CREATE funding was decreased from $6,000 to $4,000.
* FUSE funding was increased from $6,000 to $20,000.
* Instrumentation support.
* Issues with timely response from OSP.
* Faculty travel grant program to Washington, DC discussed.
* Discussion on minimizing the burden of student support in grants by potentially reducing tuition. Explore the possibility of reducing tuition or charging only a portion post-candidacy.
* Upcoming VPR meeting to discuss issues.

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

* Looking at other universities for ideas for a Resource Guide for UA faculty. This would also a good reference for the entire community. This guide will serve as a one-stop shop for information no well-being, benefits, and community activities.

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

* One Drive, Email, Box security and storage caps discussed.
* Read.ai tool has been deemed a security threat and blocked from joining Teams and Zoom calls. Otter.ai free version is also considered a security threat and is in the process of being blocked.
* Microsoft is changing the storage of OneDrive from 5TB to a lower cap.
* Teams Premium ($7 per month) is being considered. OIT will vet the team premium version to address note-taking and transcription needs.

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

* Set up regular meetings with the new CFO
* Raise letters went out, effective October 1, 2024.

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

* Need one more member for the Grievance and Mediation Committee. Sherri sent out email earlier and will send out another one. Must be tenured and not an administrator.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** – (*Anil Mujumdar & Sheila Black*)

* Anil thanked Sheila for all of her hard work in coming up with a new name for the DEI Committee. Sheila thanked Anil for his help and support.

**Reports from Other Committees:**

* **Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee** (*Rona Donahoe*)
  + The reserve fund, which should be between $10 and $15 million, was at $11 million in July and is predicted to fall below the threshold by December.
  + Changes to healthcare plans include increases in first-dollar deductibles, out-of-pocket maximums, inpatient copay, outpatient surgery copay, and specialist office visits.
  + Premium increases: $5 per month for individuals, $16 per month for single parents or single employees with children, and $19 per month for families with a spouse.
  + UA will pay an additional $10 million per year towards employee healthcare premiums.
  + The Faculty Staff Clinic has moved and plans to add a pharmacy.
  + Several new large healthcare claims are impacting the reserve fund.
  + Employees continue to use emergency rooms instead of other options.
  + Erica Shumate will talk to the Senate in October about the official changes during open enrollment.
  + Increase advertisement for the Faculty Staff Clinic's evening hours.
* Compliance Committee (Babs Davis)
  + Compliance training is open

**Old Business**

**New Business**

Meeting Adjourned (4:55 p.m.)