

## University Faculty Senate Minutes

March 28, 2022 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:** Francis Degnin (Chair), Melissa Dobosh (Vice-Chair) John Burnight (Past Chair), James Mattingly (Faculty Chair), Gretchen Gould (Secretary), Imam Alam, Nick Bailey, Megan Balong, Karen Breitbach, Michael Conrad, Kenneth Elgersma, Mark Hecimovich, Thomas Hesse, Rob Hitlan, Charles Holcombe, Syed Kirmani, Karla Krueger, Matthew Makarios, Andrew Stollenwerk, Ali Tabei, John Wiles (Fifty percent quorum met, with 19 of 19 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.)

Regular Guests: John Vallentine, Patrick Pease, Becky Hawbaker, Alisanne Struck (NISG Vice-President).

Additional Guests: Katelyn Browne, Angie Cox, Janet Croft, Anne Marie Gruber, Amy Igou, Matthew Jackson, Hyunseung Koh, Jeanne Little, Andrew Welty, Theresa Westbrook

**Call to Order at 3:30 PM:** *Note: Due to technical difficulties with Senate Chair Degnin's computer, Past Chair Burnight convened the meeting and asked Faculty Chair Mattingly if he would like to make any announcements.*

### Courtesy Announcements

Comments from Faculty Chair Mattingly [time stamp 0:00:49]

*Faculty Chair Mattingly noted the Senate that faculty elections are currently taking place, and thanked all of the volunteers who stepped up to serve. He reminded faculty to please vote both on college ballots and at-large ballots.*

UF President Hawbaker [time stamp 0:02:08]

*President Hawbaker reminded the Senate that UF's Faculty Appreciation Picnic will take place on April 24, and that faculty, administrators, spouses, family, and pets are all invited. A save-the-date email and RSVP will be forthcoming. She also noted the upcoming April 15 deadline for compensation for low-enrolled summer courses; this is a pilot program that is intended to be voluntary for faculty, allowing low-enrolled courses to go forward with an alternative compensation structure. UF seeks to ensure that participation is truly voluntary, and asks faculty who might be experiencing pressure to participate to contact UF. She also offered some follow-up remarks on last month's Faculty Handbook consultation with the Senate, and expressed a desire to keep the Senate and faculty at large better informed about the debates occurring on the FHC throughout the year, including current efforts to clarify and develop policies and procedures related to major discipline and termination.*

Comments from NISG Vice-President Struck [time stamp 0:06:20]

*Vice-President Struck discussed the slight increase in student fees that recently passed the student Senate, the transition to the new student President and Vice-President, and an upcoming trip to Washington D.C. to discuss mental health initiatives.*

Comments from Senate Chair Degnin [time stamp 0:08:02]

*Senate Chair Degnin discussed the value of the Senate being able to engage in robust conversations about the issues that come before it, and noted that the Senate's reception would take place on May 2.*

**Minutes for Approval:** February 28, 2022 meeting [time stamp 0:09:35]

MOTION: Burnight/Elgersma (17 in favor-0 against-2 abstentions)

MINUTES APPROVED WITHOUT AMENDMENT.

**Docket Items** [time stamp 0:11:19]

1475 [Library Consultation](#)

*Representatives from Rod Library, including Dean Theresa Westbrook, Janet Croft, and Gretchen Gould, presented an update and answered questions about the library's collections and reductions necessitated by its materials budget, which has not increased since 2002-2003.*

1476 [Emeritus Request: William Koch](#) [time stamp 0:26:30]

MOTION: Makarios/Elgersma (16 in favor-0 against-3 abstentions)

*Past Chair Burnight, UF President Hawbaker, Faculty Chair Mattingly, and Senate Chair Degrin offered comments in support of the emeritus request.*

1477 [Emeritus Request: James Jurgenson](#) [time stamp 0:31:12]

MOTION: Dobosh/Makarios (16 in favor-0 against-3 abstentions)

*Senator Elgersma and Senate Chair Degrin offered comments in support of the emeritus request.*

1478 [Emeritus Request: Margaret Berghammer](#) [time stamp 0:33:50]

MOTION: Balong/Conrad (16 in favor-0 against-3 abstentions)

*UF President Hawbaker, Senator Balong, and Senate Chair Degrin offered comments in support of the emeritus request.*

1479 [Emeritus Request: Jerome Soneson](#) [time stamp 0:36:32]

MOTION: Burnight/Hesse (18 in favor-0 against-1 abstention)

*Past Chair Burnight, Senator Hesse, and Senate Chair Degrin offered comments in support of the emeritus request.*

1480 [Faculty Senate Handbook](#) [time stamp 0:40:32]

MOTION: Breitbach/Burnight (13 in favor-2 against [Hesse, Tabei]-4 abstentions)

*Senate Chair Degrin, Senator Makarios (Chair of the Senate Governance Committee), and Faculty Chair Mattingly outlined the proposal offered by the Senate Governance Committee for a Faculty Senate Handbook. UF President Hawbaker requested the removal of two sentences that touched on the jurisdictions of the Senate and UF. After considerable discussion, the Senate approved an amended version of the handbook with the two sentences removed.*

1481 [Proposed bylaws revision for a new Senate Delegation Framework](#) [time stamp 1:01:25]

MOTION: Burnight/Dobosh (15 in favor-0 against-4 abstentions)

*Senator Makarios and Faculty Chair Mattingly outlined the Governance Committee's proposal for a new Senate delegation framework, one in which each department would elect one Senator. After discussion the Senate approved the new delegation framework, which will start being phased in with the spring 2023 elections.*

**Other New Business** [time stamp 1:18:30]

*Due to time constraints, Senate Chair Degrin asked that Senators who would like to offer feedback on the [request](#) from the Construction Management program to allow their graduates to wear construction hats to commencement should email him; he will collect the feedback and forward it to President Nook.*

1482 [Regents Award for Faculty Excellence](#) (Executive Session) [time stamp 01:19:20]  
*Senate Chair Degrin requested a motion to go into executive session to preserve confidentiality (Burnight/Gould, 14 in favor-0 against-5 abstentions). Past Chair Burnight, who chaired the Regents Award Committee this year, presented the committee's recommendations to the Senate. The Senate approved the recommendations in executive session.*

**Adjournment** at 5:00 PM  
MOTION: Elgersma/Gould

*Please note that a transcript of the public Zoom chat is appended to these minutes.*

00:17:19      Becky Hawbaker:      Thank you for all of your excellent work, Alisanne!  
00:42:35      John Burnight:      Bill Koch's Walt Whitman will be Wednesday, April 6, at 7:30 in Lang Auditorium (sorry, I can't find an online link). Free admission!  
01:00:18      Karen Breitbach:      Thank you Becky.  
01:11:38      Becky Hawbaker:      Thank you, I appreciate your consideration and support.

## Department of Languages & Literatures

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March 4, 2022

Dear Members of the Faculty Senate:

I am writing in support of Dr. William N. Koch's application for emeritus status following his retirement at the end of the semester. During his twenty-three years as an adjunct instructor at UNI, Dr. Koch has been a dedicated teacher, a much-valued colleague and a committed university citizen.

Dr. Koch has taught a range of courses for the Department of Languages & Literatures (and for the Department of English prior to that) including Designing Proposals and Walt Whitman and his Contemporaries, but the primary course he has offered has been the introductory composition course that currently is titled College Writing and Research. It is for that class that he developed his textbook for college-level writing and reading, *Writing and Research for College: The Structures of Imaginative Literacy*. In that book, as in his teaching overall, Dr. Koch deploys a pedagogy that asks students to consider big questions and to be precise in the language they use to discuss them. As I noted when I last observed his teaching, this approach "has the advantage of training students to become attuned to how wording decisions shape the way that a text is received by a reader."

Though scholarship is not part of Dr. Koch's required portfolio, in his published critical work he has engaged with the ideas and writings of figures ranging from Northrup Frye and Mark Van Doren to Arthur C. Clarke. In addition, his most distinctive creative contribution has been his work as a Walt Whitman re-enactor whereby he has envisioned performances where he plays the part of Whitman (often growing his beard out ahead of time), maintaining character while engaging with audiences and reading works by one of America's most influential poets. I'm pleased that he will be able to offer a valedictory performance in April.

Finally, as a department head, I particularly appreciate Dr. Koch's sense of university citizenship. He has been a member of the Faculty Senate, has represented adjunct faculty for United Faculty, and he is a reliable participant in university events. Last year, he was able to offer a Capstone class titled "The Idea of the University," and I thought of this as a kind of capstone of his teaching, as he is someone who, throughout his career, has given a lot of attention to what exactly a university aims to accomplish for all of us who have dedicated a portion of our lives to such institutions.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jim O'Loughlin  
Department Head and Professor

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1 March 2022

Dear UNI Faculty Senate members,

I am most pleased to provide support for Dr. James Jurgenson's application for Faculty Emeritus status. Dr. Jurgenson earned a PhD in Molecular Biology from University of Arizona in 1980. He completed two post-doctoral positions at Rutgers, and then served as a faculty member at Dickinson College for seven years before coming to the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). When Dr. Jurgenson retires from UNI this summer, he will have served the Department of Biology for 30 years.

Over the course of Dr. Jurgenson's career at UNI, he has improved the Department of Biology and the learning of its students through a devotion to adopting new technologies and making them available to students. He was an early promoter of student-centered, project-based learning in his molecular laboratory classes. Thanks to his foresight, Dr. Jurgenson was awarded a National Science Foundation grant in 1994 to support PCR-based undergraduate molecular biology work, less than 10-years after PCR was first described and well before it was commonly used in classrooms. For the past 15 years, he has made it possible for students in our general education classes to observe and analyze their own DNA profiles; this was a time-consuming labor of love for him. Student comments from his classes have always centered on two points: Dr. Jurgenson cares about his students, and he challenges them. Under Dr. Jurgenson's guidance, 13 students completed their MS or MA degrees. Many of his 45 public presentations at scientific conferences included student coauthors.

Dr. Jurgenson is regarded by faculty and staff in the Department of Biology as an innovator and a problem solver, developing resourceful solutions to benefit a community of faculty and student researchers working on small budgets. Many of his colleagues have benefited greatly from a list of projects too long to enumerate, but that include cloning *Thermus aquaticus* DNA polymerase for student research when industry pricing would have been prohibitive to student work. He also found ways to create reagent-quality water to assure accurate analyses. Dr. Jurgenson has advanced this department both through devotion to his own research agenda, and through his generosity and willingness to collaborate. Most of these collaborations remain only in the memories of colleagues and students, but some are documented in Dr. Jurgenson's publication history. Over the course of his career, he has published 20 manuscripts, at least five of which involved collaborations with other faculty in either the Department of Biology or in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

Dr. Jurgenson's research at UNI has been supported by the National Institute of Health, the Carver Scientific Research Initiative, the National Fish & Wildlife fund, and through a series of seven awards from the Department of Transportation. These awards total over \$360,000. In addition, Dr. Jurgenson's efforts to improve teaching facilities at UNI resulted in another \$170,000 of funding to support student learning.

Over the course of his career, he has given generously of his time. For the community, Dr. Jurgenson led numerous DNA workshops for high-school classes. At the university, he served at a variety of levels. He has been the chair of the Department of Biology Professional Assessment Committee, and he was a member of the Committee on Academic Program Review and numerous other university and college committees, including the College Promotion and Tenure Committee. Most prominently, he served as

Faculty Chair. Beyond that, Dr. Jurgenson was extremely active in service to his profession through membership on boards and service as a reviewer.

In light of Dr. Jurgenson's laudable accomplishments in teaching, scholarship, and service to others, I wholeheartedly recommend that he be awarded emeritus status.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Theresa Spradling". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Theresa A. Spradling  
Professor of Biology and Department Head

3/9/2022

To the UNI Faculty Senate:

I whole-heartedly endorse the request for Emeritus status from Professor Gretta Berghammer.

Professor Berghammer has had an illustrious career as an educator and artist. Her achievements have been characterized by the creation of new work, significant outreach to the community, prolific grant-writing to support her projects, contributions to the literature of her discipline, and the creation of significant opportunities for students through ongoing connections to professional theaters.

In her time at UNI, Gretta has been responsible for several youth theatre tours to underserved populations. This work has included a focus on inclusionary practices for participants and audience members on the Autism Spectrum. She has consistently created substantial experiential opportunities for UNI students, and her extensive outreach into the community has increased visibility for the university.

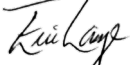
She has also created immersive-theatre experiences for students with exceptionalities, such as a NASA-supported project called *To Touch The Moon* - a devised theatre experience targeted to youth on the autism spectrum and celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first manned mission to the moon. It was a uniquely creative way to connect to STEM fields through a theatrical experience. This project was created under her guidance through the mechanisms of two departmental courses, extensive grant-writing efforts, and consultation with multiple entities from the UNI campus and beyond. This was a first-of- its-kind experience in both the fields of theatre and spectrum work which garnered significant national recognition and served as a focal point for shifting best practices and changing the thinking about this type of work.

Another hallmark of her work has been high-quality teaching grounded in genuine care for her students. Students consistently indicate how passionate and supportive she is, and that their work with her resulted in substantial growth and learning. She fulfills the spirit of the language found in her teaching philosophy, which emphasizes an approach "grounded in the pursuit of ideas that tackle problems, support others, and engage participants physically, emotionally, creatively, and/or verbally". Her teaching processes have served as a strong example to others in the department.

Professor Berghammer built a high-quality Youth Theatre program over the last two decades. This work included 20 summer productions under the auspices of Sturgis Youth Theatre and countless weekend workshops and school outings which provided opportunities for UNI students to develop into strong (and in-demand) teaching artists.

There is no question that Professor Berghammer's substantial body of work has positively impacted hundreds of UNI students, and - realistically - thousands of K-12 students. For these reasons, her request for Emeritus status is appropriate, and her impressive contributions should be celebrated.

Sincerely,



Eric Lange, Head  
Department of Theatre, UNI

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20 March 2022

UNI Faculty Senate

Greetings!

I write in support of Dr. Jerome Soneson's application for emeritus status. Jerry arrived at UNI in 1991, after receiving his B.A. at North Park College, and an M.Div, M.A. and Ph.D. at Harvard University. Over the course of his 31 years at UNI, Jerry has epitomized what it means to be a teacher-scholar and a colleague.

Although Jerry was hired to teach religion, he is one of the few faculty in the department who is trained specifically in both religion and philosophy. Throughout his career, his research focused on exploring the contributions of philosophers to theological thinking and theologians to philosophical thinking. His book, *Pragmatism and Pluralism: John Dewey's Significance for Theology* exemplifies his interest cross-disciplinary engagement. His specific focus on pragmatism, particularly in the work of John Dewey underscores his understanding of philosophy as a discipline inseparable from the social realities in which we live. Viewed from this perspective, both philosophy and theology, for example, examine questions of normative judgments that cannot be divorced from their cultural situatedness. One can see this interest in Jerry's other publications, which often dealt with complicated questions about the environment, nationalism, and war.

Jerry's teaching underscores his engagement in these two disciplines central to the liberal arts. For Jerry, education is about how we live our best lives, how we create meaning, and how we make the world better by our actions. He was a staunch defender of the Humanities Program, not only serving for many years as advisor to Humanities majors, but also teaching Humanities courses regularly and with gusto. He contributed widely to the Liberal Arts Core, with courses ranging from Religions of the World to The Idea of the University to The Holocaust in Literature and Film. In the department, he regularly taught Religion and Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Religion and its Critics, and American Pragmatism: James and Dewey. He also co-taught a course with Steve O'Kane (Biology) on Religion, Ideas of God, and Evolution, and many courses in the Honors Program. In all of these courses, he taught students how to read and discuss difficult texts and ideas, stretching them to expand their perspectives and consider their place in the world carefully. Jerry always met students where they are, but also pushed them to hone their critical thinking, speaking, and writing skills. He is a masterful leader of class discussion. He was in the first cohort of recipients of the University Book & Supply Outstanding Teaching Award, which is a further testament to his excellent teaching.

Jerry has also given many hours of service to the institution. In the 1990s, he was a member and later co-chair, of UNI's Qualities of an Educated Person project, a group that engaged in important conversations about what a UNI education should and could do for our students. He served as a member of the Faculty Senate at two different times during his career. He has advised student organizations, worked on various



Task Forces, served on, and chaired, search committees. He is currently a member of the Program Vitality Committee. His thoughtful approach to problems, his collegiality, and his desire to contribute to the growth of the institution have made him an excellent committee member. He has also contributed to his professional organizations, engaging in scholarly conversations on a variety of topics. He served the university, college, and department as Head for ten years, in addition to two stints as interim Head. He has provided calm and careful leadership in difficult circumstances, always confronting challenges with evidence and considered arguments. He endeavored always to be fair, to reflect on all sides of the issue, and to make decisions with care. He has been a passionate and unwavering defender of our department and our programs, always working to emphasize their centrality to a liberal education at UNI.

When I came to UNI, my office was across the hall from Jerry's. I remember having numerous helpful conversations with him about teaching; his advice and mentoring has been crucial to my success in the classroom and beyond. He has always been generous with his time, and a good conversation partner whenever I needed someone to think with. I have very much appreciated his support during my many years at UNI.

I understand why Jerry wants to retire, but I must say that I wish he'd decided to stay around a bit longer. I do look forward to continuing my conversations with him when he takes on his new title, Dr. Soneson, Professor Emeritus.

Sincerely,

*Susan E. Hill*

Susan E. Hill, Head  
Department of Philosophy & World Religions