
FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

March 3, 2022

12:50 PM to 2:20 PM

MSB 109

Present: Tim Newman, Joey Taylor, Carmen Scholz, Mike Banish, Andrea Word, Andrei Gandila, Carolyn Sanders, Gang Wang

Absent: Azita Amiri, Laird Burns, Elizabeth Barnby

Ex-Officio and Guest: President Dr. Karr, Dr. Jon Hakkila

- **Faculty Senate President Carmen Scholz called the meeting to order at 12:50 PM.**
- **Meeting Review:**
- **Administrative Reports**
 - President Karr
 - I wanted to check in with you on mask. A switch got tripped when Tuscaloosa decided to get rid of mask. I really wanted to get feedback on that. The students were about 75% in favor of dropping. Staff were about 60% in favor of keeping mask. Faculty Senate were in favor of getting rid of them. Huntsville City School is dropping mask. I don't want to do anything right now but look at numbers through the CDC. We are still in orange. When we slip down to yellow, I will strongly consider dropping mask.
 - I want to tell you how much I appreciate your attendance with the Provost interactions. I was disappointed there wasn't more faculty in attendance. I would really appreciate you to encourage the faculty to view those and complete the assessment online. I can work with these candidates, but I need the faculty onboard as well. I think you told me, Carmen, that someone said they didn't want us to settle for the sixth best candidate. I think once I receive the assessment back, I will be able to get the top three. Then we may bring them all back to campus. The next step is fuzzy but depends on the feedback.
 - Andrea – Can you tell us where we are right now in regard to response?
 - President – I am not engaged in that. Bob may be able to give you that. I think the last time I spoke with him that we had received about 50 faculty surveys on Provost candidates so far.
 - Carmen – That is only 50 total. The deadline is being worked on to be extended. I want to speak to the fact that so few attended and responded. It is in regard to how thin the faculty are stretched. It is an indication of what is going on campus. I do want that on record.
 - Mike – I am going to piggyback on what Carmen said. In your case, when you tell me that you are looking for faculty feedback, I believe you. I think

you are fighting an uphill battle right now. I will encourage my faculty to watch the videos.

- President – Thank you. It is an important decision, an important person. I want someone that the faculty believes is the best. I commit to you that I will look at it. It isn't a popularity vote but we want someone who people feel good about.
 - Carolyn – I think the extension of deadline for these surveys will make everyone feel good. The end of February was very tough for faculty attendance.
 - President – If we have a solid pool of candidates, we aren't the only game in town. We do have spring break coming up. We don't want to wait to make an offer and then the candidate is off the market. I am not saying that we pushing a vote but we don't want to push this out.
 - Carolyn – I appreciate that. Before (with previous searches) we haven't been heard.
 - President – I need people to do serious evaluations. I want someone that everyone can work well with.
 - Tim – I was on the other part of campus and saw all the fences (for construction of the Altenkirch Greenway; do you know how long they will be up?
 - President – I have no idea. I think they are splitting the greenway around the library. It should be the final phase. I think they are putting recognition plates in behind my office. I have to leave today to speak with the Retirement Association. I will be attending an alumni event this evening. We need to work to get the alumni involvement growing.
 - Tim – We took all the sports hall of fame photos down in Spragins Hall. Apparently, they are aware that happened. I spoke to Dr. Dawson and they were found in a box in a closet.
 - President- I will get on that. Those are important.
 - Carolyn – College of Business does very well in acknowledging alumni. That is the best model for every college and department.
 - President – I agree to that. It is very important. I don't see how you ever lose when you acknowledge achievements of people. It is important even at the student level. It makes a difference.
- Dr. Hakkila
 - Last semester we found out that no one is following through with any deadlines. We were in crisis mode. The Library Dean pulled us aside and said that thesis and dissertations were missing. Susan Knight was on board with helping us find them. We found some dated back to 2013 in the queue. We are working to get those uploaded. I was receiving forms to sign without the theses and dissertations. There were huge mistakes on these. We rebooted the copy-editing process. We realized people were waiting on these students to graduate. Spring is our trial run on some changes. It has been even more difficult because the person who had taken this on decided to retire. I will do it if I have to. There is enough time to copy edit these by end of semester. We can't make any promises if they miss deadline. Students need to know that if they submit late it will be up to the registrar, not us. It will be awarded next semester. The deadlines as published are: Defense is March 11th.

Submission to College Dean is March 28th. Realistically, the draft needs to be to the committee before the defense. There is another date, April 6th, for our office. The copy editing is a process with the student. I have had a couple that were good at first run but most take about three times. This should give us enough time before graduation. There is another dates in here. The Registrar has a deadline that she wants the name of student, dissertation, and name of advisor.

- Carmen – I am living this now with a student. We understand your deadlines. The actual process to us is unclear. My student was not allowed to bring his thesis to the Dean for his signature. Only the staff assistant can sign the form without seeing the thesis. The staff assistant, not the student, submits to you for signature without the thesis. I have not figured out how to insert the signature on the pdf. It needs to come from your office that the Dean shouldn't sign off without the thesis. You can see the frustration among the students.
- Joey – Is there something that we can put out to all Deans? Like a blanket message so that the deans are on the same page with process? In our college we have no issues with this.
- Jon – I was under the impression that when it was submitted to the Dean the thesis went with it.
- Mike – That is how we do it.
- Carmen – It could not even be a Dean issue. We do have staff assistants involved. The student could be told they are not allowed to communicate.
- Jon – I read every dissertation at College of Charleston in my role there. I feel like this is a responsibility we have to our students. This isn't just a hand waving exercise. This is what I am doing when I am copy editing. This will sit with them for the rest of their lives.
- Mike – There was a period of time that the library made hard copies and binds them. I think one thing that happens there is we don't do that anymore. Why is it important to have one-inch margins if it will never be published?
- Jon – Someone agreed that it would be nice to have these printed in the library.
- Joey- Carmen and I talked with David Moore (Library Dean) about this.
- Carmen – It started to go bad when ProQuest started going down. Some of the missing ones are from my students because I told them that we do not go with ProQuest.
- Carolyn – Thank you for working this. You said it was a priority and I appreciate it.
- Jon – The formal process is it goes through Grad Council. I would really like to see great relationships with Grad Council and Faculty Senate. I want everyone to be informed with processes and give feedback. We want the institution to go the way you want it to. If you don't hear from your Grad Counselors you need to get in touch with them.
- Joey – When you talk about copy editing what does that entail?
- Jon – It is formatting as well.

- Carmen – We want you to know where all the problems are. We appreciate all your efforts to turn this around. We know this isn't a simple fix. If you give us guidance on the deadlines.
- Tim – I think there has been a lot of confusion about online submission. My student usually asks a student before. No one on campus really knows how to help them.
- Carmen – There is no formal mechanism where the thesis is being uploaded and transferred to you.
- Jon – That is good to know.
- This now is the biggest problem. It took months for me to figure this out. The university does not have a Graduate Student dismissal policy. There is no way to get rid of a student once they are on the system. I had to walk through this with a bunch of folks. This chart shows the layout of what is actually happening. If nothing bad happens and they keep their GPA up, they move across to graduate.
- What happens if the GPA drops below 3.0? The Registrar sends a list of students that are no longer in good standing. The total was 150 students. That is horrifying to me. The reason there are two list is because the College of Education need a 2.5 to stay in good standing. We are supposed to send out a notification once we receive the list. This notifies they are on probation. We haven't done that because we didn't know that we needed to. If the Grad School notifies the department, an action plan is created and approved by advisor then sent back to Grad School. There is usually a well-defined process of what happens when a student goes on the list. It has become an overwhelming job with 150 students with our number of staff. If the student raises their GPA, they roll back up to good standing. If they don't raise their GPA, dismissal would usually kick in. However, we don't have dismissal. You then go to the orange back. This is the most frightening thing to me. After three semesters of non-registration, the Registrar inactivates student and cancels email. Student is inactive not dismissed. They can reapply. They still exist. No one ever gets dismissal. If an international student falls into this, then they are inactivated and sent back to their country but still a student. If a student raises their GPA and doesn't satisfy their plan, we aren't following on that. In the grad catalog, it says if the student doesn't perform well, they may be dismissed. Last year, a student was dismissed because they found out it was academically impossible for them to graduate. There are a bunch of problems here. We never know how many students each program has. I found a student that recently reapplied that was in this category.
 - Mike – The problem here in some of the programs is the clientele we are dealing with. This was probably put in place to be kind to that clientele.
 - Jon – I agree.
 - Mike – We all have these students that get involved in big new programs on the Arsenal and have no time for this.
 - Jon – These rules are set up for long-term part-time students. The full-time students are not being protected by these rules.
- I have a sketch of a skeleton of what are best practices. This is what other institutions practice. I am not saying use this, I am just giving an example that can be edited. This gives the student a letter saying that you have "n" semesters to figure this out and recover. If they do recover, they go back up. If they don't, then

they can go for an appeal. If they student doesn't meet the conditions, they get dismissed. You will then either have to reapply. The program can decide if they will let them back in with caveats. It isn't a free ride, it will be stricter. The other possibility is then the student can apply to a new program. We could then waive all grades and start from scratch. There are lots of ways to do this. There is a direct path from dismissal to good standing.

- Andrea- Do we already have the ability to replace one grade?
- Jon – Yes.
- Mike – With the arsenal and contractors, one thing I would like to see is a layout of the student getting the email, the Chair and Dean, and the Program Coordinator. The main thing is that it really is reported. Who really is interacting with the student?
- Jon – That is part of the path. At my last institution, it was copied to all these. Once the student was readmitted, we made the student come into the office in person and sign. We made is serious they knew what conditions they are being readmitted.
- Carmen – How can my students be failing these classes and I not know about it? You have a lot of grad students that are part-time. They are not physically on campus and being monitored. Who has the time to sit and monitor these?
- Jon – I first looked at who are the Program Directors? It isn't consistent across campus.
- Carmen – We don't even respond to applications because we do not see it.
- Jon – I don't see this as being punitive. We are trying to help the student. How are going to know? We need these triggers built into the system. Of the 150 listed, there were GPA's 0.06. This is someone who has been here a long time. Why is that student here?
- Mike – We have an issue with undergraduate too. They stop coming to class, most are for a seemingly good reason. If they let me know, most of the time they don't, we could see about getting a withdrawal. In terms of these F's. We need to be proactive before it is an dismissal.
- Jon – All of this is negotiable. I am here because I want you to know that you are in influential places to talk with your colleagues. I will come to your departments; I will talk with the full senate. We all know there is a problem. I want as much agreement across campus as I can get.
- Andrea – Would it be possible to send us a draft to take to our department? Would you want that much feedback?
- Jon - I would filter it through your Grad Counsel representative.
- Andrea – They have already looked at this?
- Jon – Yes.

➤ **Officer/Committee Report**

- Tim Newman, Past President
 - No Report.
- Mike Banish, Parliamentarian
 - No report.
- Carolyn Sanders, Ombudsperson
 - No report.

- Joey Taylor, President-Elect
 - No report.
- Andrei Gandila, Governance and Operations Committee Chair
 - It is election season. We are in the process of electing new senators.
- Gang Wang, Undergraduate Scholastic Affairs Committee Chair
 - No report.
- Andrea Word, Personnel Committee Chair
 - No report.
- Carmen Scholz, President
 - No report.
 - Carolyn – Especially in light of lecturers being represented in the senate, how much latitude does governance have in regards to elections.
 - Tim – We have to follow bylaws as written.
 - Carolyn – So they cannot participate next year?
 - Laird is not here. I want to point out the RCEU has money for 35 and we only have 26 participants. The application process has gotten so complicated. I pulled out of the program because of the process. The process this year started too late. If we don't improve money will vanish. I would like to urge the Finance Committee Chair to simplify this.
 - Andrea – Susan Alexander sent an email on February 24th. They were going to contact those who in the past had done it. We were going to try and simplify this but we were late this year.
 - Carmen – I want to make it clear that it is urgent to simplify this process.
 - Andrea – There was a proposition that we do this through a survey.
 - Carmen – At what point?
 - Andrea – That is your proposal.
 - Carmen – As long as it isn't longer than one page.
 - Joey – There was so much work that Dave Cook and Bernhard Vogler were doing on their own on the back end. I felt like Dave figured out how to do a google form for the student and that would populate spreadsheets so that Bernhard wasn't having to do everything manually. They did a lot of work on the back end of the proposal process and I think some of this process was aimed at trying to more efficiently get that info together so they didn't have to do so much themselves. I don't know if it has gotten more complicated.
 - Carmen – Whatever it is it needs to be more workable next year. Andrea you are working on a resolution on House Bill 312. We make a stand as UAH Senators. I do not want a lengthy discussion on the wording. It is important we speak to the fact.
 - Where is Title IX?
 - Andrea – It is on the agenda for this time. We split the documents with Beth.
 - Who has the Credit Hour Contact Hour Policy review?
 - Joey – It was here in February. That is all I have?
 - Tim – It went to Curriculum.
 - The President spoke to the mask and we must accept where we are.
 - Is there an interest to bring Kristi Motter to full senate?
 - Joey – Would it be productive?

- Carmen – Do I sense to wait and place it on the next senate?
- Andrea – I think that we can table it.
- Carmen – Doing it in the fall will show the importance to the new Provost.
- Mike – We still don't have budget transparency. I want to see the numbers for this category.
- Carmen – Ok, we push this back until fall.
- Lecturer Bill will be back to the senate on the 31st. Can I get an unofficial feeling from you about if we have reached the finish line?
 - Andrea – I think we will have a discussion. Personnel had discussions that I pushed to the senate.
 - Carolyn – What are the discussions in regard to?
 - Mike- There are two departments in two different colleges that have heavy lecturer concentration, Math and English. Both of those departments have more lecturers than Education, Nursing, Business, and Engineering. If you take those two department out of the college, they have more lecturers than the rest of the college. Are we talking about the college not having the adequate representation or are we talking about the lecturers needing representation? I think that is something we haven't addressed yet. Is it departmental representation or lecturer representation? There are some cases that we could run into that you actually have to combine colleges to get to the seven (regarding Carolyn's proposed amendment to Bill 458).
 - Andrei – The document you sent today. It looks here we aren't even able to change much. We need to have consistency across the campus. Is all the discussion and effort being for nothing?
 - Tim – I've passed around the message that Bob Lindquist received from Office of Counsel's Mike Huff. Huff's position would be a profound change to business at UAH. When the Policy on Policies was instituted, the President stated it was for policies only--that that was a new, parallel track to the track for the Handbook. Only the numbered policies, not the Handbook, was to be covered under the Policy on Policies. When Carmen and I talked with the Chief Counsel for the System and Mike Huff in 2021, they said that the Senate can change its bylaws without Administrative involvement as long as it is in line Board Rule 108. So, this message from Mike Huff is a step back from that statement in 2021. For policies, the President can suspend any policy at any time. If the Handbook is covered by that, then what does that mean about your tenure? Chapter 7 of the Handbook can be suspended at any time? What does that say about House Bill 312? What prevents administration from doing away with Chapter 7? It seems like this sets up the potential for strong man politics. Rules are then only as good as whoever we have at the top. We have no protection anymore. This is really something. We need to address this as a Senate body.
 - Mike- One thing you have to make perfectly clear is that we understand that anything we do goes through an approval process. Yes, it will go to the Provost, President, Legal, and BOT. The handbook cannot be suspended as the Policy on Policies states. The President has pointed out that the

handbook was not a part of that policy. The fact is what was left off was not necessary as we were told.

- Carmen – In this letter, Huff demands the lecturers be given Senate membership like UA and UAB. It is not his responsibility.
- Andrei – It sounds like Tuscaloosa and UAB want us to join in so that we are consistent?
- Carolyn – When do we bring the President in on these discussions? I am sure the letter is warranted but when does he step in and go back?
- Tim – I think a letter is warranted. It will be on record.
- Joey – Who does this go to?
- Carmen – President/Provost and copy Huff?
- Mike – Once we get the letter laid out, I think you need to talk with Ron Gray.
- Carmen – The letter will need to be needed before April 8th.
- Mike- I don't think it will be needed for that meeting. I think you need to have a conversation with them letting them know where it is going. This is such a far reach for conducting normal business?
- Joey- I think this interpretation of our by-laws is intentionally antagonistic.
- Mike – We have never done anything to them that would be considered hostile.
- Carmen- We have an agreement that a letter needs to be written.
- If I could ask everyone as we bring back the Lecturer Bill, we take a responsible discussion from the FSEC and not derive a new discussion.

➤ Meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM.