



Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2022
Online by Zoom

Attendance: Pages 12-15

Proceedings of the meeting are uploaded onto UB Box.

The Chair, Fred Stoss, called the meeting to order at 3:02pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Agenda: The agenda for the day was approved unanimously.

Secretary's report: The minutes of the previous FSEC meeting were approved unanimously.

President's report: no report

Provost's report: We already had the first graduation with the Medical School last Friday, Dental Medicine is this Friday, and then Law School, and the bulk of them are in a couple of weeks. Last week, we had the annual celebration of student academic excellence, I just want to highlight some of the awards of our students. Carol Ramos Herrera, PhD student in Urban and Regional Planning, was one of 40 scholars selected for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Research Scholarship fellowship. Three UB students received the Barry Goldwater scholarship, one of the most prestigious and competitive research scholarships offered to undergraduate STEM students. We had seven students who received Fulbright awards, and twelve were selected as finalists for the awards. Great kudos to our faculty who have been very strong supporters and mentoring our students. We had six students and alumni who received NSF graduate fellowship awards. I think we've really built the capacity at UB to help our students really be competitive for some of these really major awards.

We have two dean searches underway. These are the next deans for the School of Nursing and the School of Management. Positions have attracted strong and diverse pools of applicants. Last week, the finalists for the School of Nursing position were on campus, and they interviewed with UB faculty, staff, students and senior leadership. This week, we're hosting on campus interviews for the School of Management finalists. For those of you who are

interested in attending the open sessions which I always encourage, even if you're not from the school, the information about the schedule is on the UB Leadership website.

B Lerner: I wonder if there's any follow up about the staff in the Research Foundation.

Provost: I am really pleased to report that Venu Govindaraju brought forward a proposal to me to address some of the staff shortages in that office, because it's been a challenge holding on to staff, as well as growing staff. And we have invested heavily in that in the last month to improve the situation. It will probably still take some time to see the impact of that because it takes time to recruit, but those resources have been allocated.

B Lerner: We could have an update early next semester.

Provost: Venu would be happy to come talk to you, if you invite him. He was at an AAU VPR meeting recently, and this was the number one challenge across the AAU landscape. This is a top priority, if we are going to grow our research enterprise, we have to have the infrastructure to do it.

F Stoss: Do you have any information about the new Covid variants that seem to be increasing in numbers?

Provost: The rates of infection have grown. I don't feel like we're in a crisis, by any means, but I feel like it is it's hitting home. I know this is a concern for all of us, our students, faculty, and staff across the campus. Our Health Monitoring Committee, led by Allison Brashear, Dean of the School of Medicine and Vice President for Health Sciences, continues to meet to give us the best advice possible.

Chair's report: The full report is uploaded on UB Box.

Parliamentarian's report: no report

Items of interest

Academic Policies & Grading Committee Update (Joanna Song McLaughlin): I was invited to explain what we have done in the last semester, and what we will be doing in the coming academic year. One thing that we worked on was the proposal to include a Fall break in the academic calendar. I think we all heard the presentation by Graham Hammill a couple of months ago, and we've been working on that. In the coming academic year, the committee will be working on general modification to the academic

calendar, the focus is on the top two to cover the issues that Graham talked about, in addition to inserting a Fall break that was requested by the students.

Ad-Hoc Faculty Satisfaction Committee Update (Barbara Prinari): As some of you might remember, this committee was actually only first convened on February 15, 2022. Nonetheless, we have met four times this semester, and we will be meeting again tomorrow. I don't know if there's going to be one additional meeting before the end of the semester, or if tomorrow's meeting will be the last one this semester. The charge of the committee was to develop a list of questions for a faculty satisfaction survey that will be administered in Fall 2022. The committee will put together questions that will then be submitted to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee early in the Fall for review and approval. In our meetings, we have identified various topics that this faculty satisfaction will cover: faculty senate, shared governance, campus climate/culture, UB Foundation and university budget, TT and NTT faculty, URM faculty, teaching and research, academic freedom, remote teaching, etc. So far, we have a list of about 30 questions. We are currently reviewing these questions and we expect, as I said, to present the full questionnaire to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee early in the fall for review and approval.

Election Committee Update (Barbara Prinari): This semester, we held the long overdue election for the Faculty Senate secretary. Cindi Tysick will be the new FS secretary starting in Fall. The elections for one SUNY senate seat (non-Health Sciences) is ongoing. The ballot was sent out Friday, April 22, and the election period will close in two days. We should be able to announce the result of the election at our next FSEC meeting. Lastly, the Election Committee also dealt with polling the faculty about the day/time of FS and FSEC meetings. The poll was also sent out on April 22. A reminder was sent on Tuesday, and there another one probably today or tomorrow. If you haven't submitted your preferences for the meeting times, please make sure to do so. We have received over 200 responses so far, which is quite good. We will be discussing the results of this poll at our next FSEC meeting. Regardless of the results, my recommendation will be to keep the meetings on Tuesdays at the usual time (3-4:30pm) for both FS and FSEC for the next semester, because the teaching schedule for the Fall semester has been already decided a while ago, and that time slot on Tuesdays is the one during which returning and newly elected senators were expected to be available. If a different day or time ends up being selected as a result of the poll, the

change can be made for the following semester or the following academic year, with sufficient advance notice.

Child/Elder Care Committee Update (Fred Stoss): We have had a meeting, and we essentially gave ourselves some homework assignments. One of which is to do an inventory of regional child childcare facilities at this time in Eire, Niagara and possibly Genesee counties. Another component was going to be a survey of our campus to see what are the needs of our faculty, staff, and students, especially our graduate students.

T Tryjankowski: Dr Glick asked for both sets, the professional staff and faculty senates, to work together. We would like the committee to give us an idea of what are the shortcomings, the problems, with child/elder care, and what are some possible suggestions. Obviously, a lot of these are going to take money, but I think right now the idea of this joint committee was just to identify some areas that are making it difficult for faculty, students, and staff in the areas of child care and elder care and then hopefully we can all work together to improve upon those offerings when possible.

P Glick: There is money on the table, the budget came in and I think we need to be a little bit in a hasten mood to try to make some recommendations to the President, so he can make them to SUNY. UB is one of the 17 campuses that has daycare, but obviously it's not at the capacity we need. We need more room, we need to pay the people better, and we need something on the downtown campus. So, I wouldn't let this opportunity go to waste. I think we need to be up there, advocating for the faculty, staff, and for the students in this budget session.

Unfinished business

Academic Calendar Resolution (Joanne Song McLaughlin): The resolution is uploaded on UBbox. It was circulated, and we did receive some feedback, but no change has been made since you've seen it.

B Prinari: I want to share with you some comments I received, besides the ones that were sent to everybody through the list-serv. Several faculty members voiced strong opposition to this calendar change, and some of the comments seem really relevant.

“While I think it's good that UB is going to finally implement a fall break, I'd rather see the fall term start earlier as opposed to being extended. While the proposal states that the other SUNY universities all have fall breaks, it fails

to mention that the other SUNY universities also start the week before UB does. The other SUNY universities also have earlier end dates and earlier exam week dates. For Fall 2022:

SUNY Albany

1st day of classes: Monday, August 22

Last day of classes: Monday, December 5

Exams: Wednesday, December 7 - Tuesday, December 13

SUNY Binghamton

1st day of classes: Tuesday, August 23

Last day of classes: Friday, December 9

Exams: Monday, December 12 - Friday, December 16

SUNY Stony Brook

1st day of classes: Monday, August 22

Last day of classes: Monday, December 5

Exams: Wednesday, December 7 - Thursday, December 15

The proposed Fall 2022 schedule for UB has exams ending on Wednesday, December 21. [...] No one is going to want to be grading final exams in the days leading up to Christmas. In addition, what happens if there's a snowstorm and finals can't be held on Wednesday, December 21? Are they given on Thursday, December 22? Or Friday, December 23?"

"The proposed change would negatively impact the Department of Theatre and Dance's production courses. These courses lead to our Theatre, Music Theatre and Dance Productions. Reducing rehearsal time by 2 and potentially 4 days in October would conflict with our already published production season for 2022 and would make future seasons equally challenging. October is one of the busiest times for our Fall production season. Losing 2-4 days (it's hard to ask students to rehearse over the weekend when they don't have school Monday and Tuesday) would compact our already short rehearsal period even further. This would have negative impacts on not only the learning outcomes for our student performers, who need to put in a specific number of rehearsal hours, but also the design and technology students who create the sets, lighting and sound designs for the production courses. Reducing the number of days/hours would also raise safety concerns in these laboratory settings."

K Stapleton: Like Barbara, I got a lot of negative feedback when I talked about it with people. I have two questions. If the FSEC votes to send this to the Senate, does it mean that we're endorsing it, or can we send it forward without endorsing it? My second question is: who is moderating the list-serv?

B Prinari: Jessica was moderating the discussion on the list-serv. She initially allowed people to respond to all. There were complaints about it, and so, at that point, I told Jessica to forward the responses to me, and that I would take care of acknowledging receiving the emails and of sharing the comments at the FSEC meeting.

J Livingston: I am from the School of Nursing and I raised this issue at our all-faculty meeting last week. One of the things that came up was that undergraduate courses tend to front load content at the beginning of the semester, because then the students go into clinical. The proposed change would prevent covering all the material they need to cover before they go into clinical. Faculty does acknowledge students are exhausted and stressed out and need a break, so some suggestions were to possibly do this on a Thursday and Friday, instead of a Monday and Tuesday.

K Saunders: I wanted to provide some additional clarification around the proposal itself and why some of the things were proposed. The first one is just to clarify, as was mentioned by someone else in the chat, that the proposal is to extend the last day of the semester by 2 days. And that extension is not out of alignment with our current calendar. We have some years where the semester ends Dec 13th or Dec 14th, but we do have years where the semester ends on Dec 20th or Dec 21st, so this is not an out of alignment. And then the second point was that starting the semester a week earlier is something that certainly we can consider. But it was also seen as a high priority for our students and given the current mental health crisis that we look at the opportunity to offer sooner than the holistic review of the calendar. So, this proposal was a compromise that recognizes the urgency of the situation. But also didn't want to hold that up in light of the rest of the calendar that needed to be discussed.

F Stoss: Is it true that the other university start their semesters earlier than we do?

K Saunders: Stony Brook and Binghamton do start their fall semester a week earlier than we do. When it came to this particular proposal, we weren't able to move this coming fall semester up by week for a variety of reasons. There's a lot of things that are already in place, from campus dining to orientation, other things that involve students, as well as I would imagine there are a lot of faculty who already have summer plans and travel. As I mentioned, this was a compromise in order to meet the need while not providing that challenge to people.

M Dambra: Sharing perspective from the School of Management, I heard that both faculty and students did not like the proposed change to the calendar.

M Jameson: Does a positive vote by the FCC constitute an endorsement of the recommendation or merely a referral of the recommendation. I also want to say that, based on long experience of all faculty or all employee list serves, that they really should not be “reply-to-all”. So that's a very good reason for there to be a moderator. Third, I prepared a survey to poll the faculty in my department about the calendar change. I shared the poll with representatives from other departments, and that poll got used in other departments. I won't read out everything everybody wrote but, but there is a lot of concern out there, and a lot of opposition to the proposal. I really think before such a change from our practices is made that we need to gather faculty opinion on this.

M Morris: I had actually a lot of feedback, and we usually don't have much feedback coming the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. The concerns are sort of similar to what have been already spoken about, but one concern was about laboratory courses being on Monday and losing too many of them. Also, there were concerns about clinical rotations and having to change dates.

F Stoss: One clarification. When we vote on this later, if we say yes, we are essentially endorsing the resolution and passing it on to the full senate for their consideration. If the result comes out as a no, then there's nothing that gets forwarded to the Faculty Senate and it could go back to the committee.

A Ball: I am in the School of Social Work, and among our faculty I didn't hear anyone express support for this resolution. And there are some concerns that were mentioned in our faculty that I haven't heard here. One is that we teach a lot of hybrid courses where students mostly meet asynchronously, but occasionally meet in person or synchronously. Our concern with that is when we make those courses and set them up ahead of time, it's an agreement with the students when they register that they will be available to meet in person on specific dates. And if those dates overlap with the break, we have to change that and require students to be available on different dates. But they have already registered and committed for the days that we told them, they would be required to attend, and so generally then that gets to some of our faculties concerns that this change at this point is too late for the fall semester, and that we really shouldn't be changing it so quickly, because we can't plan for it, and neither can our students. Also, this does not actually address students' mental health. A break is a break, but of all the things we could do to improve students' mental health this has very mixed research behind it, and it's not clear that offering two days off in the middle of semester is really an effective way to address the students' mental health crisis, and that was another concern that our faculty expressed.

A Kandel: My question is also about the mental health, I could not explain the connection between the mental health and this calendar change.

J McLaughlin: The motivation for inserting the break came from the student representatives, who met with Graham and they said they need a fall break. For this fall break there were a lot of restrictions, and we worked closely with Kara, and this was the best we were able to come up for the next academic calendar.

K Saunders: I would just add from the mental health perspective, no one is under any illusions that this two-day break is going to solve the mental health problem. Based on feedback from a number of different sources, but primarily from our students, as well as getting support from the counseling services, and, as well as hearing from our colleagues at other schools that this is something that they have found has been helpful to their students. The last piece that I would add is that we do a survey of new undergraduate students every fall. And we consistently hear back from them that the amount of time between the beginning of the semester and the fall break when they go home in November is very long, and can often lead many of them to the point where their homesickness is so great that we feel it significantly impacts their success. We feel like it probably does impact student retention for some of our students, and so all of those factors combined were things that we felt could help our students from mental health perspective, but certainly not solve the problem.

R.J. Multari: There is consensus among the campus-wide advising administrators, that the fall break would actually be a benefit to students. As Kara did say, it's not going to solve all of our students' mental health issues, but it is going to allow for the students, especially for undergraduate students, to catch their breath, recharge their batteries, so they can then move forward for the rest of the fall semester.

B Prinari: I am not questioning the fact that the break would be beneficial, I am sure many faculty would agree on that, and it would be beneficial for the faculty as well. But the objections and the concerns that are being raised are very real. Also, we can't be having this discussion on May 5 for the calendar of the Fall semester that's starting in three months!

A Bisantz: I just want to share, as Joanna and Kara have been talking about, that the student association brought to my attention that this was one of their priority items to be working on. I know that timing is not perfect. But, regardless of what how these discussions are today and in future, I think it's very important for our student government to understand where they're coming from with respect to this proposal. As RJ said, and I, and both Kara and Joanne have mentioned, they do feel that having those two days or

having some days off earlier in the semester is really key to alleviating the kinds of pressures out.

J McLaughlin: If you believe that there's a lot of pushback from faculty, and this is too early, we don't have to move forward with this.

M Jameson: Joanna, would you be willing to take the proposal back to the committee to work on something that would apply to this coming Fall 22, or would you be willing to find a way to have a fall break in a future calendar. And, the message to the students would be not that we don't care what they think, or we don't care about your mental health. I would not like the students to think we didn't care or we didn't listen, or their mental health is irrelevant to us.

J McLaughlin: The committee thought this came from the students, and we tried to include this break without making any other academic calendar change, so that's why we brought this up. We understand this is rather quick. We could incorporate this as part of that big modification and bring it back for future academic years, not the next one but the following ones.

K Saunders: And I would just add that the intention with the wider academic calendar conversation is that we would have more time to have focus groups with students, with faculty, reach out to colleagues at peer institutions about what it is that they do. And we will try to address a lot of the concerns that have been raised. We wouldn't go back to the committee and huddle down and then come back to this group, without having reached out and done additional research.

M Jameson: I think it is important to craft a message that could be shared with the student government leadership so they would understand the rationale behind this decision.

B Prinari: UB Council student rep, Brianna Bennett, is in attendance.

B Bennett: This was a conversation that did occur with the Dean of Students and a lot of students did not like the academic calendar being pushed back. As a recommendation, it would be better if we can start the academic year a little bit earlier, like Albany and Stony Brook, rather than push it back.

M Dambra: Based on the feedback I have gotten from my colleagues and my reps, I would advocate for a motion to table the resolution.

A motion to table the resolution was approved with 17 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain.

K Stapleton: Fred, you might want to send another message out to the faculty to inform of this decision

F Stoss: It will go out tomorrow morning.

New business

Ad-hoc Senate Institutional Review Committee (Kristin Stapleton): The list of nominations that were received for the membership of the ad-hoc Senate Institutional Review Committee was uploaded on UBbox. One of the nominees declined to serve because of too many commitments, and one has not yet responded. All we need to do today is to appoint the committee. I was hoping that somebody from the School of Management would be induced to serve, but we haven't received nominations from it.

B Prinari: Members can be added/appointed later on. At this point I would make a pitch to the FSEC members from units who do not currently have representation on the committee, to reach out to their constituents and see if they can identify valuable and willing candidates. In the meantime, I feel that eight members is a good number. If the committee gets too big, it becomes difficult to even find meeting times.

K Stapleton: I am not the chair of this committee, but my preference is to do a lot of work asynchronously. So, to have documents that we comment on, and meet as seldom as possible.

The appointment of the committee was approved. K Stapleton will send some initial thoughts out to the committee, with a congratulatory note from the senate that says we appreciate their service.

In-person/virtual meetings (Brooke Lerner): The resolution, uploaded on UBbox, is presented in first reading and will be voted upon at the next FSEC meeting. The proposal is for the first FSEC meeting of each month to be held in-person, and the second and third meetings each month to be held virtually, starting from next semester. In the event of inclement weather or other potential hazard, the chair can choose to hold the in-person meeting virtually provided the membership is given at least 3 hours' notice of the change.

A Ball: I am wondering if the choice for the first meeting to be in person is just kind of random or if there was a reason behind it.

B Lerner: Totally random.

M Jameson: Could I suggest a very slight tweak to the wording, to say the first FSEC meeting of each month will ordinarily be held in person, and the second and third meetings will be held virtually.

K Stapleton: I suggested an even vaguer wording, that the schedule would normally include two virtual meetings and one in person meeting, and it would be settled at the first fall meeting what the schedule would be.

B Lerner: I just think we could talk ourselves in circles and it probably doesn't really matter, we just need something we can remember. Which is what Jennifer just brought up, that it's easier to remember the first one of the month.

F Stoss: There is no actions that needs to be taken at this point in time, other than the fact that next week when there will be a vote in regard to the resolution. If you have comments, please send them to Brooke or to the discussion list, so they can be incorporated in a final version on which we will act next week.

Adjourned: Meeting adjourned at 4:25pm.

Submitted by Barbara Prinari, Interim Secretary of the Faculty Senate, May 5, 2022.



Executive Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 4, 2022
3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

CHAIR:
Fred Stoss - ✓

SECRETARY:
Barbara Prinari (interim) - ✓

PARLIAMENTARIAN:
Nicholas Chibuikem Ogam - ✓

ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING:
Hiro Hata - ✓

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES:
Michael Cowen -
Maureen Jameson - ✓
Barbara Prinari - ✓
Kristin Stapleton - ✓

DENTAL MEDICINE:
Othman Shibly -

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTER:
Michael Baugh - ✓

ENGINEERING & APPLIED SCIENCES:
Paschalis Alexandridis - ✓

Marina Tsianou - ✓

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION:

Tiffany Karalis-Noel - ✓

LAW:

Matthew Steilen - ✓

MANAGEMENT:

Michael Dambra - ✓

MEDICINE & BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES:

Anna Blumental-Perry - ✓

Channa Kolb -

E. Brooke Lerner - ✓

Michael Morales - ✓

NURSING:

Jennifer Livingston - ✓

PHARMACY:

Marilyn Morris - ✓

PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS:

Albert Vexler -

SOCIAL WORK:

Annahita Ball - ✓

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES:

John Beatty - ✓

SUNY SENATORS:

- Cemal Basaran - ✓
- Amit Kandel - ✓
- Patrick Long -
- R.J. Multari - ✓
- Ken Seldeen (alternate) -

PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO:

- Satish Tripathi -

PROVOST OF THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO:

- A. Scott Weber - ✓

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SENATE:

- Tim Tryjankowski - ✓

COUNCIL OF ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP (COAL):

- Brianna Bennett - ✓

INVITED GUESTS:

- Joanne McLaughlin - ✓
- Kara Saunders - ✓

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP:

- Robert Granfield - ✓
- Graham Hammill -
- William McDonnell -
- Eileen Sherman - ✓
- Ann Bisantz - ✓
- Tilman Baumstark - ✓

| OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: |
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| Jessica Naish - ✓ |
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| Bob Miletich - ✓ |
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| Phil Glick - ✓ |
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