

1-13-2021

Faculty Senate Minutes January 2021

UNO Faculty Senate

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**2020-2021 Faculty Senate Minutes
Wednesday, January 13, 2021
Zoom**

Guest Speaker: Dr. Deb Smith-Howell to talk about the strategic plan

I. Official Call to Order at President Ostler 2:13 p.m.

II. The Minutes of November 11, 2020 and December 9, 2020 were approved as submitted.

III. Officers' Reports

A. President's Report: Senator Ostler

1. The Pandemic Recovery Acceleration Model (PRAM) Indices developed by UNMC: <https://www.unmc.edu/healthsecurity/covid-19/PRAM.html> remains a great way to stay informed about various Pandemic related trends. Over the past semester, many of the University's operational/academic decisions have been based on the trends communicated within the PRAM app and we are hoping to expand the use of this tool to communicate with our Students, Staff and Faculty over the next few months, particularly as the vaccines roll out. As of now, several experts suggest another upswing in infections, etc. based on holiday gatherings, and we urge you to be informed so you can answer questions for your students and beyond. There are quite a lot of emails coming in these days about when different factions of our university family can expect to receive vaccinations. There is no definitive word yet, but I will keep you posted as I become informed.
2. Academic Calendar Considerations: The Academic and Curricular Affairs Committee will be sharing the results of a Calendar Survey that gathered dispositions on the possibility of a J-term. Discussions on a unified system-wide calendar have been underway and the system seems to be favoring the possibility of a J-term or equivalent on all campuses. Given the increasing possibility, it is perhaps time for you and your respective departments and colleges to be ready to consider offerings suited for a possible J-term. The data we have collected to date only provides information as to whether faculty believe a J-term is feasible/appropriate. Our survey, combined with a Student Government survey are both suggesting positive responses to this academic calendar addition. Please note that nothing has been decided at this point, but because nothing has been done like this a UNO, AA will be looking for innovative experiential and academic coursework that will help recruit and retain students. We do not have coursework in place nor a clear vision of what we hope to achieve beyond simply offering more courses. I would like all of you to consider how Faculty Senate may contribute to this process if J-term becomes a reality.
3. Chancellor's Search Update: The search for our next Chancellor is underway. I know many of you are curious about the process but one of the primary issues is to ensure anonymity of the applicants so at this point, we are being careful with the process. The updates I can provide at this point are as follows:
 - a. The UNO Chancellor Search officially kicked off on October 22, 2020
 - b. Towards the end of the fall semester, the Search Advisory Committee

in partnership with AGB Search worked diligently to collect feedback through eight listening sessions for students, staff, faculty, donors, community partners, and members of the public.

- c. President Carter added an additional faculty member to the Committee, Dr. Mark Foxall
- d. The Committee adopted the **Leadership Profile**, which is available at: Nebraska.edu/uno-chancellor-search. The Leadership Profile emphasizes ten **Core Leadership Pillars** or absolute “must haves” in our next Chancellor. The Pillars are the foundation on which the Committee will build its assessment and interview questions. The Pillars are:
 - 1. Proven Leader
 - 2. Commitment to the Advancement of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 - 3. Understanding of and/or Experience with a Metropolitan University that Emphasizes Research and Creative Activity
 - 4. Prioritizes Higher Education, Academic and Research Excellence
 - 5. Strategic Thinker
 - 6. Experienced Fundraiser
 - 7. Commitment to Community Engagement
 - 8. Values Student Engagement
 - 9. Student Centered
 - 10. Inclusive Shared Governance
- e. AGB Search is accepting nominations and applications via email at **UNOChancellor@agbsearch.com**. The UNO community is also encouraged to refer potential candidates to our search partners Dr. Sally Mason at sally.mason@agbsearch.com or Dr. Garry Owens at garry.owens@agbsearch.com
- f. We are encouraging applicants to submit their materials by our **target date** of January 29, 2021. Following the target date, the Committee will review application materials

B. Secretary’s Report on EO&A Meeting: Senator Surface

- 1. Deb Smith- Howell reported that at the first session of the Strategic Planning session, there were 190 participants. She was pleased with the groups' interaction, and the informal feedback to the session was positive. Deb will be present at our January Faculty Senate meeting to talk about the action steps and plans.
- 2. Dr. Gold shared that the first shipment of COVID-19 vaccines was shipped to Nebraska, and vaccinations are being given to frontline healthcare workers. He indicates that campus vaccinations may begin at UNO as early as late January to early March. He was very clear that no safety protocols will change following the vaccine.
- 3. Dr. Gold reported that the new University bylaws approved by Faculty Senate had not been approved by the President's Council, University Council, and President Carter. The language is continuing to be reviewed.
- 4. Dr. Gold reported that the Board of Regents amended the bylaws to allow digital

approval at meetings. Doing so relieves the pressure on unanimous written consent.

5. President Ostler shared that Student Senate and Faculty Senate are currently working on a hate and bias statement for course syllabi. The work should be completed later this spring with joint resolutions in March or April.
6. Senator Wessling reported on the J term calendar work her committee has been doing with the student government. The committee will make a formal resolution at the January meeting of the executive council.
7. Doug Ewald shared information on the new LMS system “Bridges”. This program will be used to onboard new employees with campus training and send reminders to current employees when they need to update their training.
8. Cathy Pettid reported that mandatory COVID-19 testing would be taking place within residence halls in January. Doing so will allow guest privileges on campus to return. The policy will be reviewed frequently.

Res.#	Date Senate Passed	Title	Admin Accept	Sent for Senate Action	Denied/Deferred/ In Progress	Final Action/Resolved
4423	11/11/20	BoR Bylaw Change				Resolved

IV. Standing Committee Reports

A. Committee on Academic and Curricular Affairs: Senator Wessling

1. Attended a zoom meeting with President Ostler, Secretary/Treasurer Surface, and SGVP Vanessa Chavez Jurado. Vanessa summarized SG's goal and discuss the next steps to include a possible statement on all UNO Syllabi that would make more immediately available the UNO resources and services that address issues of Hate and Bias. Members of our committee agreed to work with SG on their proposal during the spring semester 2021.
2. Wrote faculty J-term survey report (Attachment 2)
3. Wrote the following resolution:
WHEREAS: Summer 2020, results of a UNO Faculty Calendar Climate Survey showed a substantial interest in investigating a January term, J-term, with the caveat that certain questions be address so that a more informed decision could be made to explore the possibility of a J-term in spring 2022.
WHEREAS: Academic & Curricular Affairs Committee, ACAC, solicited faculty primary questions and concerns regarding the creation of a J-Term and the modified calendar with respect to the J-Term which were answered by SVC Sache Kopp, Dr. Sarah Edwards, and Student Government President Jabin Moore. FAQ document was emailed to all faculty Nov 11, 2020.
WHEREAS: One of the primary questions raised by faculty regarding a modified calendar with respect to a J-term was whether it would be favored by students. Summer 2020, the UNO Student Government surveyed the student body. Based on the responses Student Government recommended the establishment of a J-term, highlighting the potential benefits to students by expanding academic offerings.

WHEREAS: Contract obligations with respect to a modified calendar, compensation for J-term instruction, breaks/holiday concessions, and academic course preparation will be outlined in detail and included in Collective Bargaining to address faculty concerns.

WHEREAS: ACAC administered a second Faculty Survey at the end of Fall 2020 to ascertain faculty support of the creation of a J-term. Results showed 58.28 % of the 290 faculty responses are in favor of including a J-term as an optional teaching opportunity for faculty.

WHEREAS: Results of the Fall 2020 Faculty Survey also showed that some faculty support of the J-term is subject to department/college leadership concerns, pedagogical concerns, and effects of proposed calendar modifications.

BE IT RESOLVED: That the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha recommends the consideration of a J-term and the necessary adjustments to the academic calendar to accommodate it under the following parameters:

- Teaching in the J-term is optional and subject to the same compensation rate as summer teaching
- Each academic unit may offer courses in the J-term they deem to be most appropriate for that format, subject to availability of teaching and other resources to insure a high level of rigor and sound pedagogical practices.
- The relevant university, college and unit-level policies governing the offering, teaching, and cancellation of summer courses will apply to the J-term.
- Individual faculty teaching in the J-term will have flexibility to schedule the meeting times within the 3-week period, as long as the section meets the total minimum number of contact hours required for the number of credit hours.
- Students will be properly advised about the necessary time commitment needed to successfully complete a course in the J-term that is normally offered in a 16-week semester.
- Adjustments made to the academic calendar will be done in a manner that keeps the mental health and well-being of faculty and students paramount, including but not limited to recognition of holidays like Martin Luther King Day, a full week of Spring Break, adequate time between J-Term, Spring Semester, Summer Sessions and Fall Semester for grading and posting of final exams and course grades, etc.
- Any shortening of the number of weeks of fall, spring, or summer sessions, will not result in a decrease in the number of contact hours for those semesters and sessions.

Senator Wessling made a motion to approve Resolution 4424. No objections were made and the motion passed.

B. Committee on Educational Resources & Services: Senator Stacy

1. No meeting; no report

Senator Stacy has stepped down as chair of the committee. Senator Vnuk is the new chair of the committee.

C. Faculty Personnel & Welfare Committee: Senator Garcia

1. No meeting; no report

D. Committee on Goals and Directions: Senator Schulz

1. No meeting; no report

E. Professional Development: Senator Rech

1. Discussion of UNO childcare & emergency childcare
 - a. Current childcare facility is likely not able to accommodate emergency care (budget & size limitations)
 - b. Possible connections with new Early Childcare Center through College of Education?
 - c. Can UNO have budget available to support emergency childcare for faculty/staff?
 - d. Consultation with SAC members would be advisable
2. Follow up on renovations to DSC?
 - a. Goals & Directions committee was given this item at a previous meeting – requesting additional information
 - b. Senator Krasnoslobodtsev would like to engage in these discussions
3. Maternity leave policies
 - a. There is a dramatic difference between how colleges and departments are handling maternity leave for faculty.
 - b. Faculty member has had numerous conversations with the Ombudsperson and Academic Affairs. No definitive answer was available on the specific details of maternity leave.
 - c. Follow up with administration should occur regarding maternity leave.

F. Committee on Committees: Senator Anderson

1. No meeting; no report

V. New Business

A. New Business

1. Annual review of Faculty Performance

Adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

Schedule for 2020-2021		
Executive Council Meetings (1 st Wednesday of month)	Faculty Senate Meetings (2 nd Wednesday of month)	EO&A Meetings (3 rd Wednesday of month)
June 3	June	June 17
July 1	July	July 15
August 5	August 19 (Retreat) (3 rd Wednesday) (Classes begin 8/24)	August
September 2	September 9	September 16
October 7	October 14	October 14
November 4	November 11	November 18
December 2	December 9 (Prep Week 12/7-12/12)	December 16 (Finals Week 12/14-12/17) (Commencement 12/18)
January 6, 2021 (Classes begin 1/11)	January 13, 2021	January 20, 2021
February 3	February 10	February 17
March 3	March 10	March 17 (Spring Break 3/14-3/21)
April 7	April 14	April 21
May 5 (Finals Week 5/3-5/6) (Commencement 5/7)	May 12	May 19