

**MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE SPECIAL  
MEETING: Consultation with UNI  
Forward Teaching and Learning  
Subcommittee, June 8, 2020  
Online ZOOM meeting**

**Senators in attendance:** John Burnight (Chair), Danielle Cowley (Vice-Chair), James Mattingly (Past Chair), Amy Petersen (Chair of the Faculty, ex officio), Imam Alam, Megan Balong, Francis Degnin, Melissa Dobosh, Kenneth Elgersma, Gretchen Gould, Kenneth Hall, Mark Hecimovich, Thomas Hesse, Rob Hitlan, Charles Holcombe, Syed Kirmani, William Koch, Matthew Makarios, Nicole Skaar, John Wiles. (Fifty percent quorum met; 19 of 20 voting senators were present. The Chair of the Senate is included in this count, but votes only in case of a tie.)

**Call to Order:** 3:30 PM.\* *To maintain order in this Zoom virtual meeting, Chair Burnight closed the microphone for all attendees and asked that they open their microphone to speak only if recognized by the Chair. Senators were instructed to use the yes and no buttons to vote accordingly, when appropriate, and to press neither yes nor no, if they wish to abstain from voting.*

**Call for Press Identification:** There were no members of the press attending the meeting.

**Introduction of Guests:** Regular Guests: Becky Hawbaker (President of United Faculty), Patrick Pease (Associate Provost for Academic Affairs). Special Guests: Teaching & Learning Subcommittee chair John Fritch and members Gayle Rhineberger-Dunn and Rachel Greene (student); Mark Grey.

**Calendar & Docket Item:** The Senate voted unanimously to immediately docket calendar item 1509 as docket item 1387, [Consultation with Teaching and Learning Subcommittee](#). Associate Provost Patrick Pease, along with T & L Subcommittee members Fritch, Rhineberger-Dunn, Greene, and (Senator) Balong, outlined and explained the subcommittee's recommendation to change the Academic Calendar this fall due to COVID-19 concerns. The key elements of this change are: 1) Classes would begin a week earlier (August 17); 2) Classes will be held on Labor Day (September 7); Classes will end the Friday before Thanksgiving (November 20); and 4) Finals week will run from Saturday, November 21 to Wednesday, November 25 (excepting Sunday, November 22).

*Members of the subcommittee noted that a number of other institutions are moving to this (or a similar) plan, to avoid the necessity of having students return to campus after Thanksgiving (thus ameliorating the potential impact of a second wave of COVID-19). During the consultation Senators and guests discussed the other benefits of such a shift, including greater certainty for faculty and students. Challenges were also discussed, including childcare for faculty and staff with children and scheduling finals during a busy time for student athletes. There was also a concern raised that some professional programs may be unable to deliver the required content in 70 (rather than the typical 75) instructional days, and that flexibility may need to be offered to those programs to meet for one more week in an online setting after the Thanksgiving holiday. If this happens, the deadline for filing grades would need to allow for such flexibility.*

*UNI administration determines the Academic Calendar, subject to the approval of the Board of Regents and in accordance with six established general guidelines (see [supporting documentation here](#)). Since several of these guidelines were voted on by the Senate in 1985, we were asked to consent to a temporary deviation from #4 and #6, which would conflict with the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee's recommendation should the administration decide to adopt it. After discussion, Senator Degrin moved to consent to these deviations, and Senator Kirmani seconded. **The motion passed (17-0, 2 abstentions).***

*Associate Provost Pease then concluded the consultation by asking the Senate to start thinking about plans for the spring semester, including any calendar changes that may be deemed necessary due to COVID-19.*

**Adjournment:** 4:29 PM. (Motion: Mattingly/Gould)

Submitted by John Burnight, Chair of the University Faculty Senate.

\* Timestamps and a recording are not available for this meeting, because the new Senate Chair forgot to hit the "Record" button (despite writing three separate reminder notes to himself to do so). He regrets this error, and will endeavor to make sure that it does not happen in the future.