

Chair of the Faculty Statement

September 12, 2022

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Thank you and welcome to our returning and new Senators, to all our *ex-officio* non-voting members, and to our guests.

I'd like to devote my time as Chair of the Faculty to awakening the faculty, not only to its rights, but also to its responsibilities in governing the University. In service to the people of this state, the student experience, the economy and ecology of our desert, we are privileged to work in and for a commons, in and for the public good.

I look forward to working with the Chair of the Senate, Arthur W Andrews Professor of Law, Mona Hymel, with our Secretary, Tessa Dysart also of the Law College, our parliamentarian, Dr. Mark Stegeman of the Eller College and, of course, with the Faculty Center staff. They have all worked thoughtfully and tirelessly to balance our business meeting between two imperatives - on the one hand, the ratification of routine institutional business and on the other, the public debate of policy matters of the day.

The law charges us, as the elected representatives of the faculty, to share responsibility for instruction/curriculum

and academic personnel matters, as well as general policy. To that end, we look forward to continuing engagement, improvement, and eventual endorsement of the General Education Refresh. It is high time also to systematically review Arizona International's many microcampuses and the international dual degrees that are in process. And we will provide checks and balances on the UAGC venture which will attempt to combine the instructional programs and faculty of a very different entity into our University.

On the question of academic personnel, I am optimistic about partnering with the President and the Provost's office to recenter the faculty. I have found common ground and engaged concern with President Robbins this summer in advocating for faculty members. With Provost Folks and with Senior Vice Provost Andrea Romero, we have already found common cause on one specific aspect of faculty concern - multiyear contracts. ABOR allows 30% of career track faculty to have multi year contracts and the University as a whole only made that happen for 3% of our colleagues. I was happy to see that the Provost's office is as committed as I am to making sure that each college quickly reaches that threshold as the first step in expanding job security for many of us. Other personnel matters ahead include refining research and conflict of interest policy, initiating timely and meaningful

administrative reviews, and addressing the disparities in compensation dynamics between stagnant and uncompetitive rank and file faculty and staff salaries and the rapid expansion of upper administrative positions and salaries. I will fight for repayment of the unnecessary 2020 furloughs as well as for the 10% cost of living adjustment raises that all state employees except University employees received. I hope we will also match Arizona State University's 60K salary floor for lecturers and instructors. I believe that our partners, the President and Provost, do see that the faculty and staff are not a resource to be exploited and exhausted, but an invaluable asset to be cared for and invested in.

The work ahead also includes assuring the integrity of the faculty side of shared governance. Adequate funding for governance, fair and inclusive processes, clean elections, and effective grievance pathways will be among the topics of discussion in the Faculty Center, the governance committees and here in the Senate.

The business of the Senate includes open discussion and debate on public university policy as well as routine oversight. I remind all of us that self governance will be tedious, frustrating and messy at times, that the formality of parliamentary procedure is the best way we know to

mediate difference, and that civility certainly facilitates the discussion of differences, while never replacing it.

Without our vigilance and commitment to active governance, our big, beautiful university is easy prey for corporatization, privatization and deepening exploitation of the workforce. We are the custodians of an amazing machine for the production, recombination and application of knowledge. It needs attention, maintenance and upkeep from those who embody it and understand it best - we, the faculty, along with our staff and students. Not only is our standing among our peers in jeopardy if we abdicate responsibility; so is our basic academic freedom and our right to tenure and stable dignified employment in these perilous political times. I want us together to begin to turn that around, and to position the University of Arizona as the emerging leader in faculty-led reinvestment in our people and our academic mission. That turning tide will raise all the boats.

Thank you! I look forward to the work of the year ahead.