

The University of Arizona®
Faculty Senate Executive Committee
1216 E. Mabel St. (PO Box 210456)
621.1342
facultycenter@email.arizona.edu

Minutes: August 30, 2021

3:00-5:00 p.m.

VIA ZOOM

<https://arizona.zoom.us/j/9503583576>

Present: M Brewer (Acting Chair), M Bolger, B Brummund, C Casey, J Curry, J Dudas, T Dysart, W Fink, L Folks, P Gordon, R Hammer, S Helm, M Hymel, J Lawrence, W Neumann, D Ohala, S Sen, M Stegeman (Parliamentarian), J Summers, and R Tsosie

Absent: M Hingle (Chair)

Guest: J Frumkin, IT Liaison

Call to Order

M Brewer, acting in Chair Hingle's absence, called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. Committee members introduced themselves.

Approval of the Minutes of April 19, 2021

The minutes of April 19, 2021 were approved with one correction and one abstention.

UPDATES

President's Office – Secretary of the University, Jon Dudas

Dudas reported that ABOR is working with President Robbins on University-wide one and three-year compensation goals. The Universities are seeing an increase in Regent involvement in matters that were traditionally handled within the Universities, i.e. TRIF dollars, which have been traditionally split 40/40/20 on research between the three in-state Universities. The Regents are trying to oversee and identify where those dollars will be best spent. The three Presidents drafted a letter informing the Regents that this is a poor idea and that the money should be given to the Universities without interference as to how it is allocated internally. ABOR is now recommending the terms of how the dollars are distributed and not just providing guidance or helping set objectives, as in the past. There are more COVID-related issues on campus than expected in June 2021, when it appeared as if the virus was going to flatline and die down. The Delta variant has brought massive change. UArizona, including College of Public Health faculty members, has been working closely with the State of Arizona. UArizona is the only University working with Pima County and the state to adopt lower thresholds for testing. Extensive wastewater testing was done last week, and although not mandatory, is recommended. Sixty-five percent of the Honors Dormitory was tested with no positive cases. UArizona's students have received more vaccinations percentage-wise than the general population, and certainly more for their

age group. Fink asked about the status of the 150-bed dormitory for quarantine students and ICU beds available in Tucson. Folks responded there are three students in isolation. Dudas later noted that number may currently be as low as one. There is an uptick in flu prevalence, as well as Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in young children, so ICU beds are feeling stress, but not due to COVID-19 in particular. Mitigation measures in place can certainly assist with hospital admissions. Senior Vice President Dake reported last Thursday that Banner has 40% of all COVID patients in the state in Banner beds. Friday, a cohort of 750 students were tested and no positive cases were reported. A flattening of the curve is being reported by Senator Gerald from the College of Public Health in his weekly emails. Dudas added that UArizona will have the capacity for up to 300 beds for infected students should the need arise.

Provost – Liesl Folks

Folks reported a remarkably smooth roll out of the start of the semester, despite login protocol problems with the UArizona Wi-Fi network. The team is working 24/7 to resolve that issue, but currently it hasn't been completely resolved. Everyone returning to campus sparked a pre-pandemic Wi-Fi bandwidth issue to surface. A large number of projectors also failed in classrooms due to corrosion from sitting idle during the year of the pandemic. There is continued concern that UArizona is not pushing back on the State about mandates for testing and vaccines, but as State employees, UArizona is bound to follow the rules of the State. A letter came forward from a group of concerned faculty this week about the processes for allowing faculty who have either health concerns about the Delta variant or caregiving situations, and administration is requesting people to work directly with the heads of their units to figure out if there are alterations or modifications to the workload assignment that would make it safer and more comfortable. The letter writers requested an answer to an instructor's request to change modalities due to COVID concerns within forty-eight hours. Folks asserted that this would be impossible to turn around in that period of time. When an individual instructor requests a different modality, the head, chair, or director is then faced with a sequence of changes that need to happen in order to meet the university's commitments to the students. For every faculty concern, the institution receives concerns from families who need their children to be in an in-person learning environment due to academic and mental floundering during the pandemic. The political piece to all of this is the Governor has his eye firmly on the Universities and is unambiguous about his belief that the State requires in-person learning. Units have been successful at managing changes in teaching modality strategies, often without the involvement of Human Resources or Disability Resource Center, but patience is required to allow all dominoes to fall into place. Fink asked if KN-95 masks could be provided in classrooms instead of the flimsy surgical masks. Folks responded that KN-95's are still considered PPE. Because of this, if issued by/to a University employee, an occupational health and safety representative would be required to officially administer the mask for proper fit and usage. Far fewer constraints are involved if individuals purchase said masks from Amazon. Fink asked if it would be useful to advocate to the Legislature for mandating vaccines and mask requirements to ensure ABOR support. Dudas responded no. Fink asked if there would be any provisions for potentially going online after the Thanksgiving break mirroring last academic year. Folks responded that although the answer today is no, the international, national and local data are constantly being monitored for decision-making purposes. Traveling does not appear to be the risk factor it was once thought to be since airlines and airports have effectively and efficiently learned how to operate safely. Arizona also has higher transmission rates than many other places in the country, so travel is unlikely to make a difference. Dysart asked how contact tracing is working. Dysart was notified that one of her students who attended her class tested positive for COVID-19, but her classes are held online. If the scenario was for an in-person class, does that class then move online? Folks responded that five steps need to be followed before any changes are made in modality. Not everyone in a class setting is considered a close contact and, if masked, are considerably

safe from contracting the virus. As far as close contact information, people's perceptions can also differ quite extensively and not all persons are recorded as close contacts. Ohala asked about different teaching modalities since she is hearing from most students that the online modality is preferable to transitioning to in-person classes, which is in opposition to the Governor's orders. Folks responded that the pandemic has brought about modal preferences. Some students would like everything online and live their lives in pajamas, and on the other end, there are students who report that they would be suicidal if they don't get back into the classroom. Student Success and Retention Innovation (SSRI) has done extensive studies on this topic. Students who are privileged and have access to private space to study and have access to good Wi-Fi connections, as well as nurturing parental support, prefer the online modality. The marginalized students are the ones most at risk with an online delivery model, and UArizona has a larger fraction of students from low-income households than many other schools. UArizona is trying to figure out how to serve a very large population that is at risk of dropping out of education and doing harm to themselves because of unattainable resources. The data from SSRI points in this direction, and it's the same data the Governor has and is using for K-12. UArizona has 30,000 students on campus, which is comparable to pre-pandemic enrollment.

IT Update – Barry Brummund

Brummund reported that last Monday morning before the start of the 9:00 a.m. classes, UITS started receiving alerts in the Wi-Fi infrastructure monitoring. At 9:29 a.m., UITS declared a severity one, which signifies major problems in a cluster of Wi-Fi connectivity servers. UITS tends to have fairly solid Wi-Fi support and can usually handle hundreds of thousands of people connecting concurrently at athletic events and the Book Festival, and in fact, normal Monday through Thursday operations serves 100,000 individuals without any issues on any given day. The alerts on the first day of classes at 8:45 a.m. showed usage with approximately 20,000 individuals, which is barely measurable or any number that UITS pays attention to. Severity One means a number one priority for all UITS staff at the University and the problem is dealt with 24/7 until resolved. The team started working in twelve-hour shifts to check on roughly 15,000 different network devices on campus. From Monday through Wednesday evening of last week, fifteen to twenty changes were made to the infrastructure each evening to improve the Wi-Fi sign-in set of servers. During the day, UITS monitored and reset servers. On Wednesday, a logging into bugging was in place to be able to tell which specific line of code in the Wi-Fi authentication program was breaking and showed that it was line 15,049. The process was taking 5500 milliseconds to process, and typically that amount of time is 1000 times longer than expected for that particular step in the process to take. Cisco has asked that UArizona refrain from using the term "bug," but the issue was a problem in Cisco's code. In May of last year, the current version of the code was installed and updates have been performed every ninety days. Once the line of Cisco code could be identified, Cisco fixed the problem almost instantly. UITS runs two versions of hardware, a primary and secondary, in case power goes out or UITS encounters an extreme event. UITS took the secondary hardware and started to rebuild a brand-new Wi-Fi authentication cluster with the new version of Cisco code, which was tested over the weekend. All wireless networks the University supports (dormitories with gaming capability, research, teaching, and guest capability) are still running on the old set of hardware and are still having problems with the old version of code. Faculty, staff, and students are able to successfully connect to UA Wi-Fi, and more than 30,000 have done so today, so there is an intermediate solution in place for UA Wi-Fi, but in the course of doing so, used up the second set of hardware. Over the weekend, there was a massive power failure on the north campus. The generator did not kick on and some equipment was burned out in the process. A trip to Las Vegas to acquire new equipment happened over the weekend to replace power surge equipment. UA Wi-Fi is up and running with all the security features, authentication, and performance as expected, but the other networks have not been fixed. The solution from a UA Wi-Fi perspective is not as redundant and highly available, and is a little riskier than what UITS

typically engages in. The workaround is in place and it is functioning for campus, but the incident has not been completely resolved and is still severe. Brummund shared activity graphs he monitors every fifteen minutes. Frumkin added that UArizona is not the only University that experienced this same issue. Arizona State University, a number of schools in Florida, and Iowa State also had the same problem since all are clients of Cisco.

Vice Chair of the Faculty – Melanie Hingle

Hingle was absent.

Chair of the Faculty – Jessica Summers

Summers stated that during her time allotted on the Faculty Senate agenda she would like to remind Faculty Senators what discussions and policies have been put into place regarding academic freedom versus freedom of speech/expression to start a dialogue of broader discussion over the course of the next year. Summers would like to find out from Faculty Senators what direction they would like to take this discussion. Summers would like to prepare slides outlining current UArizona and ABOR policies.

Secretary of the Faculty – Michael Brewer

Brewer reported that he worked on extensive changes to the Constitution and Bylaws over the summer, after having been approached by the chair of the GCC, the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and the OGC about inconsistencies in the Bylaws and UHAP that have been causing problems in the grievance process. The grievance policy revamp will now require that administrative avenues for resolving grievances in UHAP will need to be exhausted prior to initiating a grievance through the processes outlined in the Faculty Bylaws. Faculty must seek and exhaust administrative remedies (e.g., in their college) prior to filing a grievance with the Faculty Center. APPC will review the changes prior to them coming to Faculty Senate. They have already been reviewed and endorsed by the GCC and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. The University Committee on Ethics and Commitment also requested a Bylaws change increasing membership by three faculty due to an extreme workload the past several years. The General Faculty Census increased by over 100 faculty members this fall. All have been assigned appropriate vote codes so that they will be able to vote in elections.

IT Liaison – Jeremy Frumkin

Frumkin followed up on Brummund's report. The authentication error prohibiting login can be compared to a crack in the dam and where the pressure builds to create a fault. The process is ongoing and UITS is working with Cisco and Microsoft to resolve the issues. The poor supply chain to acquire electronics has not allowed for a quick fix in this instance. As deep dives are made into the root causes of the problem, communication to campus will be forthcoming. Although the campus is up and running, permanent fixes have yet to be made.

SPBAC – Sabrina Helm and Barry Brummund

No report.

University-Wide General Education Committee – Joan Curry

Curry reported that UWGEC is working to help move the new General Education program forward, with an anticipated launch in Spring 2022 with a limited set of classes. Live online quick starts sessions were offered over the summer for people who wanted to revise their courses, and a very long list of proposals have been submitted for the new Gen Ed program. Curry and the committee are working through the list in order to provide timely feedback to the proposers.

Graduate Council – Ron Hammer

Hammer requested three minutes at the Faculty Senate meeting to talk about the Dean's report on admissions for the Graduate School and a recent report on a survey of graduate students regarding financial stress. Dean Carnie will be recommending a minimum stipend to all colleges. Hammer would also like to mention the Associate Dean's report on the 21st Century Master's Project, as well as a couple of disestablishments of programs, a change to persons who study under the GDP, and a new proposal for an alternate way of getting graduate students affiliated with industry getting back into school.

Undergraduate Council – Molly Bolger

Bolger reported that UGC has engaged in its first subcommittee meeting and the first full Council meeting will be held next week. The Curriculum Policies Subcommittee is working on being more proactive this year by working with Curricular Affairs and the Registrar's Office, who helped put together a roadmap of policies for students that may need to be improved upon for the committee's review. The Subcommittee approved a Minor in Environmental and Occupational Health, which will go forward to UGC for approval.

UArizona Staff Council – Jennifer Lawrence

Lawrence reported that the Staff Council's new website is almost ready to launch. A combined budget was proposed marrying the two separate budgets from CSC and APAC, and the Council is still working on the structure of its Officers. The former APAC Bylaws do not address the new structure of the Council. The Council worked with the Trellis Marketing Cloud group over the summer to formalize listserv usage and get access to templates. Trellis will automatically pull data from UAccess to keep the listserv up-to-date, which is a major step forward from the former Sympa listserv platform.

ASUA – Kyle Kline

Kline reported that ASUA is back in the office and the first leadership seminar was held over the weekend before school commenced to onboard new students. All programs and services are in operation and the Director's Council will be held this week. The budget for the next year should be published shortly and students' stipends will be increased to almost minimum wage standards for students who are program directors, for a \$4,500 per student stipend. ASUA Senate will be meeting this Wednesday for the first non-budget meeting. Kline said that each Executive Leader will go through the process of refocusing, reimagining, and reestablishing ASUA's goals for the coming year. Kline's main focus will be Safe Ride and Pride whose struggles have been mainly from being shut down due to the pandemic. As a whole, ASUA Leaders will make sure that student government is fully operational for students, and that it is available for all students' needs on campus.

GPSC – Shilpita Sen

Sen offered a list of resources available at [this link](#).

C11 – Wolfgang Fink

Fink reported that the committee will have its first meeting on Friday, September 3, 2021, at which time goals will be set for the coming academic year.

Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Rebecca Tsosie

Tsosie introduced herself to the committee. Tsosie explained that the committee is new, and is now in its second year of service to the University. Tsosie would like better collaboration with Faculty Senate and welcomes ideas from committee members as to best practices for the committee's involvement with the University community. In the committee's first year, members' goals were to get a feel for the

changes that were made in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion portfolio. Moving forward, Tsosie would like the committee to be more proactive with the faculty sector of DEI because that's what the Faculty Senate is charged with addressing. Tsosie held the title of Vice Provost at Arizona State University and at UArizona, and is in contact with University counterparts across the country. The metrics of faculty inclusion and belonging are not so much displayed in numbers, but in the sense of what it means to belong to the institution, areas in which we can grow as an institution, and create positive opportunities for faculty to collaborate and come together. Tsosie has been in discussions over the summer with professionals who sit on various boards across the country relating to boards' efforts surrounding DEI and faculty, and would like to explore how to better create new and innovative opportunities at UArizona in a positive direction moving forward. Committee member Hingle has been working on community engagement and how to engage external constituent communities of color considering the current political climate. Issues include framing of critical race theory accounts and voting rights discourse, both of which feed into freedom of speech and academic freedom. Tsosie hopes to be positive, forward thinking, and to bring substantive thought, as well as collaborative engagement to resolve many of these issues. Folks stated that the institution, as a whole, needs to take ownership of diversity issues and hold each other accountable at the local level in order to change outcomes. Tsosie responded that with the layers of governance from the Board, to senior leadership, to Deans, to directors, and faculty, a collaborative sharing of aspirations is necessary, but so are possible recommendations and solutions. A transition away from the blame game will go a long way so the campus community feels like everyone is participating together. Folks stated that every search committee needs to be scrutinized at the axes of equity and inclusion at every level.

APPC – Tessa Dysart

Dysart solicited proposals or policies for the committee to review.

SAPC – Co-chairs Diane Ohala and Cheryl Casey

Ohala reported that Casey was on sabbatical last semester and that the committee met after the final Faculty Senate meeting in May 2021. The committee's first meeting is next week. The committee's perpetual problem is that students are not aware of the resources and services available to help them, or they are not sure how to obtain those services. Messaging is important, and Ohala feels that the committee's work this year should be centered around creating pop-up, hard to ignore messages to students at crucial times of the year when they may need more help. Although SSRI has been sending more messages to students, Ohala feels there can be improvement in this area. Ohala asked about the Faculty Senate agenda committee report section being absent and wanted to know if this was a permanent deletion. Faculty Center staff responded that it was removed for this meeting only since most committees are in the process of meeting. Brewer responded that obtaining reports is hit or miss, but encourages those chairs with activities to report to be proactive and send it to Faculty Center staff for inclusion on the agenda. If a chair would like to report briefly on a certain topic, that will be allowed.

RPC – Paul Gordon

No report.

Other business

Summers said that the letter on faculty concerns submitted to leadership was sent without faculty governance involvement, and the Faculty Officers were only copied after the fact with a request for the item to be discussed at this meeting and for the item to be added to the Faculty Senate agenda. Committee members discussed. Folks noted that unit heads have apparently handled most requests within the unit with creative solutions because Human Resources (HR) and the Disability Resource

Center (DRC) have not seen an influx of requests for accommodations. Fink, who was a signatory on the letter, responded that there were some people who tried to get accommodations and exhausted all possibilities with department heads and couldn't get a definitive, workable solution. The letter was routed in urgency and bypassed shared governance to bring it to attention, but was executed in a very polite and professional manner. Fink would like Faculty Senate to discuss further possibilities and streamline and formalize the process for accommodations so that it does not end with department heads. The process is meant to engage HR or DRC if the circumstance is not remedied by the department head. Unfortunately, caregiving is uncharted terrain and there is no legal framework available at the moment. The question is whether or not individuals are actually seeking out HR or DRC, who, if a solution can't be reached, alert a Dean in tandem with the Provost as a next step, which so far, hasn't happened. Dysart mentioned that she doesn't feel a presentation to Faculty Senate is necessary, but thinks the processes should be addressed as a longer conversation. Others agreed. Folks offered a slide presentation that will be linked from the Faculty Senate agenda. Fink stated that many faculty didn't sign the letter due to fear of retaliation, but asked Folks to broaden the discussion to include feasible solutions currently being offered so faculty have that concrete information. Fink cited Folks' memorandum to Deans giving them the power to designate mask and space requirements. Folks responded that the directive was ABOR generated to alleviate signs being displayed across campus, and agrees that approach to designating spaces is inefficient.

Review agenda for the September 13, 2021 Faculty Senate Meeting

Summers suggested allowing the President and Provost sixty minutes for updates and questions and rearranging other items to compensate for a longer discussion. Brewer spoke to the new agenda item, "Approval of the Agenda," explaining that this item will be at the beginning of each agenda in order to better manage time during the Faculty Senate meeting, and to also allow Faculty Senators to know at the onset of the meeting what will be discussed and voted on. If there is "new business" that Faculty Senators wish to place on the agenda, the item will be discussed at the beginning of the meeting and time allotments will be made, if necessary. If time is not available, the item can be placed on the next month's Faculty Senate agenda. Under this new model, if new items are suggested for discussion or action after the Approval of the Minutes, those would require a motion approved by 2/3rd of Senate to be considered. Stegman noted that this approach adheres to Robert's Rules of Order.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Recorded and transcribed by Jane Cherry