

**MINUTES
FACULTY SENATE
DECEMBER 2, 2024**

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Present: Senators Baker, Barefoot, Bernick, Braitberg, Braithwaite, Brochin, Cheu, Cochran, Cooper, Cornelison, Diaz, Domin, Downing, Eckert, Figler, Fink, D. Garcia, Giacobazzi, Goetz, Gregory, Guzman, W. Harris, Hingle, Hudson (Chair), Hymel (Vice Chair) Joseph, Knox, Leafgren, Little, Marx, Meyer, Neumann, O’Leary, Palacios, Pau, Rafelski, Rishel, Rocha, Roche, Rogers, Russell, Simmons, Slepian, J. Smith, M. Smith, Spece, Stegeman (Parliamentarian), Su, Thomas, Torres, Waddell, Werchan, Williams, M. Witte, R. Witte, Wittman, Zeiders (Secretary), Ziurys.

Absent: Senators Buxner, Cui, Coletta, F. Garcia, Garimella, Grijalva, Hall, S. Harris, Heileman, Medevoi, Nelson, Paschke-Wood, Schulz, Stephan, Tafolla, Willis Jr.

1. CALL TO ORDER [00:00:01]

Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate, Mona Hymel called December 2, 2024, Faculty Senate meeting to order at 3:02 PM in Silver and Sage and via Zoom. Secretary Zeiders was also present.

2. ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL OF THE [AGENDA – VICE CHAIR OF THE FACULTY, MONA HYMEL](#) [00:00:28]

Vice Chair Hymel stated there has been one change since setting the agenda in the Senate Executive Committee. There will not be a verbal report from the Provost during the meeting, but he will submit a written report to be attached to the agenda when he returns to town. There is a consent agenda that was changed to a discussion item, three old business items, and four new business items.

- Vice Chair Hymel asked Secretary Zeiders if she will be giving a report on the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.
- Faculty Center Staff, Jane Cherry stated it was attached to the agenda.
- Senator M. Smith moved [**Motion 2024/25-12**] to approve the December 2, 2024, Faculty Senate Agenda. Motion was seconded. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

3. APPROVAL OF THE [MINUTES FOR THE NOVEMBER 4, 2024 FACULTY SENATE MEETING](#) [00:02:15]

- Chair Hudson moved [**Motion 2024/25-13**] to approve the minutes for the November 4, 2024, Faculty Senate Meeting. Motion was seconded. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

4. OPEN SESSION. KIAN ALAVY, SENATOR DUARTE DIAZ, SENATOR LUCY ZIURYS [00:03:08]

E. Fiona Bailey, Professor in Physiology [00:04:04]

Professor in Physiology and one of a few PIs outside of Cancer Center running a large-scale NIH-funded clinical trial at UA.

I wanted to draw attention to effects of HR centralization on our research efforts and specifically the issues we’ve had processing salary increases for valued team members.

July 30 - I submitted a request to COM-T HR for change in position for a Research Technician I to Research Technician II on basis of additional duties/responsibilities/experience.

October 10 - Main campus HR denied request *on basis of experience, education, and a comparison with similar roles both within the university and the college*. Recommendation: Position reclassification.

October 18 - COM-T HR submitted paperwork for reclassification to Research Technician III.

October 23 - Main campus HR recommendation: To advertise a new position as Clinical Research Coordinator III or

Clinical Research Associate that the current employee would apply to.

November 4th - COM-T HR submitted paperwork for new position for a Clinical Research Associate

November 19th - Main campus HR approval of Clinical Research Associate position.

November 22th - COM-T HR submitted paperwork for Clinical Research Associate position to Health Sciences Talent Recruiting - denied

November 25th - COM-T HR resubmitted paperwork to Health Sciences Talent Recruiting approved November 27th

Position is open and must remain open for 7 days and the employee will need to apply. Given that we have NIH funding for a salary increase for additional duties the requirement to reclassify, advertise and interview for a new position represents an inordinate burden and delay.

Senator Lucy Ziurys [00:07:25]

This sort of builds on what was previously said by Dr. E. Fiona Bailey. We were told that the University of Arizona is in a financial crisis with another 3% to 5% budget cut on the colleges on the horizon. You learn from the press that the University added over \$1.5 million to an administrator salary in the past year. This has reached the point of complete absurdity.

We have administrators, even sometimes down to the department head level that have managed to get 100% raises to their salaries. Some of them have selectively harassed and driven out faculty who bring in big bucks, like a \$1.5 billion project, in order to "keep control." Some of them have hired expensive outside firms to do their work. Some of them have used their positions to promote themselves in external honorary societies.

Yet, the faculty are told they're going to be lucky if they get a 1% raise and are simply told to go back and continue their work despite the grim circumstances. This is a totally ineffective and absurd way to approach a financial crisis.

Furthermore, the imposed centralization of university functions appears to be a racket for administrators to serve their own interests and not the core mission of the university. Perhaps the UA should no longer be called the University of Arizona, but rather, the University of Administrators.

Now, President Garimella has already made steps to cure some of this administrative calamity but we're still a long way to go and we hope he continues to clean up these problems.

Senator Ted Downing [00:09:48]

Senators.

On our website, President Garimella claims credit at Vermont for establishing a "premier flagship research university, committed to delivering a world-class student experience." He promises to improve the UofA. [University of Arizona]. However, the 2025 Wall Street Journal rankings of 500 U.S. universities and colleges worries me. In 2024, The Journal interviewed over 100,000 students and alumni nationwide and found Vermont ranked 337th in its impact on graduates' salaries, trailing the UA at 269th. The UA ranked 166th in the critical category of advancing the economic outcomes of students from low-income families. Vermont a dismal 451st. And our graduates took significantly less time to repay the net price of their education [166th versus Vermont's 240th place]. On their student experience, it ranked dead last [500th of 500].

In the Committee of Eleven, I asked the President: *What lessons from his experience might guide your resource allocation at UA?* I primed the question, *asking if smaller class sizes and higher faculty compensation might help?* He dismissed rankings as "bullshit."

He's mistaken. Ratings create intangible values that drive and tank reputations and markets. Ask Apple. Nike. P. Diddy. Or Wildcat fans after a disastrous season.

People respect measured, constructive, and grounded leadership. Respect is earned by raises, not roses; by facilitating, not constraining; by dialoguing, not reading from teleprompters; by cutting, not expanding bureaucracy; and by active participation, not aloofness.

We can improve our national mid-range ratings for student experience by administrators cooperating with elected faculty representatives. It's their job. It's our statutory duty. Let's follow the people of Arizona's wisdom that is enshrined in law [ARS 15-1601b]. Facing multiple challenges, might it be time to change our motto from "bear down," to "grin and bear it?"

5. STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR [00:13:12]

We come to the end of another semester of change and challenge, still looking forward to collaborating with our new administration to get the University of Arizona back into fighting form. To sum up the last two months - we have a president who can identify problems and administrative inefficiencies, liabilities, and contradictions and is not squeamish about taking action. On the other hand, when those gross issues are rectified, restoring health will require listening to the people who do the work. We elected faculty reps have let the president know how important it is for faculty elected reps to participate formally and actively in the search to replace Provost Marx, how unhelpful another round of 3-5% cutting exercise is on academic programs and people, and how the blanket spending caps hurt everything from motivation - we couldn't sponsor a reception for you senators today due to spending caps - to curtailing those few items in Ag Extension specifically paid for by legislative line items. Teaching our students and helping them succeed and educating our community about how they can support us is a plan that elected faculty governance must play. To that end we held an important and very well attended executive session on our Gen Ed curriculum last week with an eye to bringing together under the Senate's auspices all the good, hard, critical work on Gen Ed by UWGEC, OGE and the ad hoc committee to formally approve a clear Gen Ed curriculum as soon as possible. We continue to emphasize the importance of MY appointments, competitive salaries, workload, and academic freedom in our ongoing talks with Provost, Pres, and ABOR.

I want to bring an issue to the Senate's attention which has implications for faculty morale, for order and respect of contracts, and for enhancing one of the four key pillars of our financial structure - philanthropy. We have what in my opinion is disturbing evidence of endowed chairs being secretly and selectively reinterpreted by administrators.

In November 2024, Dean David Hahn of the College of Engineering sent a memo to Edward and Maria Keonjian Chair Dr. Wolfgang Fink stating that on July 1, 2025, he would be stripped of the chair that was part of his recruitment and hiring offer in 2009 and to which he has been regularly reappointed every one of the fifteen years since then. The modest research funds provided by this honor in the name of the "father of microelectronics" has contributed to the development of the bionic eye or artificial retina and numerous other autonomous sensing optical devices. I'll make that memo available for the minutes. The dean claims to have discovered a decade and half since the founding of the Keonjian Chair that it was intended by the donors to be a "rotating chair" subject to ad hoc reassignment every three years. I should note here that an endowed professorship honor is typically one that lasts for a professor's career at an institution despite recent trends to endow new rotating professorships a stipulation which would be explicitly stated in the founding documents. In my opinion t anyone who values contracts, estate and trust law, academic tradition and academic freedom should be concerned. So should anyone be funding an endowment at the University of Arizona

I brought this matter to The Committee of Eleven, from which Dr. Fink has recused himself on this matter, and the committee wrote to Provost Marx and President Garimella asking for the original donor agreement of the Keonjian Estate and the work products of the "larger review" cited by Dean Hahn as the basis for his arrogation of the chair. Our letter has not been answered and we have not seen either document. On the other hand, We requested, promptly received and have inspected Dr. Fink's letter of appointment and sample routine reappointments since then and satisfied us that there was not ever mention of rotation or review at any time from 2009 to 2024.

What prompted this abrupt arrogation of power over an endowed chair which we have found no university or college policy, no evidence to support Dean Hahn's reinterpretation of the donors' intent and in which ample evidence of a traditional durable endowed chair exists? Two factors did in my opinion. The first is a history and pattern of retaliation by the College of Engineering leadership against the Keonjian Chair Dr. Wolfgang Fink, parts of which I cannot discuss here because they are being adjudicated elsewhere in formal processes, but other parts of which may be familiar to the Senate. Keonjian Chair Dr. Fink was the driving force in a pioneering effort passed overwhelmingly by the Senate to submit administrators - including college deans - to a serious annual elected faculty review process with the possibility of removal for poor performance. He also was nominated as the senior faculty senator by several of his colleagues in CoE to serve on Dean Hahn's upcoming review - the first in his 5 years as dean. It's impossible to eliminate retaliation from this scenario. The second factor is equally eyebrow raising. This arrogation of power takes place after the death of the donor, Maria Keonjian in March 2024.

President Garimella, as we move towards financial health and sustainability, please recall that philanthropy is one of the four pillars of revenue that fuel our great institution, and the one in which we can make the best and fastest improvements. Since donor agreements are held by the non-Public UA foundation, future donors need to know that their endowments they intend to fuel the best and brightest research will not be secretly reinterpreted postmortem by administrators.

IT Centralization

I had intended to bring a resolution here today asking President Garimella, to engage with the ad hoc faculty committee on IT's excellent report from last year (link here) to specify precisely what our IT centralization goals are, what the timeline and methods for accomplishing them are what the metrics (financial and functional) are lee which we can evaluate our progress towards those goals. We also wanted a comparison of peer institutions, organization and faculty governance mechanism or even a peer review of our IT governance structure. But with Barry Brummond's well deserved retirement and the transition that will follow I think we need more sustained engagement with the IT committee. I will forward the IT committee's report to the president and we'll pick this matter up in the new year

Questions and Comments [00:22:01]

- Senator M. Witte stated thanks to Chair Hudson for bringing this matter to the faculty senate. It should reverberate throughout the campus, including those friendly and critical to the administration, that endowed chairs can be political footfalls.
- Senator M. Witte stated Chair Hudson mentioned the opportunity for President Garimella to listen and it is important for the record, that she has been a faculty member under ten Presidents, including President Harvill. President Garimella who is the first one who is not at the Senate, as a voting senator, which he is supposed to be but it not attending. He doesn't expect to be here once more during the semester and is not giving a monthly report which gives the faculty an opportunity to ask questions.
- Senator M. Witte stated this is a very dangerous precedent, which is also foolish if one wants to hear what the faculty senate and faculty have to say. She urges everyone to urge the President to come to monthly Senate meetings as his office is down the hall, to grace the Senate with his presence for a report or response to critical questions.
- Chair Hudson stated there is an ad hoc committee on donor influence which made some important contributions in the last couple of years. The committee may be repurposed to look at the integrity of donor contracts and to curtail inappropriate donor influence.
- Senator Ziurys stated this retaliatory behavior is becoming more and more common at the University against people that speak out against administrators or criticize them in any way. It is done by department heads, deans, provosts, and more. Senate should look at this more closely.
- Senator Ziurys said an example of this is Wolfgang Fink, which is terrible, but things have also happened to other people that need to be brought out. If there is a committee set up to look at this, maybe it will give more visibility, and it can help in putting a stop to it.
- Chair Hudson stated her thanks for Senator Ziurys comments and said she has tried to emphasize this in her conversations with the President. That while he has made some good inroads in addressing some of these issues at the Vice-Presidential Level, this also extends to the Provost level and down into several colleges, if not all. Institutional integrity needs to be restored, as well as financial health.

6. **ACTION ITEM: CONSENT AGENDA – Co-chairs of the Graduate Council, Philip Waddell and Sanlyn Buxner – Proposal MS in AI for Business, Proposal MEd in School Counseling, Proposal PSM in Resilience Practice post GPERC [00:25:07]**

Chair Hudson moved [Motion 2024/25-14], [Motion 2024/25-15], [Motion 2024/25-16] to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion was seconded. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

7. **ACTION ITEM: NON-CONSENT AGENDA – Co-chairs of the Undergraduate Council, Joost van Haren and Lisa Rezende – Undergraduate transfer credit policies: proposal and benchmarking [01:07:15]**

Vice Chair Hymel stated there were concerns that there might be interest in discussion over the undergraduate transfer credit policies.

Joost Van Haren, Interim Chair and UGC Representative [00:26:27]

Hello. I am Joost Van Haren, and I represent the UGC and I am also the Interim Chair right now, together with Lisa Rezende. I also Chair the Curriculum and Policy subcommittee where this comes out of.

The transfer credit policy modifications stem from the Arizona community colleges now offering Bachelor's degrees and upper-division courses. This Summer, ABOR removed the system-wide sixty-four-unit transfer credit limit for credits from the Arizona community colleges.

Previously, there were certain academic programs that were approved by the University of Arizona and ABOR to accept more than 64 credit units transferred. This means students can take classes beyond their second year at Arizona community colleges, and they should be treated as students transferring from four-year institutions, needing at least 30 units in residence at UA. 18 of which must be upper division at the UA, to earn a University of Arizona degree. This, along with a 42-unit upper division requirement that remains unchanged.

Removing this restriction from UA policy will improve equity and keep the university competitive with its peer institutions. When the UGC Curriculum and Policy Subcommittee, the Transfer Credit Articulation Office, and the Registrar's Office started looking at the UA transfer credit policies, we noticed that there were six policies on the book, which are not easy to navigate for students and their advisors. In the policy linked to your agenda, four policies were combined into one, two separate policies are proposed to be eliminated. The one that I mentioned before, the credits from community colleges and the averaging of grades for final non-university credit courses. It is no longer necessary with a previous update to the units in the residence policy, and the increase of Arizona online options for students who need to complete their final course.

The new policy passed the full UGC committee unanimously, after lengthy discussions that mainly focused on the foundations for second language requirements. That policy would allow students to satisfy this requirement with transfer credit.

The main issues that were brought up are the need for language proficiency of student's capacity to conduct international research, their cultural competency, and humility. From the perspective of the University of Arizona, as a Hispanic serving institution, should enhance the cultural competency and linguistic diversity. With that, it also includes increases diversity and inclusion efforts. Taking the second language requirement at the community college, to some departments, is ideal. They brought this up because it leaves the University with upper division courses which can be positive. Though, some worried that weaving the 16 extra units from a bachelor's degree would potentially leave room for general electives to be transferred and not address the required rigor. The last concern is not necessarily a general education concern, and as such, departments and colleges can make sure that their requirements are still being met with students transferring credit.

In summary, these are all valid concerns, however, within UGC, we decided that we should not hold up this policy change that improves equity in application of transfer credit, especially in Arizona community college students. Also, especially in light of the current Provost working group that is looking at how we are dealing with second language requirements, whether that needs to remain a foundations issue or not. There is likely going to be a change depending on how that working group is going to do its recommendations. With that, we decided we should not hold it up right now, but this is something that we will revisit probably in the next year when those recommendations come in.

Comments and Questions [00:31:17]

- Chair Hudson stated she has a practical question, which regards the second language learning instructors and program directors and what kind of impact would be felt on those programs or departments. She asked if there are metrics regarding enrollment, student credit hours, or anything tangible that came up in the course of this discussion.
- UGC Co-chair, Van Haren stated there was one thing that came up which the Registrar's office looked at and it concerned how many students would bring in more credit hours. For the entire University, this is about 1,000 students each year. This can potentially create impacts but he doesn't know for certain. The individual who would ask if Alex Underwood or Greg Heileman.
- SPBAC Co-chair, Greg Heileman stated about 1,700 students each year come to UA as transfer students from community colleges. If they have completed AGECE (The Arizona General Education Curriculum), ABOR says they completed Gen Ed and don't have to complete it at UA. The number that has completed AGECE of that group is probably a good chunk of them, probably most, if not all.
- Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Greg Heileman stated he is unsure how many students would've come to the UA without having the second language fulfilled. There is a large chunk of students doing these requirements at the community college anyways, and he suspects this will be minor.
- UGC Co-chair, Van Haren stated the discrepancy between his and Heileman's number is that his is the number of students who are bringing in more credits, not all transfer students.
- Senator Downing stated his thanks for the good work on this and asked since the enrollment cliff has been noticed

by everyone, has anyone in UGC witnessed trends towards transfer students increasing or decreasing.

- UGC Co-chair, Van Haren stated this is not a question he can answer.
- Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Greg Heileman stated the transfer student number has been pretty consistent for the last ten years and hasn't changed much.
- Executive Director of General Education, Miller-Cochran stated Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Heilemann responded and offered a great deal of helpful information about why this change has been recommended, but she wanted to speak as the Executive Director of General Education.
- Executive Director of General Education, Miller-Cochran stated one of the things her and Heileman looked at was the discrepancy between the policies which were on their own website. There was one page that said if AGEC was completed, all general education requirements were completed but on a different page, it told students that they need to complete the second language requirement for AGEC to be completed.
- Executive Director of General Education, Miller-Cochran stated this discrepancy was very concerning, especially since it goes against the intention of AGEC and why that has been supported by AZ Transfer and ABOR, which is to help students who have completed their general education curriculum at their community colleges to transfer into universities. This is one of the reasons for the recommendation.

Chair Hudson moved [**Motion 2024/25-17**] to approve the Timeline, Current Priorities, and Upcoming Issues in General Education. Motion was seconded. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

8. **OLD BUSINESS [00:36:36]**

A. **Update and slide presentation from the ad hoc Committee on Campus Climate – Chair, Matthew Abraham [00:36:58]**

At the November 4th meeting, I mentioned that the climate survey distributed back in February sought to learn about how comfortable faculty are to complain about conditions in the University, as well as their levels of confidence in various offices on campus to investigate allegations of discrimination and harassment and to ensure the protection of whistleblowers. Other questions inquired about the University's possible monitoring of faculty and student email communications. Just with respect to feeling comfortable to complain about conditions in the University (Question 25), over 180 respondents indicated that they did not feel comfortable complaining, while 160 indicated that they did.

In the context of my remarks last month, I specifically focused on how University of Arizona employees do not receive the protections of Arizona Revised Statute 38-532, which prohibits those in a supervisory role from retaliating against whistleblowers "for a disclosure of information of a matter of public concern by the employee to a public body that the employee reasonably believes evidences a violation of law, mismanagement (gross waste of monies or an abuse of authority). Employees of state universities are exempt from these protections because of A.R.S 38-533, which states: This article does not apply to an employee or former employee of a state university or the board of regents which has in effect at the time a personnel action is taken against the employee a rule or provision for the protection of its employees from reprisal for disclosure of information to a public body, except that the employee or former employee may appeal the administrative decision to the Superior Court as provided in Chapter 12.

For some reason, the language of ARS 38-532 is part of ABOR policy 6-914, which specifies when a university employee may file a whistle-blower complaint, with whom it can be filed, and the responsibilities of those who receive a whistleblower complaint. As the policy states, a university employee may report "**a violation of any law; mismanagement; gross waste or misappropriation of public funds; a substantial and specific danger to public health and safety; or an abuse of authority.**" As I noted, it has become practice within the University to route whistleblower complaints through the Provost's Office, although the Provost is only one of several University officers that can receive such a complaint according to the text of 6-914. These other officers include the University president, a vice president, vice provost, college dean, or non-academic department director. In addition, ABOR 6-914 lists the following as "public bodies," to which whistleblower complaints may be sent: **the Arizona Attorney General, the Arizona State Legislature, a federal, state, or local regulatory or law enforcement agency; the local county attorney; and the Arizona Governor's Office.** If the University has formally designated the Provost's office as the sole office for receiving whistle-blower complaints that is problematic given the precise language within 6-914 (the policy itself is twelve-pages long)—it clearly designates many different officials and public bodies as being proper recipients for a complaint. The purpose of 6-914 is to "prohibit supervisory personnel from taking adverse personnel action against an employee, or failing to take an otherwise appropriate action, as a result, of the employee's good faith disclosure of alleged wrongful conduct to a public body or to a designated university officer on a matter of public concern."

You have committee's the report and the slides, so I'll mention that Question 4 attempts to get at the issue of the discrepancy between ABOR and University policies and procedures for protecting whistleblowers. Approximately 170 respondents indicated that the policies were either extremely unclear or somewhat unclear, while nearly 120 respondents indicated the policies were "neither clear nor unclear." I think it's important to look at the results for this question and pair

it with question 26 (slide 16), where faculty were asked how confident respondents were in the administration's ability to investigate faculty complaints. Over 240 respondents reported that they were extremely skeptical or somewhat skeptical, while about 50 respondents were extremely confident or somewhat confident.

The survey asked faculty about their interactions with and levels of confidence in specific offices, such as the President's Office and the Office of the General Counsel. The question about confidence in the administration is now a bit dated since there has been a change in presidential leadership. However, question 27 (slide 17) does point to a concerning lack of trust in the administration given various controversies that have enveloped the campus over the last five years. While faculty generally have had positive interactions with the Office of the General Counsel, concerns were expressed in responses to question 30 about how faculty must obtain a supervisor's formal approval before receiving legal advice from the OGC staff. A supervisor in this context would be, for example, a department head, associate dean, or dean. This appears to be a result of the OGC's attorney-client relationship with ABOR, apparently necessitating that the OGC only issue legal advice to administrators, who then pass this advice along with their own interpretation to faculty. As noted in the report, this could be a problem if the supervisor's behavior is part of the reason the faculty member sought out the OGC's advice.

Of course, the importance of the University producing public records through the Public Records Office cannot be underestimated. While the climate survey did not include any questions about the Public Records Office or its practices, survey respondents in their open-ended commentary did implicate it in producing a climate of institutional distrust. The accurate and timely documentation of the University's business is absolutely crucial to achieving accountability for the public we serve. When the University takes inordinate amounts of time to process requests and then refuses to produce records based on wide-ranging exemptions such as "privacy of persons," "chilling effect," and "best interests of the state," one begins to wonder if the real goal of the PR Office is to undermine the presumption toward disclosure of public records, which is at the heart of Arizona Revised Statute 39-121, et. seq. (the AZ public records law). The University's recent move to charge requestors for so-called "personnel time" to search for and produce non-commercial records is not consistent with the applicable statutory requirements. I doubt I'm the only person who believes that when the public records production process breaks down it can lead to an erosion of confidence, especially as questions loom about why records are actually being withheld. The Faculty Senate Chair may wish to convene a separate ad hoc committee to produce a report about the specific practices of the PR office.

Comments and Questions [00:45:44]

- Senator Downing stated this is a great report and he would like to add context. If one were to go to the ABOR manual, there is a legislative intent listed by ABOR. Among those is important, is that it says ABOR opposes eliminating or substantially altering the board's exemptions from state rulemaking, which means every other agency in the state must follow the rulemaking, but they are out of that. They're exempt from personal laws and rules, and other one which has him puzzled is that the University system is exempt from procurement.
- Senator Downing stated he would like someone to explain why the University doesn't have to follow open bidding laws that are followed by the rest of the state. He got in trouble for saying that and was disciplined by the University, but he said it in Senate.
- Senator Diaz stated if 50% of the respondents were not confident in the anonymity of some of these processes, what would Dr. Abraham speculate about those people that did not participate in the survey. It seems that 50% is a lot and can state it is much harder than that.
- Chair of the *ad hoc* Committee on Campus Climate, Abraham stated it is difficult to speculate why people don't participate in a survey but the percentage of faculty who did participate was about 10 to 12 percent. This is similar to the turnout of other requests for faculty participation. This ponders the questions of whether this is low morale, if faculty don't believe their response will be anonymized enough, or protected, although it is hard to say.
- Senator Keith Maggert stated the report gives clues that the University is a fragmented community. When one, for instance, files a Freedom of Information request and it is denied on ridiculous grounds like best interest of the state, or personal information, when it is not personal, there is no sense of the scope with which those excuses are being used.
- Senator Maggert stated it seems that the Senate or another organization can accumulate such instances, or request information of how often they happen. He suspects that most open records requests end with failure on those grounds. He has one or two examples that he knows from his colleagues.
- Chair of the *ad hoc* Committee on Campus Climate, Abraham stated he can speak for hours about public records laws in Arizona, but he does agree that crowdsourcing responses from the public records office would be very useful.
- Senator M. Witte stated the survey is a reflection that free speech on the campus is either a whisper, other than executive session where speech comes out, or it is an echo chamber for the administration. Something must be done about it as it is a major issue on campus.
- Vice Chair Hymel thanked Dr. Abraham for his report and said it is very clear that more work needs to be done.

B. [Resolution](#) Involving Speech: Rights and Responsibilities, Chair of the Faculty, Leila Hudson [00:51:29]

After several months of discussion and study, in which I have taken up precious moments of the Senate's time extending

this resolution, I would like to bring this resolution to the floor for a vote. I'll just say by way of explanation, this is a symbolic resolution. I know there are fears that it can be weaponized. Although, as we enter unchartered territories with the potential of turbulence, both domestic, and continue the international and even planetary scale, I think it is important to clarify the Senate's position on free speech, but also on behavior that harasses people based on their identity. I will read it once more, you all have had a chance to look at it, I'd like to have a discussion and hopefully bring it to a vote within our 10-minute allotted time.

I should add that in comparison to my previous versions, I added the phrase, "anti-Jewish" to the list of included, but not limited to forms of bigotry. This was graciously edited by Senator Joel Smith and benefits from his conciseness.

"The Faculty Senate of the University of Arizona is dedicated to nonviolently combatting all forms of identity-based targeting, harassment, intimidation, supremacism, and discrimination on our campus, specifically including but not limited to antisemitic, anti-Jewish, Islamophobic, and anti-Palestinian threats, silencing, incitement to violence, or breach of the peace.

Simultaneously, the Faculty Senate emphasizes and reaffirms that the exercise of Constitutionally protected First Amendment rights to freedom from/of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, and freedom to petition shall not be infringed upon by our public state institution or its agents.

The Faculty Senate endorses the principle that the solution to disagreement is more speech, not less, and the Faculty Senate encourages a culture of vibrant civil discourse and lively debate."

Chair Hudson moved **[Motion 2024/25-18]** to approve the Resolution Involving Speech: Rights and Responsibilities. Motion was seconded.

Comments and Questions [00:54:03]

- Senator M. Witte said this is now the third time this resolution has been brought to the floor, as the minutes reflect. As far as she can see, there has been no supportive discussion, but critical discussion mainly about the first part of the resolution. The Senate is not an investigative body, it cannot determine whether an accusation of hate speech is correct or not, that is for other faculty bodies.
- Senator M. Witte stated the administration already has a policy. To her knowledge, faculties around the country have been very careful not to be weaponized related to hate speech and hate behavior. The word behavior is put in harassment.
- Senator M. Witte stated the Senate is not in the position to condemn something that can be investigated, that is being weaponized, when there is already a policy. It would be a big mistake to do this. At the Columbia's campus, she mentioned they had two professors suspended by the administration, one for anti-Semitism, and one for pro-Semitism. The faculty took no part in this, and faculties have to be careful not to become involved in this particular discussion.
- Senator M. Witte stated she believes it is a big mistake and contradictory in a way to have a hate speech preamble, and then to say the Senate would like to protect all speech and so on. This is a contradictory resolution that is perverse to free speech. All of the testimony heard from Senator Ziurys, Senator Downing, and the survey says there needs to be time to defend free speech in many forms and not sit there and have a specific identity speech.
- Senator M. Witte stated there is plenty of hateful speech. She has seen it when administrators fire people with no notice, when furloughs are taken for no justified reason, and more. That is hateful action and behavior, and the Senate should not be preoccupied with trying to micro define and determine whether it is true or false. As she mentioned, the Faculty Chair herself was accused of anti-Semitic speech which went all the way up to ABOR. There are witch hunts, and the Senate has to be careful to avoid them.
- Senator Rafelski stated he agrees with Senator M. Witte's comments but thinks in the first section of the document, which expresses the large degree of the sentiment that drives the document, is something that can be voted on, which is as follows: *The Faculty Senate of the University of Arizona is dedicated to nonviolently combatting all forms of identity-based targeting."*
- Senator Rafelski stated the resolution doesn't need to be as specific, but the Senate can join thoughts while being more broad.
- Senator M. Witte stated that is not what she said, and she said the opposite.
- Senator Rafelski stated he sympathizes with this procedure but is also worried, which he has expressed in writing. This is a very sensitive issue that should perhaps be further discussed by a committee since there are so many complications and different views, and he can't find his own position.
- Senator Eckert stated based on what was just heard from Dr. Abraham regarding fear of retaliation and how faculty are siloed on campus, if the Senate is not willing to speak out and make a statement that is non-binding about freedom of speech, and hate speech, how can the Senate expect other faculty members around campus to feel that the Senate is united as a body, and can allow them to feel they can speak out. She would argue this is a meaningful statement.
- Senator Ziurys stated that free speech is important and would support the second two paragraphs on reasons

discussed by Senator M. Witte. She believes the first paragraph is not necessary and freedom of speech should be focused on in general.

- Senator Cochran stated he will echo his statements from a couple months ago, he does affirm this statement. He believes it is a courageous statement that needs to be put forward as a Senate, echoing some of the comments that have been made by the last two speakers.
- Senator R. Witte stated the first paragraph doesn't go far enough in the sense that he is against all harmful speech. To separate and identify the type of speech the Senate wants to focus on raises a question.
- Senator R. Witte stated this has become more about the First Amendment when you look at the first three paragraphs together, but the fourth paragraph missing is related to censorship. He believes that one of the greatest problems in free speech is that individuals aren't allowed to say what they want and are not given access to information. There are search engines extremely biased, published in the PMAS. This requires much larger discussion about the First Amendment.
- Senator R. Witte stated he would like to table the motion and allow this to go to a vote because this is not in any way, shape or form, based on what he has heard, in the place where it should go to a vote.
- Senator R. Witte moved **Motion 2024/25-19]** to table the Resolution Involving Speech: Rights and Responsibilities until such time as the Senate votes to bring this back to the agenda. Motion was seconded. Motion passed with thirty-one in favor, twenty-one opposed, and no abstentions.
- Chair Hudson stated she would like to thank everyone to their extremely thoughtful contributions about what it means when a position like this is taken. She thinks all of the comments are very valuable and fall under the important category of more speech, not less.
- Chair Hudson stated as was noted in the comments, this was designed to be a symbolic statement of the Senate's values and is non-binding. The Senate does not have the power to enforce many of the things it would like to, and sometimes that is a blessing in disguise.
- Chair Hudson stated the first paragraph that many would like to eliminate is especially important given the emergent, domestic, political culture that will be navigated together, which may be from all indications, more openly indulgent of various forms of hateful rhetoric. It is certainly exacerbated by the current global situation on which she is more expert in her knowledge, that pits people against one another in highly volatile, sensitive, and potentially genocidal situations. This potentially exacerbates local sentiments of identity and passion.
- Chair Hudson stated if the table failed, she would like to put this before everyone again as a symbolic expression of values, the way they are projected for students, the community, and the larger world around us. Ironically to Senator M. Witte, the purpose is to avoid the travails of Columbia University and other universities that have left very unhelpful ambiguity on this question she seeks to ask this measure.
- Senator Ziurys stated she can understand Chair Hudson's perspective but if one is talking about people being discriminated against, but the first paragraph must be crafted better as it is too specific to certain groups and needs to be more inclusive of people like women and those who are gay.
- Senator R. Witte raised a point of order and stated there is a motion on the floor to table the resolution, therefore, discussion should be about tabling.
- Parliamentarian Stegeman asked Senator R. Witte for clarity with the intent of his motion and whether this means Senate would place this back on the agenda, or if the Senate Executive Committee can add this or a similar resolution to a future agenda at their discretion.
- Senator R. Witte stated the intent of his motion is for indefinite tabling.
- Parliamentarian Stegeman asked if the table were to pass, would the Senate have to act to place this item back on the agenda.
- Senator R. Witte confirmed yes, that is the intent of the motion.
- Senator M. Witte asked that this be a secret ballot because it is known that individuals cannot express themselves how they would like due to potential ramifications.
- Senator Cochran asked for clarification on what Parliamentarian Stegeman asked, it sounded like Senator R. Witte said it was an indefinite table, but also said it is not.
- Senator R. Witte stated it is an indefinite table, and the item must be brought back by the Senate.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated the Senate is voting on whether to table the issue until and unless the Senate brings it back as an agenda item. To table the motion, a majority vote is needed.
- Senator M. Witte stated she would like to provide clarification that when the Senate tables a motion, it doesn't mean a part of the resolution cannot be brought back. For instance, the free speech element.
- Senator Maggert raised a point of order and stated his understanding of the bylaws is that the Senate Agenda is set by the Senate Executive Committee, not the full Senate. He asked how this can be destined for the agenda, yet not set by the Senate, it seems to go against the bylaws.
- Parliamentarian Stegeman stated that it is a great point and grey area, he is relying on Robert's Rules and general guidance on the fact that the Senate must always approve its agenda at the start of the meeting. He believes it is appropriate to state that the Senate does not want this on the agenda until it votes specifically to add it back.
- Parliamentarian Stegeman stated the executive committee can agendaize the vote to put something back on the agenda. He acknowledges that this is a grey area where there is tension with the bylaws, it is up to the Chair to overrule his opinion on this as he has no formal authority.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated that even though the Senate Executive Committee, it is the Senate that votes on the final

agenda.

- Senator Fink asked the Parliamentarian if it is true that the Senate can easily amend the agenda before the meeting has started, as long as there is a simple majority, and if it happens later in the meeting, a two-thirds majority vote would suffice. Perhaps the area is not so grey.
- Parliamentarian Stegeman stated his advice is that it is appropriate to add into the motion that the Senate must bring this back, but he is also noting that this is an arguable point, and the presiding officer can overrule his opinion.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated she is not overruling Parliamentarian Stegeman's opinion.
- Senator Medevoi stated he assumes the Senate would have to vote to add this back to the agenda but asked if would be possible for someone to make a motion to un-table this proposition, and have the Senate vote to put it back on the agenda. In other words, the Senate Executive Committee can add a motion to un-table the proposition on the agenda, rather than putting the resolution itself back on the agenda.
- Parliamentarian Stegeman stated yes, this is within the Senate Executive Committee's prerogative.
- Secretary Zeiders stated there cannot be OpaVote and paper ballots as this would create a large mess, and you wouldn't be able to see who is online versus in-person. Her recommendation is that everyone uses OpaVote.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated this can be managed.

C. IT Centralization Data Request – Chair of the Faculty, Leila Hudson and Senator Lucy Ziurys [01:14:26]

Chair of the Faculty, Leila Hudson [01:15:13]

On IT Centralization, Senator Ziurys and I had intended to bring a resolution here today, asking President Garimella to engage with the ad hoc faculty Committee on Information Technology's excellent report from last year. We will attach this report to the minutes and provide it back to the Senator's listserv to specify precisely what our IT centralization goals are, the timeline, methods, metrics (both financial and functional), so that we can evaluate our progress towards IT centralization goals.

We also wanted a comparison of peer institutions, organizations, and faculty governance mechanisms on Information Technology, and even possibly a peer review of our information technology governance structures. But with Vice President Barry Brummund's well-deserved retirement, and the transition that will follow, I think we need a more sustained engagement with the Information Technology Committee. I will forward you all the 68-page Information Technology Committee Report from last year, and I will also forward it to the President. We will pick up this matter of advancing our information technology projects in the new year.

Senator Ziurys [01:16:51]

Thank you, Leila. I would also like to point out the big question as to whether IT Centralization is necessary or is it just a burden on the faculty, students, and staff. Furthermore, I think we need to have clarity and transparency in all these IT changes that are occurring. This should not be an exercise in removing resources from the departments, which it seemingly is.

We've experienced a lot of run around on this issue, way back when we were first told by the administration that IT centralization was mandated by the Arizona Auditor General for, "security reasons." We got the Auditor General's report and centralization was never mentioned in the report. The report pointed out deficiencies and how upper IT management handled the security issues. The Senate members wrote a report, we brought it to the Senate, and our report was subsequently ignored by the administration. Then, suddenly, the Auditor General report sort of disappeared. Then we were told that IT Centralization had to occur because it would save money, and again, the whole thing was debunked.

Now, it seems to me that the real reason behind IT centralization was to hire more high-paid administrators, which is what Barry Brummund has proposed who knows that will happen at the expense of getting rid of the skilled and knowledgeable IT Staff that are doing all of the work. By doing that, we would reduce the overall efficiency in solving IT problems and add their further burden and pain to the faculty and staff. We'll see whether these administrator positions actually get fulfilled, but IT committee should look at that very carefully.

Now, a step has been taken in the right direction by our new President to solve all this IT baloney, but many additional problems, and trenches are needed. We do hope to work with President Garimella in the future, in developing and implementing a new IT policy, and not necessarily centralization, that is based on efficiency and common sense.

Comments and Questions [01:19:33]

- Senator Rafelski stated to the best of his knowledge, centralization is in progress, and Senators must do something to stop it as there are obvious conversations. He knows of support members within his department that are being transferred to the IT office, and he doesn't believe they want to do this, nor does he believe the department wants them to go. He thinks there should be a vote in the Senate to stop this and ask for a break in the process while this discussion occurs.
- Senator Fink stated there was already a vote in the Senate to put a stop to the centralization last year.
- Chair Hudson stated the IT Committee's excellent is endorsed which points out the points at which centralization is

a good idea, and points where there is not. There is more information needed, and in the meantime, she would be happy to work with Senator Rafelski to produce a resolution for January.

- Chair Hudson stated the intent of the resolution that Senator Ziurys and she had was to ask for specific metrics as to what is trying to be accomplished, and how the University knows whether they are accomplishing those goals. Her and Senator Ziurys have agreed to not offer that resolution currently, until there is more clarity about IT leadership.
- Senator Ziurys stated she agrees with Senator Rafelski that something must be done about what she calls, “the racket of centralization,” as it is really hurting the faculty, staff, and students. Brummund proposed there will be three more Vice Presidents for IT work, and in the meantime, they are getting rid of IT workers themselves. Steward Observatory went from 5 IT personnel to 3.5 which is not helping. She is sure other departments and colleges are also hurting.
- Senator Ziurys stated she would like to get the new person in and see what their policy will be, but the Senate should be very active from the beginning. This should be discussed again at the January meeting to see what the lay of the land is.
- Senator Downing stated he believes one has to have a sense of humor, in 2018, four Arizona communities including NAU, ASU, and UA) were audited for security breaches. The three others passed, but UA failed. The Auditor General asked over and over to do something about the security breaches. For four years, the UA got hit, and the Auditor General gave up at that point. Then, someone dreamt up an idea that the President would get awarded about \$100,000 for centralizing. This turned out to be a scam, and lemonade can be made out of anything in this building including the bad Auditor’s report.
- Senator Harris stated she would like to echo what Senator Ziurys stated, that there have been shifting explanations for why centralization is needed at all. As Senator Downing just asked, who is benefiting from this. The edict is coming from ABOR, and the question is why ABOR is so invested in imposing this.
- Senator Harris stated she would like to know more about who would benefit ultimately besides the big pots of money going to the President and CFO for imposing policies that the faculty have been loud and clear about not wanting and have given rational explanations for. She is curious if anyone has information on what companies and regions hold stock in those companies and would benefit from the software and hardware changes coming down the line. She would like further investigation into this.
- Senator Ziurys stated Senator Harris brings a good question to light; she believes there are connections and there will be benefits and maybe the Arizona Board of Regents should be renamed the Arizona Board of Bonuses as this seems to be one of their main objectives.
- Vice Chair Hymel announced the results of **[Motion 2024/25-19]** to table the Resolution Involving Speech: Rights and Responsibilities until such time as the Senate votes to bring this back to the agenda. Motion was seconded. Motion passed with thirty-one in favor, twenty-one opposed, and no abstentions.

9. **NEW BUSINESS [01:26:55]**

A. Faculty Workload Discussion – Secretary of the Faculty, Katie Zeiders [01:27:15]

Hi everyone. I am sorry I couldn’t be there in person today. I wanted to follow-up on a few things related to workload and some new information we’ve received from the university. I’ve invited Dr. Gary Rhoades to speak with me—as many of you know, Gary led the General Faculty Recalibration Committee last year. Before I have Gary speak, I want to talk briefly about UA data that was released that shows our current headcounts and expenditures for Q1 of this fiscal year and shows changes from last year and the previous. The document will be put in the chat, and I believe there are printed copies on the tables in person.

Here are what the data show: in the first quarter of FY25 (so that is from this July to Sept), we have reduced our spending on faculty by almost 4 million dollars (as compared to last year) and reduced our spending on staff by \$3 million. We’ve also spent 1.3 million less on graduate students in the past year. And the only class of employees we spent more on are administrators. We increased expenditures on administrators by 1.6 million.

Said differently, to fix the financial mismanagement crisis in the last year: our top leadership decided to cut faculty expenditures by 5%, staff by 3% and graduate assistant support by 19%, but increase administrators’ expenditures by 8%.

And if you simply look at headcount and expenditures, you see we are currently spending 2.8 times the amount per person on administrators than faculty. And this wage differential has increased by about 20% over the past 3 years.

I bring this data up because this cutting of faculty, staff and graduate students is something I have been documenting in my qualitative data on workload. I have heard from over 100 faculty in the past semester in every college at our university and they have described that their class sizes have increased, the number of classes they are required to teach has increased, while their support in the classroom has decreased.

And CFO Arnold has once again asked College Deans to prepare budgets (that are due this month) that reflect a 3% and a 5% cut for the next year.

Central Administration frame these data as a “return to stability” and a “recovery”. But cutting faculty, staff, and graduate students but increasing administrators is not recovery. Asking College Deans once again to cut from their budgets and continue to jeopardize the academic mission is not recovery and stability.

We are at a pivotal moment with our new President. And he has assured us that he will protect the academic mission for the success of our students. But these data from last year (which were not under his watch), show he has a lot of work to do to reverse course.

Gary Rhoades, Chair of the General Faculty Financial Recalibration Committee [01:30:56]

I am Gary Rhoades, Chair of the General Faculty Financial Recalibration, which worked last year on analyzing and making recommendations about expenditure and staffing patterns, reporting regularly to the Senate. In Fall 2023 and late Spring 2024, there was meeting with the Central Administration to come up with recommendations about steps to pursue, and the title of the spring report was, “Correcting Course, Protecting the Core, and Targeted, not across the board cuts. This is seemingly still relevant.

My wife has taught me to start with the positive, so as GFFRC recommended, a hopeful sign is that appears to be a central administrative commitment to significantly reduce the overly high level of tuition discounting for merit and out-of-state students, which has been costing the University \$25 to \$40 million a year, for five years. We hope in the committee that as we recommended, the money saved by reducing the tuition discounting will be channeled back into the colleges which have been getting undercompensated by roughly 20% for the student credit hours, precisely because of that tuition discounting and lost revenue. The so-called budget spending has been considerably a function of being undercompensated for our productivity.

Unfortunately, despite some initial positive signs in the spring, the University is backsliding on three other recommendations that we made. Some of those relate to our conversation today. One, prioritize and protect academic units. Two, achieve greater efficiencies and cost reductions to subsidiary units. Three, establish expenditure controls on administrative spending and costs. It is not prioritizing and protecting the academic core to have all academic units preparing for 3-5% cut scenarios. It doesn't mean they will all be cut at exactly that level, but that is the range. It is not strategic when 95% of those over budget spending accounts are from 11 of the 81 units within the institution, which is according to John Arnold's data from last year. That is 14% of the units. It is not protecting the academic core to have fewer faculty, staff, TA's, on top of 10-year decline. Katie was talking about the data this past year, these are 10-year declines in investment in the staff, faculty, and TA's who work face-to-face with the students.

Second, prioritizing the academic core would entail requiring subsidiary units such as athletics and UAGC to do cut scenarios beyond that range of 3-5%. The same range, 3-5% that all support units are being asked to do, that is not prioritizing the academic core. Under the leadership of the new VP and Athletic Director, Desiree Reed-Francois, athletics has apparently increased slightly in revenues and has reduced expenditure by 6%. I'll just not as our committee tracked that 6% deficit in athletics, is one fourth of the overall deficit of athletics in just one year, let alone the accumulated debt over multiple years of over \$100 million. Much more extensive reductions are needed. If academic units are doing 3-5%, athletics should be doing more than 6%. As we suggested, the same with UAGC.

Third, it obviously does not enhance student success or expand research productivity to further expand administrative expenditure, on top of a decade of disproportionate increases, which we tracked last year and shared data with you all, increases in the double and triple digits over the previous decade at both the college and central administrative levels. That is not what students and their parents, the state legislature, or the public want and is calling for. It is not even what John Arnold called for in January when he said, “here is our path forward.” What he said was one of the keys is to reduce administrative costs and to right size Vice President, vice Provost, Associate, Assistance Vice Provosts, and other positions to reduce costs and to centralize functions to reduce costs. As Lucy pointed out, that tune changed after a while.

Now, a couple weeks ago, in a Tucson.com article, CFO Arnold was quoted as saying, “well, what we saw was those Vice Presidents we talked about went away, so there was a reduction in Vice Presidents, but we hired other positions that replace a lot of those.” So it seems like among the tough decisions that we're all being asked to make, apparently the toughest for the folks in the center, is to actually deliver on reducing administrative expenditures. We have seen a reduction in VP positions, and there is a plan to reduce AVP positions. As Katie mapped out, and as CFO Arnold acknowledged, the administrative expenditures have increased in the time of fiscal stress. That is not the fiscal discipline in John Arnold's words that we need, which he has called for in a centralized system where he oversees all hiring. He has failed to implement.

We understand, as was said, that President Garimella has only been here two months. We agree, as was said in an article just a week ago in Tucson.com on November 24th that he did not support moving in unhealthy ways to hit targets for reducing costs, to increase today's cash on hand, which is a five-to-seven-year problem in the making. It is going to take five to seven years to dig out of it. But we would ask the President to consider and recognize that continuing autopilot of 3-5% cuts for academic units is neither prudent nor strategic. It leaves colleges to simply get lower budgets to serve even more students with no scenarios for growth, innovation, or improvement

In contrast to what Ron Marx is doing as an Interim Provost, with reestablishing a provost investment fund, which identifies there are some places we can grow. The question is, why are we not doing the same thing in planning as an institution. I urge you President Garimella, to Bear Down, Bear Down on administrative costs, costs of subsidiary units, and prioritize the academic units, faculty, staff and graduate students whose working conditions, positions, expenditures, and spaces are quite literally spaces in learning and living conditions.

As GFFRC called for, we need to upsize and reinvest in a wrong-sized workforce that would involve, as we recommend, undertaking three-to-five-year plans at the college and central level for how we strengthen and reinvest in faculty, staff, and graduate assistants. Not just say, as was said in the newspaper, there is hiring going on. What is the plan that hiring fits? For all the good work that is taking place, this decremental budgeting is already compromising academic units' capacity to serve our students and to fulfill and realize our full potential in our research and public service missions as well. We're ready to work with the President on doing this, and on correcting this University's course. As Katie said, the problem is not of his making, it is a decade in the making, but we can't continue the current course, or we're going to continue to compromise the work that we all do and this institution we care about. Thank you.

- Secretary Zeiders stated there is no time left on this item, but they are happy to engage in further discussion in January 2025.

B. [Update on Arizona Online Initiatives](#) – Interim Senior Vice President, Gary Packard [01:40:00]

Let me start by thanking Chair Hudson, the Executive Committee, and Senator for allowing me the chance to come and give you an update on what is going on in online initiatives, and what we are doing. I'm going to start with the land acknowledgement because it is important for us to think about this in a couple ways.

"We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service."

I'm currently working with Levi and Tessa on our native initiatives to come up with a second statement for online initiatives to recognize the fact that we serve students across the nation. Our students are not just here in the Tucson regional area, but we are headquarters in Chandler for UAGC, and we have students on every land across this nation. We think we should recognize that diversity of our student body and online and the national impact of this is truly something. We should think about it as a national and international university.

The update I want to share with you is that since I have taken over almost exactly a year ago, we focused on one thing throughout this year, that we're pushing the entire team for, and this is student success. If we look at online initiatives in general, we need to do a better job across both UAGC and Arizona Online in our retention and completion of students in the online enterprise.

We have different projects in Arizona Online. We're working very hard with colleges and our partners to make sure we are improving the numbers for Arizona Online. For UAGC, we have set three very specific goals of retention, completion, and value propositions for our online students that we are working on for the next year or two, until we get these numbers up to where they need to be. That is our primary emphasis.

A couple of other things that are key to note is that we proposed a budget this year that would be \$3 million of positive cash to the cash balance of the University of Arizona. After the first quarter, I am happy to say that we are on track for that, and we will continue to focus on that. I have given the team the guidance that we have to stay on that track and adjust our expenses if the revenue doesn't match. We will cut as we need to, to stay on that target throughout the year.

I can't really give any Department of Education updates. You all know the political landscape as well as I do. I have no clue how to guess what is going to happen over the next several months. Other than that, we will continue work with the legal team and the President's office to try to find the best solution for our university. We will be focused on what we can do, not what we can't do.

We lack a vision for online initiatives. So, I proposed this to the President and the Provost, that we need to have a

vision of how the online enterprise of the University fits into the culture and climate of our University. This is the vision that we have come up with to address the things that align with who we should be as an online enterprise. The big thing I want to focus on is, we don't want to be, in my opinion, a 150,000-student enterprise. That is not our culture. Our culture is quality, completion, and doing things the right way, and that is what we're going to focus on. We're going to do this by rethinking how we do business.

We have two paths. We have the Arizona Online path and the Global Campus path; I call it the flagship campus path here because it is all online and confuses anyone when I talk about it differently under online initiatives. This is where the blue boxes are indicated on the slide. Around that, we need to do better in the orange boxes in the slide which are student support systems. We're working hard to partner those with Arizona online and UGC and those teams are working together to create less confusion for students and better direction to get them into the right program at the right time. Then of course, underneath that is our business operation which has to be sustainable. We have to operate the business in a way that makes sense and brings benefit to the State and University. We're focused heavily on those goals for FY26.

Things we can't do haven't really changed. UAGC is still a separate, accredited entity. Students cannot move across the University without going through the normal transfer process we do with any other University. It means the curriculum has to stay independent. We must have separate accreditation. We must really care about how we market these two because we can't market them as a single unit, as they're not. They're still separately accredited universities until we have a change from the Department of Education. We're highly limited by what we can do with the existing program set at UAGC in terms of adding new programs without the Department of Education approval. There are a lot of restrictions there we must keep track of.

What can we do? A whole bunch of things, work better together, communicate better, find better ways to benefit students that sign up to do online education with the University, whether it's at the Global Campus or Arizona Online. Our focus very squarely is on students and students' success. I look forward to working with the Senate and everyone else at the University to help more students get a UA degree, whether it has the global campus tag on it or not. We benefit students by getting them to those degrees.

Comments and Questions [01:46:59]

- Secretary Zeiders thanked Interim SVP Packard for doing the presentation and coming to Senate to discuss UAGC. She asked about military benefits as she is a veteran and believes he is. They are both members of the Air Force and she believes he served much longer than she did. She asked for the percentage of students at the UAGC who veterans are, and in terms of the GI Bill, is UAGC considered for-profit, private institution for these benefits or has this changed.
- Interim SVP Packard stated the percentage for veterans for military students is about 28%, they have both the GI Bill and Tuition Assistance students. The tuition is adjusted to the level of what the GI Bill or Tuition Assistance will pay. Veterans or Military affiliate students are not paying extra out of pocket, and they do get a discount for whatever amount that is for their education.
- Secretary Zeiders stated there is a big distinction on GI benefits on whether the University is private, for-profit, or public. She asked if UAGC is still private, for-profit in terms of GI Bill benefits.
- Interim SVP Packard stated the institutions is still considered private for some cases, and not private for others. He will have to return with an answer regarding where the GI bill has specifically landed on that matter.
- Interim SVP Packard stated for IRS, state purposes, and others, they are considered as part of the University of Arizona. However, for the Department of Education (DOE), and the way they approved UAGC, they have never approved the initial acquisition in 2020. Since they are not approved to operate as not-for-profit, they still must be listed as a Private university under DOE rules. He is pretty sure GI Bill allowed the institution to operate as public, but he will return with confirmation on this question.
- Senator Ziurys stated she is worried about quality control with UAGC's degrees and asked if there is a process that the institutions takes to make sure students are getting a good education.
- Senator Ziurys stated a few years ago, UAGC was carrying out predatory practices according to the brief obtained from the University of California lawsuit against Ashford and Zovio. She asked if these practices have been eliminated and what the checks and balances are that goes into quality control and ensuring students aren't taken advantage of.
- Interim SVP Packard stated regarding quality of education, they are accredited with other national accredited programs. They have a very rigorous, more frequent review cycle of academic programs. There is external consulting on programs. 100% of the programs have been through the Quality Matters certification. There is an extensive amount of work done with outside agencies as well as internal controls to make sure the programs are up to quality.
- Interim SVP Packard stated the Chief Academic Officer, Blake Naughton, is currently working on a process which is to do nuts and bolts across the board to review all programs in preparation for conversations of how they can shift into the University of Arizona, hopefully at some point in the future. The institution is going through an incredibly detailed self-study of every program. This will be made public as soon as it is complete, first it will go to the Provost. He is also looking on getting an external review of that report.

- Interim SVP Packard stated as far as predatory practices, they are not Ashford University, and he can guarantee anyone they do not operate like Ashford University or Zovio, nor engage in the issues that causes the lawsuits in the history of the university.
- Interim SVP Packard stated this is controlled internally through postures where all calls are listened to that go up to enrollment. Specifically, a percentage of calls are listened to and the institutions identifies anyone doing things outside of boundaries of what is in good practice. The University keeps track of numbers and does training around numbers. If these actions are repeated, employees will be removed. Employees have been fired for not meeting standards.
- Interim SVP Packard stated they have a contract with a company called Norton Nourish who do secret shops, and they call in as prospective students, they are anonymous, and they report externally on their satisfaction. At the last shop for the quarter, out of the thousands of students spoken to last quarter, there was one potentially misleading comment. Less than twenty were training opportunities, where for example, a counselor didn't get the answer completely wrong but they didn't do something right or could've done it better. These go into training programs that all enrollment counselors must watch. The institution is very active in ensuring compliance and not doing things of the past.
- Interim SVP Packard stated the staff has been reduced from 300 enrollment counselors to around 170, which ensures better control of who the institution is working with. Additionally, there are no longer incentives to enroll, without the possibility of completion.
- Senator Downing stated he appreciated the challenge Dr. Packard has faced. Regarding the social economic impact, it seems 59% of the students were not retained in the first year and he hopes it will drop.
- Interim SVP Packard said it will drop, and he can be held accountable for it.
- Senator Downing stated those students went through the program, took out loans, or used their own money, and he asked if UAGC can track the social economic impact by looking at how much indebtedness is leftover from students who did not graduate so the negative footprint can be reduced. This also affects the main campus.
- Senator Downing asked if the impact and footprint the institution has on the U.S., especially within minority students who weren't retained and still have the debt.
- Interim SVP Packard stated this is a great point and he doesn't have a definitive answer but agrees with the sentiment. Just the other day, he gave a presentation to a faculty learning conference that was run internally and as part of that he put the number 60 on his slide which represents the number of students that didn't finish. He wanted them to think about what is happening to the student that comes with a promise that they will receive help, then don't make it to the finish line. This group must be thought about more, now that they are in the adult learning market.
- Interim SVP Packard stated there was a study that came out earlier that day regarding the adult learning market. Retention across the nation hovers around 50% or lower on average, in general. They are a hard group of students to keep in school because life happens including having kids, job changes, caring for parents, or money run out. There are things that get in the way of what a traditional student has. There are students where this happens to them, but not at that degree, and they are not responsible for it. There has to be different ways to work with that population to help them succeed, the industry in general needs to do better as the average of 50% is abysmal.
- Interim SVP Packard stated he challenged his team to be the number one leader in retention and completion for adult leaders, He doesn't know the exact number but knows the institution must be better than everyone else in that aspect.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated anyone else who has questions can give them to the Senate and they will be given to Interim SVP Packard.
- Interim SVP Packard said he is willing to come back, meeting with the Senate, or anywhere else he is invited. He would like to get this done, and get it done right.
- Senator Brochin stated Interim SVP Packard mentioned staff reducing from 300 which works for efficiency but also shows a decrease in positions. She noticed that in the data presented by Katie regarding budget, planning, staff members, and faculty members at the UA, it doesn't include UAGC. She asked if Interim SVP Packard can return to discuss whether UAGC and UA online has decreased or increased in both faculty, staff, and administrative positions.
- Interim SVP Packard stated he can return anytime. He apologizes for not getting to the questions presented ahead of time but will send written answers to those. There were questions regarding finances and such ahead of time. He is happy to return with his experts.

10. **Adjournment [01:57:39]**

Vice Chair Hymel adjourned the December 2, 2024, meeting at 5:00 PM.

Katie Zeiders, Secretary of the Faculty
Jasmin Espino, Recording Secretary

Motions of October 7, 2024 Faculty Senate Meeting

[Motion 2024/25-12] to approve the December 2, 2024, Faculty Senate Agenda. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

[Motion 2024/25-13] to approve the minutes for the November 4, 2024, Faculty Senate Meeting. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

[Motion 2024/25-14] to approve seconded motion from Graduate Council, M.S. in AI for Business. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

[Motion 2024/25-15] to approve seconded motion from Graduate Council, MEd in School Counseling. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

[Motion 2024/25-16] to approve seconded motion from Graduate Council, PSM in Resilience Practice post GPERC. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

[Motion 2024/25-17] to approve the Timeline, Current Priorities, and Upcoming Issues in General Education. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

[Motion 2024/25-18] to approve the Resolution Involving Speech: Rights and Responsibilities.

[Motion 2024/25-19] to table the Resolution Involving Speech: Rights and Responsibilities until such time as the Senate votes to bring this back to the agenda. Motion passed with thirty-one in favor, twenty-one opposed, and no abstentions.

Attachments Within the Minutes

1. Page 1, Action Item 2: Approval of the [Agenda](#)
2. Page 1, Action Item 3: Approval of the [minutes November 4, 2024](#)
3. Page 4, Action Item 7: Consent Agenda
 - a. [Proposal MS in AI for Business](#)
 - b. [Proposal MEd in School Counseling](#)
 - c. [Proposal PSM in Resilience Practice post GPERC](#)
4. Page 4, Action Item 8: Non-consent agenda: [Undergraduate transfer credit policies: proposal and benchmarking](#)
5. Page 6 & 7 Old Business Item 9:
 - a. [Update](#) and [slide presentation](#) from the *ad hoc* Committee on Campus Climate (Page 6)
 - b. [Resolution](#) Involving Speech: Rights and Responsibilities (Page 7)
6. Page 13, New Business Item B: [Update on Arizona Online Initiatives](#)
7. Written reports from the
 - a. [SAPC](#)
 - b. [Constitution and Bylaws Committee](#)

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