

REPORT TO FACULTY SENATE

DATE: November 1, 2021

SUBMITTED BY The Faculty Officers, Jessica Summers, Chair of the Faculty; Melanie Hingle, Vice Chair of the Faculty; Michael Brewer, Secretary of the Faculty
<http://facultygovernance.arizona.edu/>

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Continued work with Senate Parliamentarian, Mark Stegeman, to ensure that all members have opportunities to actively participate in the Senate business meeting and in faculty governance.
- Met with Office of Gen Ed, Chair of UWGEC, Chair of UGC, and the Provost's Office to understand the role of elected and appointed faculty in the Gen Ed Refresh, and related program approval process.
- Convened the Shared Governance Review Committee for the second time in AY 21-22; members approved revisions to the signed Shared Governance Memorandum of Understanding (guiding principles); next meeting will address the implementation plan. Work will continue this AY.
- Convened the Naming Advisory Committee and President Robbins to discuss revisions to procedures surrounding naming requests associated with academic units.
- Added several hundred new General Faculty members to the Census, based on the criteria in the Constitution. Many were emeritus faculty who have been provided that title retroactively many years after retirement. A dozen or so Research professors, who were moved over from Research Scientists, were also added to the general faculty. Their time in service as research scientists was counted toward the criteria, since their positions had not changed – only their titles, due to changes in titling precipitated by UCAP. Most were in CALS, COM-T, and Science.

GOALS

SHORT-TERM:

- Work with administration to ensure continued (and strong) faculty governance of academic program approvals.
- Work with members of the Shared Governance Review Committee, Faculty Senate, President Robbins, Provost Folks, Secretary Dudas, SVPR Cantwell, & CFO Rulney to establish guiding principles and an implementation plan describing how we will collaborate on decisions and direction of the university.
- Revise the membership and mechanisms for populating the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils (and perhaps UWGEC) to include ex officio representation from

Senate and to ensure the selection of representative to the councils from the colleges adhere to the Shared Governance Memorandum of Understanding.

- Support UWGEC in temporary expansion to manage increased workload due to Gen Ed refresh.

LONG-TERM:

- To ensure a continued successful, safe, and healthy return to campus life for all members of the UA community.
- To broaden participation in shared governance to ensure that the University lives up to its values and supports its mission as we move ahead.
- To work with you to do all that we, as a community, can do to save lives, support our most vulnerable community members, and increase faculty participation in all decision-making that affects our lives and the long-term health and well-being of all of us.

To Our Senate Colleagues: We remain grateful to you for your hard work, your input, your ideas and your continued engagement in shared governance. We continue to work to support the work of the University and to ensure the prominence of the Faculty voice.

Contact us: email (Jessica Summers, jsummers@arizona.edu, Melanie Hingle hinglem@arizona.edu, Michael Brewer mbrewer@arizona.edu)

Dear Senators:

Some thoughts for moving forward:

Policy and process related to curriculum: it is important to review and remind senate of actions and votes taken at recent meetings, particularly as it relates to ongoing programmatic and curricular decisions that affect the entire campus. It is also important to remember that by the time senate acts on these types of issues, hundreds of eyes have read, revised, recommended, and decided on what was the best course of action for students who will inevitably enroll in these courses. When programs are “approved,” what senate sees is the product of hours, weeks, and months of scrutiny by faculty who have volunteered to do this work. In other words, the information senate is seeing for the first time has already been vetted and voted on by faculty who are willing to do the work necessary to approve programs before they reach senate. It is appropriate for senators to ask questions, raise issues, and scrutinize possible problems that arise from examination of the materials presented to senate. However, it is not appropriate to question the legitimacy of the work done by your colleagues on curriculum committees because of their rank, status, or qualifications to do this work. If you think faculty on curriculum committees are not representative of your particular college, this should be raised at your college faculty council meetings. The faculty officers have asked several senators to be part of a pilot program that puts senators at regular curricular committee meetings (including UWGEC) so they can appreciate, support, and offer feedback on the work conducted by these groups, but many people have had to decline because they are busy – we understand that being a senator in addition to your other responsibilities is time consuming, but we need to have better pathways of support between

senate and curriculum committees. Perhaps you have some better ideas. Last semester, the chair of UGC quit his position (and chose not to return as a senator) because there was a disconnect between the the enormous amount of work the committee put into their reviews, recommendations, and decisions, and the faculty senate's perception that programs were being pushed through by administrators. We need to do a better job of understanding and appreciating the work that curriculum committees have taken on for the sake of the students who will eventually enroll in these programs. Student-centered learning and success should be at the center of any concerns we raise about curriculum, but we are moving away from these kinds of discussions in senate. If more transparency is needed with regards to process, please ask for more information before assuming that decisions were made in the absence of faculty consultation or conducted with duplicitous intent.

Voting on issues with adequate preparation: We are excited to have Dr. Mark Stegman serve as our new parliamentarian, and we have clearly made some major changes to our parliamentary procedure based on his knowledge and insight of Roberts' Rules. As we are getting used to these guidelines, it would be extremely helpful if senators come prepared to meetings by familiarizing themselves with the agenda and related materials in advance so we can focus on the business at hand, and similarly we as that you help prepare fellow senators for any new items you wish to raise during the meeting by submitting appropriate materials for consideration. It is difficult to vote on new motions without having any context, materials, or documentation to make decisions – this is why we held a special meeting on the recent naming decision, because senate needed more information to make an informed decision. Similarly, senators should be prepared with documentation in advance of the meeting (if possible) so that votes are taken with the utmost understanding and confidence of process.

Interaction during Senate Meetings: As of late, the debate about certain issues has been very engaged, and as you might have noticed, some senators are more engaged than others. As a reminder, we have over 60 voting members of senate who each have opinions, ideas, and a voice. If this were a classroom, I would encourage students who do not currently engage with their voice to find ways to register their opinions and ideas, because when individuals tell me that they are uncomfortable raising an issue because of strong voices in the room, we (everyone in the room) are responsible for ensuring inclusion. As it is with senate, it is your job to LISTEN just as much as it is for your voice to be heard.

I appreciate your service. Thanks for all that you do!!!
~Jessica