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Faculty Senate Minutes February 2021

UNO Faculty Senate

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2020-2021 Faculty Senate Minutes
Wednesday, February 10, 2021

- I. **Official Call to Order** at 2:54 p.m.
- II. **The Minutes** of January 13, 2021 were approved as submitted.
- III. **Officers' Reports**

A. President's Report: Senator Ostler

1. **Academic Calendar:** (Attachment 2)

Expect a revised academic calendar beginning with AY 2021-22. With Student and Faculty surveys illustrating support for an academic Term (J-term) during the first three weeks of January, the Faculty Senate Resolution supporting the inclusion of a J-term for AY 21-22, and UNL and UNK both supporting similar resolutions through their own Faculty Senates, the Office of Academic Affairs has now proposed a draft of the AY 21-22 calendar with a J-term, including all of the start/stop dates for beginning, end, and semester breaks. The fall Academic Calendar will most probably not be impacted but there will be major changes to spring semester/terms. President Carter has expressed interest in a System wide unified calendar and the 21-22 Calendar changes being recommended at this point are considered a *pilot* of the J-term for UNO and possibly a “winterum” term for UNL. I would note that this calendar modification represents a substantial investment of time and forethought in a lot of different offices/departments here, not to mention what will be one of the most significant changes in recent history to the way faculty and the university offer their services. Additionally, because there are many *dominoes* involved in this change, including financial aid, student housing, advising, and other student support services, it is important that we all take another look at the proposed dates and make appropriate suggestions (i.e., “appropriate” meaning issues that potentially represent substantial oversights, not simply disagreements about aspects of the decision). The draft of the modified AY 21-22 Calendar is attached to the agenda. This calendar modification represents the collective voice of UNO Students and Faculty and has cursory support from NU Central Administration and AAUP.

2. **Chancellor's Search Update:** In the spirit of transparency, I would like to report that the search for UNO's next Chancellor is moving forward. We initially selected a target date of January 29th for applications to be due. As that date has now arrived, the committee is in the process of reviewing applications and will be evaluating candidates with respect to the Leadership Profile and the Core Leadership Pillars represented therein.

a. The Pillars are:

- a. Proven Leader
- b. Commitment to the Advancement of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- c. Understanding of and/or Experience with a Metropolitan University that Emphasizes Research and Creative Activity
- d. Prioritizes Higher Education, Academic and Research Excellence
- e. Strategic Thinker

- f. Experienced Fundraiser
 - g. Commitment to Community Engagement
 - h. Values Student Engagement
 - i. Student Centered
 - j. Inclusive Shared Governance
- b. 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.
3. With so many changes expected to come in the next few months including movement toward a more densely occupied campus in the fall if PRAM indices allow us to continue to consider it, a new Chancellor and a new academic calendar, it is appropriate for faculty to reconsider the current state of the Strategic Plan. It is my hope that the faculty will be highly attentive to how the physical and academic changes to our offerings are aligned with our long-term intents. With the Student Centered nature of UNO's mission, it would be helpful for all of you to take a look: unomaha.edu/strategic-planning/index.php. For example, the Early Alert System for students is now integrated. They are using a series of Flags as an Early Alert System for advisors/faculty/student support as to potential strugglers (e.g., First Flag found approximately 400 students who had not yet logged on to Canvas). Second Flag comes with the first major assignment, etc. Units currently participating are CPACS, CBA, A&S Non-exploratory Studies, Success Academy, TLC and Exploratory Studies. Along with this is the Academic Key Indicators Report: <https://www.unomaha.edu/academic-affairs/files/documents/oa-2020-annual-report-1.14.21.pdf> (Attachment 3)

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

1. Dr. Kopp updated the J-Term plans and complemented Faculty Senate on our work with shared governance as we are ahead of other campuses. Dr. Kopp shared the survey developed by the Committee on Academic and Curricular Affairs led by Senator Wessling with other campuses.
2. Dr. Gold shared information from President Carter about standardizing the academic calendar. They have discussed the J-term, but no decisions have been made, and no J-term proposal would alter the fall calendar. Additionally, the plan for next fall is to be back to full operations on campus. Senator Anderson asked about the new strains of Covid impacting the country. Dr. Gold shared information about the strains and the efficacy of the vaccines to kill the new strains.
3. Dr. Gold reported the Spring semester in headcount more being graduate-level students. The senators and administration discussed the concern that we all have with our first semester full-time students' attrition. Senator Qureshi shared her concern for students with mental health challenges. Cathy Pettid suggested that it helps students if they are given a warm handoff with a counselor. It is easy to introduce students to a counselor, and the student is much more likely to follow thru on seeing a counselor for help.

4. Senator Anderson expressed the importance of encouraging students to take courses that can manage online successfully and defer difficult courses, particularly in the first year. A pilot early alert system is being rolled out which will notify an instructor when a student is not completing work. The group discussed the importance of professors knowing their students. Cathy Pettid agreed to join a senate meeting to discuss many of the things that instructors can do to keep our students engaged in our classes and help them find help when they need it.
5. The annual review was discussed, and faculty can opt-in for an additional year to stop the tenure clock. Faculty members need to express the impact of Covid on their plans to seek tenure. There are plans to revisit university RPT guidelines, but this will not impact current faculty. Senator Surface gave a brief update on the plans for the change in faculty teaching effectiveness. Dr. Kopp talked about Carl Wyman's visit to our campus and the teaching effectiveness using the T-Dal instrument.
6. The administration has discussed maternity leave, and a clarifying memo is being developed that discusses both adoption and maternity leave.
7. Doug Ewald discussed the Corona Virus supplement of 17.9 million to our campus. The focus of the funding will go to the success of students.
8. Faculty Senate/Student Government and Staff Advisory council leadership have discussed a stamen addressing the riots at our nation's capital. The conversations are in the early stages.

Res.#	Date Senate Passed	Title	Admin Accept	Sent for Senate Action	Denied/Deferred/In Progress	Final Action/Resolved
4424	1/13/21	J-Term Resolution				Resolved

IV. Standing Committee Reports

A. Committee on Academic and Curricular Affairs: Senator Wessling

1. Senator Todd Robinson is initiating contact with Goals and Directions Committee and Student Government to begin work on the Hate and Bias statement. No further progress to report at this time.
2. Discussed President Ostler's invitation to join a pilot training opportunity for Sexual Violence and Prevention through Title IX that is being offered by a company called Catharsis. No ACAC Senators wish to take part.
3. SVC Kopp requested a copy of our survey questions to pass along to the Chief Academic Officers from other campuses. Request was granted. The email message to faculty that contained the survey link, and the survey questions were sent to SVC Kopp January 15, 2021. We have not received any further information on creating a J-term or adjustments being made to the academic calendar.
4. Discussed a faculty member's email received January 26, 2021, expressing displeasure in the fact that on-line classes are now being cancelled when campus classes and campus operations are closed due to inclement weather. This faculty

member stated, "Ultimately I would like a policy that allows faculty to consider their syllabus, their teaching/learning strategies and tools they have available to determine the appropriate response to whatever circumstances they face." This email was forwarded to President Ostler for a response. As a committee we are interested in knowing the reason behind the change in the winter weather closure directives. We have not taken any further action and wait to hear from President Ostler on this matter.

B. Committee on Educational Resources & Services: Senator Vnuk

1. F&A Updates
 - a. We discussed updates regarding F&A transparency, reviewing reports to the SVC from college deans. We are still waiting to hear from CFAM. We'll continue to provide updates as more develops.
2. Paul Beck Scholarship updates/timetable
 - a. The Paul Beck Scholarship is now open for students, with a deadline of 03/01.
 - b. James Shaw is the designated contact for any inquiries regarding the scholarship
3. OER follow-up (questions to pass on to Jaci – visit in Feb), crafting resolution language
 - a. The committee discussed information passed to us by Jaci Lindberg regarding Online Educational Resources (OER) materials and the possibility of marking) classes in the class registrar
 - b. Jaci will visit the ERS Committee in February as we develop resolution language on OER materials
4. Discussion of class size caps
 - a. Brief discussion of new language in the CBA contract concerning class size caps and consultation
5. Chair Update
 - a. Richard Stacy stepped down as Committee Chair in January
 - b. James Vnuk will remain Chair of ERS through Spring 2021

C. Faculty Personnel & Welfare Committee: Senator Garcia

1. **No meeting; no report**

D. Committee on Goals and Directions: Senator Schulz

1. Leadership and Support of Part-time Faculty
 - a. There were two key areas of discussion:
 1. How can the Faculty Senate provide input for administrative oversight of part-time instructors?
 2. What types of support or incentives could be considered by UNO for part-time instructors?
 - b. The committee would like to seek an endorsement from the Faculty Senate.
2. Facilities Planning and Renovation of the Durham Science Center
 - a. There were several key points of discussion:
 1. What type of input should the Faculty Senate provide for overall

- facilities planning on our campus?
- 2. What type of input should the Faculty Senate provide for the renovation of the Durham Science Center?
- 3. We have identified a process that may be place
- b. In a recent Faculty Senate meeting, Senator Krasnoslobodtsev proposed a survey of faculty before the big renovation of Durham Science Building
 - 1. Follow-up meeting with Senator Krasnoslobodtsev
 - a. It has been a long time since the last renovation of DSC
 - 1. Putting renovation on hold has created uncertainty for faculty
 - 2. It is difficult for faculty to make plans for the future
 - b. Delays have impacted teaching activities
 - 1. Example: Faculty were asked to develop flipped classrooms
 - 2. Due to the pandemic, the classroom was converted to Zoom
 - 3. Zoom classrooms have created a need from additional smartboards
 - c. Delays may affect UNO is an R1 Research Institution
 - 1. Uncertainty about research facilities may lead to a decline in experimental research
 - 2. The need for lab space may affect our ability to recruit experimental researchers in the future
 - d. Delays have created a constant tension in the need of research labs versus teaching labs
 - 1. The faculty are in desperate need of research infrastructure
 - 2. We work in a STEM-oriented field and need infrastructure to support our faculty

E. Professional Development: Senator Rech

- 1. Questions regarding the cancellation of all classes (synchronous/asynchronous/online) when classes are canceled due to weather. The sentiment was expressed that we should be working with our students when it is possible, and that technology certainly allows us to do that.
- 2. We will be meeting with representatives from the Staff Advisory Council in February to discuss possible options for emergency on-campus childcare.
- 3. We are aware that the AAUP was discussing maternity leave items with the administration as a contractual matter. However, there is still concern that in practice, there is a great deal of variability and uncertainty in departments/colleges across campus as to how this is administered. The committee will be sending emails to chair and department heads to get additional information.
- 4. The question was raised about release time for instructors. Currently, instructors teach 24 credits/year without the ability to apply for release time for research. In

some departments, instructors are very productive in the way of research. Is this something we can explore? (Along those lines – there was an AAUP item regarding “tenure” of instructors that several thought was going to pass, but apparently did not – more information about this is requested)

F. Committee on Committees: Senator Anderson

1. Excellence on Teaching Award Committee

a. Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following faculty members be appointed to the University Committee on Excellence in Teaching: Abbie Syrek (CFAM and prior award winner, to replace Shelby Van Nordstrand, whose term has ended) and Ann Fruhling (IS&T to replace William Mahoney, a prior award recipient whose term has ended) for three-year terms from 08/01/20 through 07/31/23, and Hannah Weaver (CFAM, as the at large, pre-tenure member, replacing Anne Karabon, ED) for a one-year term from 08/01/20 through 07/31/21.

The Resolution was unanimously approved.

VI. Non-Senate Committee Report(s)

A. Senator Vnuk- AAUP Contract Ratification

1. Summary of Major Elements

- a.** A 1.25% salary increase in each of the two years of the new contract, allocated in the traditional 70% satisfactory performance and 30% exceptional performance split.
- b.** If promotion adjustments exceed the 30% pool, the administration will cover the additional funds.
- c.** Creates a pay structure for a 3-week term between fall and spring semesters identical to summer sessions.
- d.** Amends Section 3.7, Non-Discrimination to comply with federal law.

2. Additional Updates

- a.** Minor emendations to sections (3.1.1; 3.3.1.1; and 3.1.3(b)) containing typos and/or references to outdated documents or obsolete technology.
- b.** Adds class size and method of instruction to the mandatory workload consultation in Section 3.1.3.
- c.** Changes section 3.1.3.4 Workload for Unit Members in the University Library, Center for Public Affairs Research, and University Division, to refer to scheduled hours instead of work location.
- d.** Updates section 3.6.1.3, Status of Unit Member Charged During Termination for Adequate Cause, creating additional opportunities for a meeting with the SVC and requires the SVC to reply in writing with reasons for suspension.
- e.** Adds subsection c to section 3.3.1.3 Continuous appointments outlining provisional tenure status for those who lack permanent work authorization.
- f.** Memo from the Office of Academic Affairs clarifying 3 aspects of parental leave

policy:

1. No documentation is needed for leaves of 8 weeks or less.
 2. The Dean is required to meet with the member to discuss the leave dates.
 3. Leave can be taken both before and after the arrival date.
- 3. Explanation of Negotiations on Promotion/Tenure Pathway for Instructors**

No agreement could be reached, so the option recently proposed by the Faculty Senate for stepwise advancement of instructors fell to the ground.

- 4. Many thanks to the Negotiation Team and their hard work! That team is Joseph Brown (chief negotiator), Thomas Sanchez, and Jim Shaw.**

VII. New Business

Briefly Discussed: Senator Sample suggested that a committee be formed to assist professors who are teaching courses on both UNO and UNL campus' with transferring course information between Canvas' and sharing resources that may only be available with one university.

VIII. Adjourn at 3:49 p.m.