

# Faculty Senate Meeting

March 18, 2021 at 3:10 pm.

## Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 3:11 pm via Zoom video conferencing.

<https://youtu.be/ZvQTQ04Geow>

**Senators in Attendance:** Charlene Simmons, Tammy Garland, Nominanda Barbosa, Jamie Harvey, Zibin Guo, Nicholas Boer, David Giles, Julia Cummiskey, Susan Thul, Natalie Owsley, Alexandra Zelin, Erika Schafer, Christopher Stuart, Joshua Hamblen, Cuilan (Lani) Gao, Phil Roundy, Spencer Usrey, Stephanie Gillison, , Ron Goulet, Liz Hathaway, Joanie Jackson, Barry Kamrath, Beth Crawford, Bernadette DePrez, Wes Smith, Anne Swedberg, Jodi Caskey, Donald Reising, Irina Khmelko, Sarah Einstei, Eleni Panagiotou, Mengjun Xie, Chandra Ward, Ethan Mills Ignatius Fomunung, Marisa Colston.

**Senators not in attendance:** Hill Craddock (**on sabbatical**), Jaclyn Michael, Priscilla Simmons-Robertson.

## Approval of the minutes:

Approval of the minutes of the February 18, 2021. There were no revisions nor objections, so the minutes were approved.

## Administrative Reports:

### Chancellor Steve Angle:

Not present

### Provost Jerold Hale

- A. Brief update on Spring 2021 semester face to face commencement ceremonies:
  - Confirmed the number of ceremonies for graduate and undergraduates.
  - Details on whether there will be guest would be announced later.
  - It is estimated that it will take six hours for cleaning between each ceremony
  - Any additional detail be provided later today.

## Committee reports:

- A. NTT Committee

**Proposed changes to NTT committee description in Faculty Senate Bylaws:  
Create new NTT divisional members.**

The discussion of this proposal begun on the Faculty Senate meeting of February. A motion to continue the discussion in the February full faculty meeting was put forward and passed. Discussions took place and members were encouraged to contact their senators for further comments which were sent to the Senate President.

The debate on the topic continued this current meeting followed by voting. Before the beginning of the debate, the President recalled Roberts rules of order to ensure that everyone would get an opportunity to speak if wanted to participate.

**The original proposal from the committee:**

The number of tenure-track Senate members from each of the above divisions will be based on the number of assistant, associate and full professors in each division. **The number of nontenure-track Senate members from each of the above divisions will be based on the number of full-time non-tenure-track (lecturers, clinical, visiting, research, and practice) faculty in each division.** If the size of the division is 1-15, 16- 30, 31-45, 46-60, etc., the number of representatives will be 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., respectively. Only those members of a division eligible to be elected as described above will be counted for the purpose of determining the apportionment.

Overall, there was intervention from many members of the senate, some supporting the equally representation of NTTF on the senate a hundred percent and supporting the proposal as presented. In general, most members agreed on the need to increase representation of NTTF on the senate. A few members still had concerns related to how the process is proposed and wanted to see other options.

After many interventions, Tammy Garland put a motion forward to amend the part of the language of the original proposal. The motion was seconded by Don Reising:

Part of the original proposal's language would be replaced by:

The number of **Senate members** from each of the above divisions will be based on the number of full-time non- tenure track, tenure track, and tenured faculty in each division. assistant, associate and full professors in each division. If the size of the division is 1-15, 16- 30, 31-45, 46-60, etc., the number of representatives will be 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., respectively. Only those members of a division eligible to be elected as described above will be counted for the purpose of determining the apportionment.

The discussion of the amendment proposed by Tammy Garland took place, with intervention of several senate members. Among them, some supported the amendment other preferred the original proposal.

After several interventions, a secondary amendment to Tammy Garland's amendment was put forward by Beth Crawford and was seconded by Christopher Stewart:

The number of **Senate members** from each of the above divisions will be based on the number of full-time non-tenure track, tenure track, and tenured faculty in each division: assistant, associate and full professors in each division. If the size of the division is 1-15, 16-30, 31-45, 46-60, etc., the number of representatives will be 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., respectively. Only those members of a division eligible to be elected as described above will be counted for the purpose of determining the apportionment.

**Within each voting division, the members elected must be from at least two different faculty-rank categories (full time non tenure track, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor), and wherever four members represent a given voting division, it is desirable that they come from four different categories, and these elections must be held after the completion of the University-at-large election.**

The floor was then opened to discuss the secondary amendment to the primary amendment. After several interventions a roll call vote took place. The secondary amendment to the primary amendment passed with 30 “yes” 2 “no” and no abstention.

After few more interventions a roll vote call took place on the primary amendment to the original proposal. The primary amendment failed with 9 “yes” 21 “no” and no abstention. Because the primary amendment failed, the original proposal came back for further discussion and vote. A roll call vote took place and the original proposal passed with 25 “yes”, 3 “no” and 3 abstentions which means that the bylaws change passed.

#### **B. Faculty Senate Executive Committee (presented by President Simmons)**

**The committee brought forward a proposal to change Senate Bylaws Language related to the Faculty Administrative Relations Committee.**

The committee conducted a shared governance survey asking faculty whether they thought the Handbook Committee should be opened to include members who are not senators. She recalled that the current bylaws require that all members be senators. From the survey’s results, the majority of the faculty supported expanding the membership beyond just senate members. Traditionally, it is hard to find people to serve on the Handbook Committee and this is because under the current bylaws is limited to only senators and in some divisions such as library there is only two people that can serve and there must be a library representative.

In the survey, we also asked their opinion about the makeup of the Committee or what should be the balance between senators and non-senator members. The number one choice was for senators to maintain majority of seats but there also a healthy number of people that wanted an even split.

Based on the results from the survey, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee is putting forward the proposal below:

**Composition.** The faculty Handbook Committee shall be composed of the Vice President of the Senate (chair) and six members: two from the college of Arts and Sciences and one representative from the Library, College of Business, College of Health, Education Science, ex officio: Provost designee. At least half of the members of the committee (counting the chair as a member) must be members of the senate.

Discussions on the proposal above took place:

- How would non-senators be appointed? The senator member recalled her concern on how certain committees are formed, especially those committees that have influential role on major issues. She thinks there has been lack of transparency on how committees are filled and that some people stay on the same committee for a very long period, some rotate. She emphasizes that without transparency then she would not support the amendment to the Bylaws.
- West Smith put forward an amendment to the original proposal to add a line that would say “at least two of the committee members must be non-tenured faculty” to guarantee adequate representation within the committee and guarantee that issues such as promotion mechanisms and others concerning NTTF can be best described in the Handbook. The amendment was seconded by Jody Caskey.

Discussions of the proposed amendment took place:

- A faculty thought that whoever is chairing the NNT Committee would automatically be part of this committee. She was not sure and wanted certification on this matter. West Smith responded that there was a discussion about that and that he believed that the idea is to keep it open to anybody (NTTF) and not put the burden only on the NTTF Committee chair.
- A senator needed clarification on the composition of the Handbook Committee. A clarification was provided by the Senate President: It’s the President Elect and sometimes other senators.

A roll call vote took place after the discussion of the amendment and the motion passed with 25 “yes”, one “no” and 0 abstentions.

The floor was then opened for further discussions of the amended proposal:

- A member wanted a clarification on the proposal and expressed a concern related to how appointment to Committees especially to committees like Handbook usually takes place. Her concerns extended to how senators are appointed to serve on committees, how long they serve on committees. She added that very often people get comfortable working together in a committee and because of that maybe others are not having the opportunity to also get involved and contribute to important discussion.
- A member wanted to know the reason for the proposed amendment and specifically know which problems it would be solving. The Senate President answered that one of the major problems associated with it as it is, is the difficulty in finding six senators plus the Vice President which is automatically the chair to serve in this Committee. This will open opportunities for some non-senator faculty who maybe want to be involved in the Handbook Committee but do not have the time to serve as senator. Also, in her view it would take some of the burden off the senators that come from the smaller divisions such as Library.

- The Senate President Simmons added as clarification that with exception of FARC, all other committees under the senate are reformed every year. This means that the appointment is for a year. However, some people will end up being reappointed multiple times.
- A member expressed support to the concern (how members are appointed) and acknowledged that it is an existing but separate issue, and for that we should vote on the proposed amendment in order to expand the pool first and then take under advisement if that's an issue and have another proposal at a different time.
- A follow up question; so, would the process for filling the Handbook Committee seats be the same as every other committees? President Simmons clarified that if this proposal is approved then when the survey that comes out in the Spring where faculty would indicate what committee they are interested in would have to be updated to include Handbook Committee as well.
- A member wanted to call the attention of the senate that many times being part of a committee has a lot to be with the willingness to serve on the senate and not so from being elected to serve.
- Senator Julia Cumminskey which also presented some concerns then presented an amendment to the proposal: the amendment would include the underlined bold sentence within the original and amended proposal.

***Composition.*** The faculty Handbook Committee shall be composed of the Vice President of the Senate (chair) and six members: two from the college of Arts and Sciences and one representative from the Library, College of Business, College of Health, Education Science, ex officio: Provost designee. **Seats will be filled by members of the Senate unless there are not sufficient senate members willing to serve.** At least half of the members of the committee (counting the chair as a member) must be members of the senate.

The proposed amendment was seconded by Don Reising and put forward for discussion:

- A member of the senate questioned whether the amendment was needed.
- A member suggested that non-senators be put as alternative in case cannot find enough senate members.

The amendment was put forward for vote and passed with 26 “yes” zero “no” and zero abstentions.

After the voting on the second amendment the senate went back to the previously amended proposal and then put it forward for vote: the amended proposal passed with no further discussions: 26 “yes” zero “no” and zero abstentions.

**C. Faculty Senate Executive Committee (presented by President Simmons)**

brought forward a proposal to change bylaws related to FARC

Due to the advanced time, a motion was put forward by Sarah Einstein to postpone the discussion of this proposal to the next meeting. Motion was seconded by Julia Cumminskey and Wes Smith. After a roll call vote the motion passed with 25 ‘yes’ zero ‘no’ and zero abstentions.

President Simmons encouraged everyone to look at the proposal again and send suggestions to her or to other members of the committee.

**D. Faculty Senate Executive Committee (presented by President Simmons)** brought forward a proposal for discussion on this present meeting that was also postponed for the next meeting. – Creating a Faculty Awards Committee – The idea is to create a committee that would select the University Faculty Awards recipients.

President Simmons encouraged everyone to look again at the proposal (more information is found on the Senate Website) as well and send suggestions to her or to other members of the committee.

**E. Reimaging General Education: Update**

The chair of the committee had already left this meeting to teach her class and this item will also be put back in the agenda for the next Faculty Senate meeting.

## **New Business:**

**President Charlene Simmons:** the feedback from the faculty townhall on EDO’s has been posted on the Faculty Senate website. It includes a list of improvement that faculty would like to see about EDO process. The feedback will be a starting point for Academic Affairs, the Handbook Committee and the Senate to look at in the next academic year. Faculty were encouraged to look at the document and email her with questions and/or suggestions.

## **Unfinished Business**

**Charlene Simmons gave a brief update:** the discussions on “Nine months faculty sick leave” are still on going. The results from the system wide survey showed that most of the faculty are in favor of it. The results are being finalized by UFC and they will be used to help advocate for the matter. President Simmons added that as the Faculty Senate President she has served on the Compensation Advisory Board for UTC system for six to seven years and she has brought this item again and they had agreed to create a committee to further study the subject.

## **Faculty Concerns:**

A faculty wanted to revise an older concern raised earlier regards to FARC appeal processes related to appeals for promotion and tenure when denied. Promotion and tenure that have been

denied works at the University level typically require faculty to file an appeal or to ask for an appeal. The senate member would like to see a change to the handbook in which the appeal would be automatic instead of being filled by the faculty member. He believes that the reasoning for this concern is that especially for junior faculty that are non-tenured it can create an awkward position, they usually do not know exactly where to go, what to do, or might not always know their rights. Having this change of the handbook and making the appeal automatic would make it easier.

A second concern also expressed by the same member is regarding staff compensation. He believes that many are severely underpaid, and this is a general issue across the board that should be given consideration and more action from the administration should be taken.

Regarding FARC appeals, President Charlene Simmons added that the Handbook Committee will continue looking into the issue. It may not be discussed and resolved until next year, but it is a concern to keep on the agenda for further conversations and that she will continue advocating for that. About the second concern regarding staff compensation, she acknowledged that there are currently conversations going on about adjusting staff salary particularly the lowest paid and that as the Senate president she will continue advocating for the matter as well.

A member asked for some clarity on summer compensation. President Simmons promised to ask for some clarity of the matter and even may bring someone to talk about it on the next faculty senate meeting. Related to the same subject, there was an immediate clarification from Vice Provost Mathews that added that he believes that the rule for 132 th rate referred to by the senate member was from the old handbook and is no longer used.

## **Announcements:**

There will be Townhalls on Handbook next week.

## **Adjournment:**

At approximately 5:45 pm Don Reising put a motion forward for adjournment. The call was seconded by Beth Crawford.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully,

Nominanda Barbosa, Senate Secretary 20/21