

University Faculty Senate Minutes

Sept 27, 2021 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.

Senators in attendance: John Burnight (Chair), Francis Degnin (Vice-Chair), James Mattingly (Faculty Chair), Gretchen Gould (Secretary), Imam Alam, Nick Bailey, Megan Balong, Karen Breitbach, Michael Conrad, Melissa Dobosh, Kenneth Elgersma, Mark Hecimovich, Thomas Hesse, Rob Hitlan, Charles Holcombe, Syed Kirmani, Karla Krueger, Matthew Makarios, Steve O’Kane, Angela Pratesi, Andrew Stollenwerk, John Wiles (Fifty percent quorum met, with 18 of 20 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 [note: the recording commenced at the beginning of the docket, due to operator error]

Call for Press Identification

Vanessa Miller, Cedar Rapids Gazette

Introduction of Guests

Regular Guests: Mark Nook, José Herrera, John Vallentine, Patrick Pease, ~~Samantha Bennett (NISG President)~~.

Other guests: Amy Igou, Michael Hager, Jeremy Schraffenberger, Ryan McGeough, Vanessa Miller (press, Cedar Rapids Gazette)

Courtesy Announcements

Comments from President Nook

President Nook related a story that an alum shared with him at a recent event, about what a difference it made to her when she was at UNI that someone believed in her. He remarked that the strong bond of community built between our faculty and students is a key part of UNI’s success in helping so many of our students to graduate and move on to successful and meaningful lives.

Comments from Provost Herrera

Provost Herrera discussed the continuing development of the UNI-DMACC partnership, and how its online courses can help place-bound students to earn a public four-year degree. He noted the importance of faculty input as we start Phase II of Academic Positioning. He also remarked that he will be attending several Homecoming events, and hoped to have an opportunity to meet some of our faculty.

Comments from Faculty Chair Mattingly

Faculty Chair Mattingly discussed the fall faculty meeting that had taken place on the previous Monday, and noted that approximately 163 faculty members attended via Zoom vs. only about 20 in person. He thanked President Nook, Provost Herrera, Francis Degnin, and Becky Hawbaker for providing remarks, Jonathan Chenoweth, John Vallentine, and Jen Waldron for recognizing new faculty and award recipients, and Haley Admire for her help with the meeting arrangements. He hoped that future meetings would also be presented in a hybrid in-person & online format. He announced that a link to the recording would be distributed to faculty. He also discussed the joint ISU-UI-UNI Senate leadership letter sent last week to the Board of Regents, which requested that the regents delegate control of COVID mitigation protocols to the presidents of the three institutions. He encouraged the Senate to register its support for the letter during the New Business portion of the meeting.

Comments from UF President Hawbaker

United Faculty President Hawbaker noted that Chapter 20 does not protect any activity that is prohibited by law. The UF attorney advised that it would protect positions that are counter to policy, such as mask mandates or social distancing, but President Hawbaker stated that she would not recommend supporting a resolution calling for a violation of Iowa law. She also noted that UF has filed multiple Prohibited Practices against the BOR for Chapter 20 violations in the past,

though judgements can take years and remedies do not always undo the harm. She therefore stated that while UF would fight for any faculty member facing discipline for imposing a mask mandate or social distancing requirement in their classroom, faculty should understand the risks of civil disobedience. She noted that a Senate resolution would offer additional support for faculty claiming Chapter 20 protection to impose a mask mandate or social distancing.

Comments from Senate Chair Burnight

Chair Burnight welcomed Karla Krueger to the Senate. Karla is replacing Danielle Cowley, who has left UNI, as a COE Senator. He also noted that this is Senator Angela Pratesi's last meeting, as she is leaving UNI on October 15 to become the Head Librarian of the Music Library and Bill Schurk Sound Archives at Bowling Green State University.

Minutes for Approval

April 26, 2021 Minutes were approved without amendment.

Calendar Items

Chair Burnight noted that in the spring the Senate voted to allow its new Leadership Council to handle the docketing process. Because the fall faculty meeting prevented the council from meeting on 9/20, however he asked the Senate to bundle the four calendar items (1567, 1568, 1569, & 1570) for same-day consideration on the current docket. The Senate unanimously approved the docketing of these items as 1444, 1445, 1446, and 1447 (see descriptions below).

Docket Items

1441 [Budget Consultation: Vice-President Michael Hager](#) [time stamp 0:00:00]

Senior Vice-President of Finance & Operations Michael Hager made his annual presentation on the university's budget to the Senate. He noted that the General Education Fund for the year is approximately \$171 million, of which the majority is state appropriations (57%) and tuition. He then broke down the expenditures by category. Among the details provided was that while the portion of expenditures devoted to the President's division appears larger than in the past, and Academic Affairs smaller, this is due to a change in reporting structure: previously, Information Technology and Institutional Research and Effectiveness reported through the Provost, but now they report to the President. He remarked that he would be happy to answer questions, and Senators asked questions about the impact of COVID on Supplies & Services budgets and how expenses such as course releases were reflected in the budget.

1444 [GERC update: Jeremy Schraffenberger and Ryan McGeough](#) [time stamp 0:10:58]

GERC/UNIFI members Jeremy Schraffenberger (co-chair) and Ryan McGeough updated the Senate on the committee's progress. Co-chair Schraffenberger recounted Phase I of the committee's work, which began in January of 2018. He then discussed the current progress of Phase II of the committee, including updates on the course and certificate proposals received by the committee last spring and this fall, and the decision to recommend that there should be two co-coordinators of general education (rather than a single director). It is hoped that a search for these co-coordinator positions will be announced by mid-October. He also noted that the committee is engaged in conversations with the UCC to ensure that the necessary curricular process is followed for any necessary changes to courses. Senators asked how the beginning of the new program in the fall of 2022 will be coordinated with the existing program, particularly with respect to Capstone courses and staffing issues. Co-chair Schraffenberger discussed some of the strategies being proposed for dealing with these issues.

1445 [Emeritus request for Karen Mitchell \(Communication & Media\)](#) [time stamp 0:28:51]

MOTION: Elgersma/Mattingly (15 in favor-0 opposed-2 abstentions) Senator Elgersma and Dr. Mitchell's department head Ryan McGeough spoke in support of the request, and it was approved. The letter of support is appended below.

1446 [Emeritus request for Laura Terlip \(Communication & Media\)](#) [time stamp 0:31:42]

MOTION: Pratesi/Degnin (17-0-0) Dr. Terlip's department head Ryan McGeough, UF President Hawbaker, and Senator Dobosh spoke in support of the emeritus request, and Chair Burnight noted her letter of support (appended below). The emeritus request was approved.

1447 [COVID-19 Resolution: Senator Steve O’Kane](#) [time stamp 0:35:32]

Chair Burnight asked for a motion to allow Senator O’Kane to present his statement and petition to the Senate.

MOTION: Degnin/Dobosh (14-0-3), motion approved.

Senator O’Kane provided background about the origin of his petition. He expressed the concern he felt at the beginning of the semester that faculty, staff, students, and the community were not being adequately protected health-wise, and that some were at very high risk, including a risk for death, were they to contract COVID. He then recounted how he insisted to his students that they begin wearing masks from the next class period onward, and how he informed them that if they did not do so they would not receive points for the day. He stated that he was fully aware that this is in violation of policy, and that he also knows that our administration is sympathetic to him and others who share these concerns, but the Board of Regents are not willing to allow us to require masks. He recounted the story of a colleague who had pleaded with her students to wear masks because of her own high-risk health status, but that her students refused to do so. He noted another colleague who is retiring several years early because of the prohibition against mask mandates. He discussed the civil disobedience by approximately 50 faculty members at the University of Georgia who had declared that they would not abide by a similar prohibition.

MOTION: O’Kane/Elgersma (no vote, see below).

Senator O’Kane then moved to have the Senate endorse his petition. Chair Burnight read the text of the resolution portion of the statement for the record [see document appended below]. Senator Elgersma seconded the motion for the purpose of allowing discussion. Faculty Chair Mattingly made a subsidiary motion to postpone the vote indefinitely so that the matter could be discussed in executive session. [Note: according to Robert’s Rules of Order, such a motion has precedence over a motion to approve.] Senator Hesse seconded Faculty Chair Mattingly’s motion. Senator Pratesi then moved to go into executive session, Vice-Chair Degnin seconded. The motion to enter executive session was approved. The Senate discussed the petition in executive session for approximately 90 minutes, rising twice out of it to vote to extend the meeting beyond the 5:00 scheduled adjournment: first extending it to 5:30, then to 6:00. President Nook and UF President Hawbaker were invited to participate as guests in the executive session.

MOTION: Mattingly/Hesse (13-0-2): After rising out of executive session, the Senate voted to approve Chair Mattingly’s motion to postpone action on the petition indefinitely. The motion passed with 13 in favor, none opposed, and two abstentions.

Other New Business

MOTION: Mattingly/O’Kane (13-0-2): Faculty Chair Mattingly moved that the Senate endorse the [joint letter](#) of ISU-UI-UNI Senate leaders to the Board of Regents on COVID mitigation protocols. Senator O’Kane seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Adjournment at 6:00 PM

Submitted by John Burnight, Chair of the University Faculty Senate

Note: letters of support for the emeritus requests are appended to these minutes, along with the text of Senator O’Kane’s petition

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to write in support of Dr. Karen Mitchell's nomination for Professor Emeritus. I have known Karen as a colleague, mentor, teacher, and friend and believe that I am in a strong position to comment on the indelible mark she has left during her remarkable career as a teacher, researcher, and performance practitioner at University of Northern Iowa (UNI). In this letter I articulate how Karen meets and excels at teaching, performances, publications, and service to the field and university, thus earning her status as Emeritus Faculty at UNI.

Teaching

Throughout Karen's career at the University of Northern Iowa she has prioritized--in almost every conceivable way--the teaching and appreciation of the artistic, cultural, and justice-driven principles of performance studies. Her excellence in the classroom has been recognized by local school boards, UNI's College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and the Iowa Board of Regents. After winning UNI's College of Humanities and Fine Arts award for faculty excellence in 2009, Dr. Mitchell delivered the keynote address for the College titled "Why *Just* Teaching Matters" wherein she shared her twin commitments of "just teaching and teaching justly." In it, she shares,

As Paulo Friere's philosophy of critical pedagogy reminds us, both teachers and students have valuable experiences to contribute to the classroom; in such a space, teachers learn and students teach through an on-going dialogue among people who share different experiences and positions. In such classrooms, teaching and learning extend far beyond the end of the term, and in some bases, learning never ends.

It is up to teachers, Karen believes, to create a better, more just world and this ethic is practiced in her classrooms.

Karen has taught nearly two dozen different courses in performance studies and critical pedagogy while at UNI which speaks to not only her commitment to performance studies as a field but also to the ideals of education. Whether she is teaching Performance of Social Protest; Communication, Community, and Change; Performance and Culture; Performance and Identity; or Critical Pedagogy, Karen promotes performance and education as emancipatory, self-defining, and an act of love. Over her career, she has embodied this ethic of care and love by being generous with her time and talent in the classroom, theatre, directed studies, master theses, and student-led shows.

Her commitment to performance studies is evinced through her continued justice-driven ethic in the classroom. She regularly couples performance studies theory with praxis-based texts such as Saul Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals* and adapts her syllabi to keep up with justice-driven movements happening today. For example, in 2015 she taught Performance for Social Change and focused the readings, assignments, and performances around the recent police murder of Trayvon Martin and the Black Lives Matter movement. From the class came a traveling ensemble show titled *Facing Our Truth* about racial injustice in the United States.

Teaching is and has been Karen's activism and it matters to her, to UNI, and to the discipline. In all, her identity as a critical pedagogue of performance studies greatly benefits the myriad other ways in which she contributes to UNI as a whole.

Performances & Publications

Karen's commitment to performance and critical pedagogy as a way to create dialogue around issues of oppression and social justice extends beyond the classroom to her live performance work and publications.

I first met Karen as an undergraduate student in SAVE (Students Against a Violent Environment) Forum Actors. This remarkable program, of which Karen was the founding director, used Boalian techniques to initiate dialogue on issues surrounding gender-based violence and provided audience members a safe place to rehearse for change. The SAVE Forum Actors performed for thousands of UNI students and the program was so successful that Karen was asked to help build similar programs at the University of Iowa and Iowa State University.

The staged performances Karen has directed throughout her career also reveal her dedication to social activism and transformative pedagogy. In the 90s, Karen played a key role in advocating for, designing, and establishing what is now the UNI Interpreters Theatre. Karen has directed 21 mainstage productions on issues spanning the topics of racial inequity, ability, the working poor, immigration, prisoner rights, and sexism. As a director, Karen engages her cast and crew in learning about the topics the performances engage. She makes what happens *in* the theatre meaningful to the lives of students *outside* the theatre.

Karen's publication work tells a similar story of her dedication to social justice and transformative pedagogy. Karen has published in *Text and Performance Quarterly (TPQ)*, *Theatre Topics*, and *The Speech Communication Teacher*. She has edited a special issue of *TPQ* on citizenship. She has written book chapters and book reviews. She has offered keynotes, delivered workshops and short courses, and has presented at many, many conferences. All of this work collectively contributes to the field of performance studies by enhancing the field's understanding of how performance makes and breaks culture, identity, and resistance.

Service

As the two previous sections of this letter indicate, Karen Mitchell's record of service permeates all aspects of her career. For some professors, service is an adjunct to the "more significant" work they do as a teacher and a scholar. To be truly impactful, however, the character of a professor's service to the field and the discipline cannot be dissociated from their teaching and research; rather, it must be consistent with their pedagogy and be reflected theoretically in their published and creative scholarship.

Social issues are at the heart of the work she has done throughout her time at UNI, from her early explorations of the gendered nature of reading and how reading can be used to create community to her more recent work related to issues of race, class, and sexual violence. Moreover, in doing these social justice projects, she has performed a feat that only a handful of other performance studies scholars have been able to achieve—she attracted external funding from national agencies to support performance work that mattered. The testimony of the performers who worked with her demonstrate the life-changing nature of the creative work in which they participated. Further, the work that they produced as a group under Karen's leadership brought about revolutions in thought and action in the lives of the people who audienced those performances. Her work actively demonstrates performance as power as well as the power of performance.

Given her grounding in both the traditions of the field and its recent evolutions, Karen was a natural choice to serve as the third editor of the National Review Board. The Board, with its mandate to provide peer-reviews of creative scholarship by performance studies scholar/artists, has increased the cache of creative scholarship at colleges and universities across the nation. It has done so by helping department heads, promotion and tenure committees, and administrators understand the significant theoretical grounding characteristic of creative scholarship that places it on par with more traditional scholarship. In her tenure as editor, Karen expanded the scope and diversity of the board in order to meet the changing demands of evaluating new types of performance work.

Perhaps Karen's greatest service is the extent to which she has seeded the discipline with

scholar/artists who, after completing work with her at UNI as undergraduate or masters students, were sent on to graduate programs and/or subsequently became prominent members of the broader performance studies and critical performance pedagogy communities. Her former students hold university faculty positions in New York (Waychoff, Powell), Ohio (Freitag, Williams), Florida (Huber), Pennsylvania (Schaes), and at several colleges and universities in Iowa (McGeough, University of Northern Iowa; Smith, Drake University; Nolte, Wartburg College; Supple-Bartels, University of Dubuque).

In 2009, Karen and her co-editors concluded the essay introducing the special issue of *Text and Performance Quarterly* on Performance and Citizenship with the following quote from Augusto Boal: "To be a citizen is not to live in a society. A citizen is one who transforms society." In assessing Karen's service, we might paraphrase Boal to acknowledge that Karen was not content to be a citizen of UNI, she actively worked throughout her career to transform the university . . . and we have all been enriched through her distinguished service.

Karen has left a legacy - a legacy of transformative pedagogy, activism, scholarship, service, love, and compassion. And for these reasons, I wholeheartedly recommend Karen S. Mitchell for status as Emeritus Faculty at UNI.

Sincerely,

Danielle Dick McGeough
Associate Professor of Communication and Media
Artistic Director of the Interpreters Theatre
University of Northern Iowa

13 September 2021

Dear Colleagues:

I am writing in support of Laura Terlip's appointment as Professor Emeritus at UNI. Laura has been an outstanding teacher, researcher, and community member for 30 years, and it is my privilege to write on her behalf.

Laura is an award-winning teacher who has taught more than 30 different courses in her time at UNI. She has taught extensively in the LAC, Communication Studies major, and Communication and Media graduate program. Her dedication to teaching extends beyond the traditional classroom, which has benefitted students, faculty, and communities outside of the university. Laura has organized and supervised over 20 consulting projects with undergraduate students. She has done consulting and led a variety of workshops for faculty at UNI on topics including SOA, experiential learning, and diversity. And she has done an incredible amount of consulting/training across the state for organizations ranging from accountants to interior designers to journalists.

Laura has been a consistently productive researcher with over 20 published pieces and 60 academic presentations. One of the most striking parts of Laura's CV is the diversity of topics she has written and presented on. Much of her scholarship focuses on organizational communication, the subfield in which she has taught and written throughout her career. However, she has also researched a wide-array of topics including communication ethics, media coverage of various public controversies, pedagogy, and other cultural phenomena that have drawn her interest. Beyond making Laura a legitimately interesting person to have a conversation with, the breadth of her interests has allowed her to effectively communicate and collaborate with colleagues across the many subfields in the Department of Communication and Media.

Laura's record of service is truly expansive. It is difficult to even attempt to summarize in a paragraph. She has done extensive service at the departmental, college, university, and disciplinary levels, as well as in the community. She served in high-profile service roles such as Vice-Chair of Faculty Senate and on search committees for the UNI President and CHFA Dean. But where Laura's record of service really stands apart is in her less-visible service work: In areas such as SOA, curriculum, scheduling, and many others, she has consistently been willing to engage in the low-profile, often time-consuming but frequently thankless work that is necessary to make a department and university function. Our department and university are better because of her tireless service to them.

Laura was the Associate Department Head when I began my tenure as Department Head. Her mentoring in those first months has helped me in countless ways. At our first meeting, I remember asking her what an Associate Head does. She replied, "whatever the department needs." I think that answer captures her approach to her students, colleagues, and the university quite well. As you can see, Laura is certainly deserving of an appointment as Professor Emeritus.

Sincerely,

Ryan McGeough, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department Head
Department of Communication and Media
University of Northern Iowa

Covid-19: A statement and resolution (Steve O’Kane)

Statement

Covid-19, caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, is real and has real consequences. Deaths in the United States due to this new respiratory virus have now amounted to about 1 out of 500 of our friends, neighbors, and fellow citizens. World-wide 4.7 million people have died. The number of people suffering from debilitating “long-Covid” is large.

Vaccines are effective in avoiding and sometimes eliminating diseases. Those of us old enough, remember getting our smallpox and polio vaccines at school or elsewhere. Both of those diseases are now a distant memory due to widespread, mandatory vaccination. Reactions to vaccines are rare and usually minor.

Masks are proven to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and other diseases. Wearing a mask reduces the spread of virus-containing droplets by up to 95%. Further, masks can reduce the inhalation of these droplets by 85%.

Vaccination and mask use is a medical-scientific issue, *not* a political issue. When politicians and politically motivated people become negatively involved in the issue it is typically for political and/or economic reasons, *not* for medical-scientific ones.

Vaccination and mask use *is* a moral and ethical issue. Most people agree that preventing disease and saving lives is both a moral imperative and the right thing to do.

Persons should be allowed to do the morally and ethically right thing. Currently, faculty members may *not* insist on the wearing of masks in the classroom. As the closest contact with students, these teachers should be free to insist that students wear masks, even if that means students are penalized or excluded from class if they do not. The protection afforded by mask use first affects the faculty member and their students, but then radiates to other students, faculty, staff, and the community surrounding the university.

Resolution

Therefore, faculty members, at their own discretion, should manage their own classroom in a way that maximizes their own and their students’ health and, by extension, the health of the broader university and local community. Faculty members should exercise this choice even if disallowed by state law, the Board of Regents, or University of Northern Iowa policy.