



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Center for Tomorrow

Attendance: See attached attendance.

Call to Order

- The chair called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Agenda Approved

- Faculty Senate [FS Meeting 4-15-25 Agenda](#) was unanimously approved.

Actionable Items

- [FS 3-25-25 Meeting Minutes](#) was unanimously approved.
- FS Chair Report 4-15-25 was accepted
- Motion for anonymous voting for all resolutions presented in today's meeting was made and seconded. Faculty Senate voted 31 (yea), 3 (nay) for anonymous voting. Pre-made ballots were utilized for senators to vote anonymously for all resolutions presented.
- Second reading of [Bylaws Revision: Definition of Voting Faculty Resolution from the Bylaws Committee](#) from Bylaws Committee. Resolution was approved by the Faculty Senate: 62 (yea), 1 (nay), and 0 (abstain).
- Second reading of the [Resolution to Establish New Department of AI and Society](#) from the Academic Planning and Assessment Committee. Resolution was approved by the Faculty Senate: 53 (yea), 6 (nay), and 2 (abstain).
- [Undergraduate Education – Curriculum, and course 'Diversity in the US' Assessment](#) report was presented and accepted.

Other Items

I. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- President Tripathi addressed the recent federal actions affecting the university's international students, faculty, and staff.
- Recognized that international students, faculty and staff feel vulnerable with these federal actions.
- Noted that Vice Provost Kwak sent an email to international students about the recent changes in immigration enforcement and policy.

- The email provided an overview of campus and external resources available to them, as well as other helpful reminders and information. These resources include, among others, counseling, financial assistance, and legal assistance.
- Adjusted advising services, resources, and communications to address international students' concerns

Provost Report

- **Recent Visa Revocations:** In the past two weeks, 17 international students and graduates (on OPT) had their immigration status revoked, often without clear reasons. Some cases may be linked to minor infractions in criminal databases.
- **National Trend:** This issue is not isolated to UB; similar incidents are happening at universities across the country, as confirmed in conversations with national academic organizations.
- **University Response:** The university is offering strong support, including tuition relief, academic accommodation (incompletes, withdrawals), and helping students complete their degrees where possible.
- **Faculty and Travel Concerns:** Faculty have also raised concerns about increased scrutiny and detentions at borders, particularly those traveling between the U.S. and Canada. Individual travel counseling is being provided.
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** The university is closely tracking the situation daily, acknowledging the impact that these federal actions may have on future international enrollment and campus morale.

Vice Provost for International Education Report

- **Visa Revocations Nationwide:** Approximately 1,300 international students have had their visas revoked across the U.S., including 17 at the University at Buffalo. These revocations happen without individual notification to universities, requiring internal tracking and verification.
- **Individualized Support Plans:** University works with students affected and provides tailored support based on their specific academic and immigration situations.
- **Faculty Involvement and Communication:** Faculty concerns, especially around travel, are being addressed through direct communication with the immigration office. The university appreciates faculty support and advocacy for affected students.

Questions and Comments

Q1: Are there any patterns in terms of the students whose visas are getting revoked, in terms of ethnicity, country, etc.

Response: No specific pattern of ethnicity or country. The most common pattern is any kind of infraction that is within a law enforcement database, whether or not the student was ultimately charged or found guilty, impacts a student's visa status.

II. BYLAWS REVISION: DEFINITION OF VOTING FACULTY RESOLUTION FROM THE BYLAWS COMMITTEE

- If approved by the Faculty Senate at today's meeting, a survey would then go to the Voting Faculty of the university to be voted on. The Bylaws require that a majority of the Voting Faculty approve any changes to the Bylaws that were approved by the Faculty Senate.
- If the resolution is not approved at today's meeting, the change to the Bylaws cannot be approved at the next meeting in May because the Bylaws do not allow changes to the Bylaws in May (end of academic year).

Questions and Comments:

Q1: How many Voting Faculty are there?

Response: *The exact amount is not known. The information differs by unit. From the College of Arts and Sciences, it is known that roughly 10% of faculty in one department were affected, signaling other departments may have similar numbers.*

III. ESTABLISH NEW DEPARTMENT OF AI & SOCIETY RESOLUTION FROM ACADEMIC PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE.

- **New AI Department Rationale:** The proposed department aims to build on past investments from New York State and the National Science Foundation, enhancing UB's leadership in the responsible development and use of AI technologies.
- **Academic Impact:** The department will support innovative and unique degree programs, helping to attract top-tier students and faculty and distinguish UB in the AI education space.
- **Vision for Research Collaboration:** The proposed chair envisions interdisciplinary research teams combining core AI experts, social scientists, and bridge professionals who understand both AI and its societal implications.
- **Focus on Societal Relevance:** The department's mission includes using AI to address major societal challenges, emphasizing ethical and inclusive approaches to research and development.

Questions and Comments:

A comment was made regarding **how math is being dealt with in the new AI X majors**, particularly the math courses not being taught by the Math Department and course substitutions.

- *AI-specific (AI-prefixed) courses will not substitute for accredited math courses required in engineering due to accreditation standards (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). In the College of Arts and Sciences, the high credit tech majors that have math as part of their requirements also have accreditation standards that must be met, and the AI-prefixed math courses will not be substituted for those majors as well.*
- *The current discussion and vote are about forming the new department, not approving the curriculum, which will be addressed separately.*
- *Faculty leaders acknowledged the concerns and stated they are actively working through curriculum details to ensure proper academic standards are maintained.*

Comment on **research in the AI Department**. For example, how would current research using AI (from another department) to address language in pediatric population fit into the new AI Department?

- *Faculty across units can continue submitting grants independently or collaboratively; the new department is not limiting or absorbing existing efforts but rather expanding opportunities.*
- *Faculty from Romance Languages, Linguistics, and Communicative Disorders emphasized the value of interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly in AI for language and intercultural communication.*

Comment on **teaching students how to navigate ethical issues and AI.**

- All AI+X degree programs and minors include a mandatory course on AI and ethics as a foundational element of the curriculum.
- The curriculum committee, including members from both technical and societal disciplines, unanimously agreed on the essential role of ethics in all programs.
- Ethical considerations will not only be addressed in society-side courses but also embedded throughout the technical core classes.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:30 p.m.

TPF