University Faculty Senate Minutes  
January 22, 2024 Online Zoom meeting

Please note that a complete audio recording of this senate meeting is available at UNI Scholarworks. The time stamps noted throughout these minutes refer to that recording.

These are open meetings to all faculty. If you wish to attend, email a member of senate leadership for a zoom link.

Senators in attendance: Melissa Dobosh (Chair), Kenneth Elgersma (Vice-Chair), Francis Degnin (Faculty Chair, Past Senate Chair), John Burnight (Parliamentarian), Imam Alam, Nick Bailey, Erika Bass, Andy Berns, Cathi Bowler, Karen Breitbach, Alexa Clements, Michael Conrad, Tim Dooley, Evette Edmister, Scott Geise, Gretchen Gould, Randall Harlow, Melanie Hill, Rob Hitlan, Charles Holcombe, Wu-Ying Hsieh, Syed Kirmani, Ana Kogle, Karla Krueger, Matthew Makarios, Shelley Price-Williams, Mohammed Rawwas, Andrew Stollenwork, Ali Tabei

(Fifty percent quorum met, with 27/31 voting senators present; the Faculty Chair is non-voting, as provided in the Faculty Constitution, and the Senate Chair votes only in case of a tie.)

Call to Order at 3:30 PM [time stamp 00:00:00]

Call for Press Identification

Introduction of Guests
Regular Guests: Mark Nook, José Herrera, John Vallentine, Chris Martin, Micaiah Krutsinger

Additional Guests: Pete Morris (University Relations), Theresa Westbrock (Faculty Handbook Committee), Robert Earle (Faculty Handbook Committee), Scott Peters (Faculty Handbook Committee)

Courtesy Announcements
Comments from President Nook [time stamp 00:00:45]
Reported that the Our Tomorrow Campaign reached its $250M target and that target has now been increased to $300M, with most of the additional funds going toward scholarships & faculty support. The campaign has been very successful in attracting new donors. Work continues on advocating for a better budget allocation with the legislature; the goal is to pursue support above and beyond the governor’s proposed budget.

Comments from Provost Herrera [time stamp 00:10:20]
Reported that there are three candidates in the internal search for the Associate Provost for Faculty; the decision on that position is projected for the end of February. The search for a new dean for CHAS will close at the end of February with decisions anticipated in March or April. Reported on ongoing work to improve recruitment of faculty in a few difficult areas where there have been recent failed searches.
Comments from Faculty Chair Degnin [time stamp 00:13:30]  
Thanked Provost’s office for finding a solution to the scantron problem.

Comments from United Faculty President Martin [time stamp 00:14:25]  
Deferred comments.

Comments from NISG President Krutsinger [time stamp 00:14:40]  
Followed up on request for funding from the legislature for Mental Health. The governor did not include this in her budget proposal but NISG will continue working on that with the legislature. This week is NISG Engagement Week; open house tomorrow. Elections for NISG coming up in February so faculty are asked to promote that among students.

Comments from Senate Chair Dobosh [time stamp 00:17:15]  
Will send announcements and updates via email.

Minutes for Approval:  
Minutes from Nov. 27, 2023 [time stamp 00:17:32]  
MOTION: Burnight / Berns (21 in favor, 0 against, 1 abstention)

Consultations:  
1584 Consultation: FY 2023 Budget [time stamp 00:18:37]  
President Nook addressed the nearly $1M of general funds provided to athletics last fiscal year. Athletics was approximately $1.2M short from their projected revenue; Athletics provided approximately $0.3M in private (foundation) funds and the university filled in the rest as part of normal budgeting process. These were end-of-year funds that were not available for allocation at the beginning of the year. Athletics has a complex budget with revenue from ticket sales, events, etc. Revenue estimates were short in ticket revenue ($400K) and marketing ($600K). This is in part due to lingering COVID effects; ticket sales have not returned to pre-pandemic levles while federal COVID funds are no longer in play. President Nook explained that faculty were not consulted because this happened during summer break (July & August), and noted this is normal end-of-year procedure that applies not only to athletics but also all academic and non-academic units. President Nook addressed concerns about the Athletics “yellow” audit: 7 out of 8 items have been addressed, with the last item being estimating revenues, which remains to be fixed. Athletics does receive general fund dollars but President Nook noted that Athletics’ budget reductions have been at the same rate as rest of campus, despite the number of students participating in athletics programs being essentially constant. There were questions from senators about how much money is given to athletics and how that is decided, and how communication on the budget is done. Invited continued discussion on the budget and noted the Senate Budget Committee and/or President’s Budget Advisory Committee can continue working on this into the future.

1585 Consultation: Faculty Handbook Update [time stamp 00:48:32]  
Associate Provost John Vallentine presented on behalf of the 6 faculty members and 6 administrators on the Faculty Handbook Committee. Presented the process of updates: for proposed changes the FHC votes, consults with FS, then brings recommendations to the provost.
There were temporary deviations to the handbook that are now being recommended to be made permanent. The use of “Professor” in titles was supported by a large majority of faculty responding to a United Faculty survey, so those changes are being recommended on a permanent basis. Also discussed recommending permanent changes allowing the use of “Professor” for Adjunct, Instructional, Clinical, and Practitioner faculty. Finally reported on changes to life insurance and moving language from the handbook to the HR website.

**Items Requiring Senate Votes:**

1586 **Statement of Support to Students** [time stamp 01:00:33]

MOTION: Degnin / Burnight (21 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions)

The statement of support was presented. There was discussion about how to strategically put forward a message to our students to offer them our support and assurance without triggering strong reactions toward “DEI” that might obstruct the underlying message of support to our students. There was also discussion about how “diversity”, “equity”, and “inclusion” are defined and whether or not those terms should be included. NISG president Krutsinger thanked Faculty Senate for this support of our student body. Motion to approve this statement as a statement of support to our students passed unanimously.

**Emeritus Requests:**

1587 **Emeritus Request: Jean McDonald** [time stamp 01:17:00]

MOTION: Berns / Conrad (21 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions)

President Dobosh highlighted aspects of the letter of support, Kenneth Elgersma reiterated that support, John Vallentine highlighted the outstanding, international success of her students. Motion to approve emeritus request passed.

1588 **Emeritus Request: Jeffrey Weld** [time stamp 01:20:10]

MOTION: Elgersma / Clements (22 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions)

President Nook spoke to his efforts raising awareness of STEM education in the state and with businesses that support STEM education. Jeff has been recognized as a national leader in this area. Motion to approve emeritus request passed.

1589 **Posthumous Emeritus Request: Curtis Nielsen** [time stamp 01:23:06]

MOTION: Bass / Clements (22 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions)

Melanie Hill spoke to his love of learning and his drive in professional growth, and his skill in leadership and care for others around him. Karen Breitbach spoke to his outstanding character. Chair Dobosh shared highlights of the letter of support, and the number and variety of students he reached. Motion to approve emeritus request passed.

**New Business**

**Adjournment** by 4:58 PM

MOTION (Burnight / Berns)

Submitted by Kenneth Elgersma, Vice Chair, University Faculty Senate
Zoom chat is appended:

00:07:36 Pete Moris: Hi - Pete Moris checking in as a guest.
00:07:40 Robert Earle: Guest: Robert Earle, Philosophy and World Religions, Faculty Handbook Committee.
00:08:50 Theresa Westbrock: Theresa Westbrock, Faculty Handbook Committee
00:54:17 Francis Degnin Faculty Chair: This will need to be sorted out by the budget committee to get greater clarity.
00:56:06 Scott Peters: I'm here
00:56:11 Scott Peters: Scott Peters
00:57:35 Melissa Dobosh: Replying to "This will need to be..."

Absolutely
01:14:52 Christopher Martin: Sorry I have to leave early.
01:15:06 Melissa Dobosh: Reacted to "Sorry I have to leav..." with 👍
01:22:31 Ana Kogl: You're welcome!