

Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting
September 4, 2019

The complete Recording for this meeting can be found at:

<https://myau.american.edu/groups/Committee/fs/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Present: Professors: Elizabeth Worden, Karen Baehler, John Heywood, Randall Blair, Stefano Costanzi, John Douglass, Max Friedman, Jolynn Gardner, Maria Gomez, Harriet Gotiangcno, Robert Hauswald, Kelly Joiner, Peter Kuznick, Benjamin Leff, Emily Lindsay, Stacey Marien, Garret Martin, Tom Merrill, Lillian Baeza-Mendoza, Danielle Mysliwiec, Hannah Park, Andrea Pearson, Zehra Peynircioglu, Jennifer Poole, April Shelford, Joran Tama, Stef Woods, Provost Dan Myers, DOF Mary L. Clark.

Chair's Report – Karen Baehler

Professor Baehler welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the year. She began by going over the Senate processes and the importance of shared governance. She closed with introductions from all the Senators.

Approval of the May 1, 2019 Minutes – Professor Baehler opened the floor for edits and discussion of the May 1 minutes. No discussion was needed, and the Senate **VOTED** 15-0-9 in favor.

Provost's Report – Dan Myers

Provost Myers thanked the senate for the work already done together and that he looks forward to collaborating more with the Senate committee. He reported on the following items:

- How to support the strategic plan: The president's office has hired new people to help manage this process. Further communication about this will be coming forward in the next few weeks.
- The next issue of the Overture newsletter will be sent within the next week. This new communication is to inform faculty of what initiatives are coming and how to become involved. There is plenty of room for information so please send any suggested topics forward to his office.
- The incoming first year class is above budget projections. Congratulations to VP Sharon Alston and her enrollment team for the great work they have done. Graduate enrollment is about where the projected budget was set but the final numbers are still to come.
- Retention numbers have been a challenge. The retention task force will continue working to turn these numbers around.
- The Fall on-campus leadership retreat is nearing, and the conversation will be focused on "Thriving and Retention." Jessica Waters, Sharon Alston and Jeff Brown will be coordinating the event. All members of the senate will be invited to attend.

- The second year of the Inclusive Excellence Plan is underway and this Fall discussions will be on planning for years 3-5. Discussions over the summer included adding a new plan for research.
- The 4 leadership searches are moving along. Currently underway and at various stages are the search processes for Chief Online Digital Officer, Vice Provost for Research, Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Dean of SOC. These will be completed over the course of this academic year.

Undergraduate Regulation Change 7.2.1 – Jessica Waters

Dean Waters stated that the regulation provides guidance on the process of studying at another institution. The regulation states, “The proposed amendment clarifies that students with approved Permits to Study may enroll in classes at AU during summer sessions or during dates when AU is not in session (i.e. winter and spring break). This amendment aligns the regulation with current university practices. The OUR has added a coding convention that satisfies reporting obligations to the National Clearinghouse and adheres to Federal standards for financial aid.” Previous practice has been handled by petition. The Senate **VOTED** 23-0-1 in favor.

Faculty Development for Newly Tenured Faculty – Steve Silvia

Professor Silvia stated that he is working on a new project under the Provost’s Office to help improve support for recently promoted associate professors, both tenure line and term, so that they can move toward promotion to full professor in a timely way. This is important to both the faculty member and the university and is a step forward to improved support of faculty development in all stages of faculty’s careers.

Professor Silvia informed the senate that a university wide working group has been established to develop a set of recommendations. Members of the group are Dean Peter Starr (CAS), AD Ajay Adhikari (KSB), Prof. Leena Jayaswal (SOC), AD Carole Gallaher (SIS), AD Corbin Campbell (SOE), Librarian Melissa Becher (Univ. Lib) and AD Alison Jacknowitz (SPA).

Professor Sylvia shared with the Senate some of the ideas being discussed, which include: sharing calendars across units on development activities, forming peer group cohorts with recent associate professors and improving mentoring.

Professor Sylvia opened the floor for discussion, suggestions and comments. He invited senators to reach out to him via email or phone.

AU Abroad Update – Sara Dumont

Director of the AU Abroad Office Sara Dumont thanked the senate for the opportunity to present her update on the AU Abroad program. She began with an overview of the many overseas centers connected with the abroad program and a report on rates of participation by gender, race and ethnicity, and duration of study abroad. She noted that AU has had very high rates of participation compared with other universities for many years – a point of great pride for AU.

Director Dumont described potential complications for many students who would like to take Core classes while abroad, especially students in programs with heavy majoring requirements and students doing double majors. She described various past proposals to make it easier for students to fulfill Core requirements abroad and expressed a desire to work with the Core Council to find better ways of integrating AU Abroad with the Core Curriculum.

Professors Casey Evans and Jolie Roetter from Kogod Business School described their experience working on a KSB pilot initiative to facilitate the approval of abroad courses for Core credit at AU. The current process of approval involves gathering course-specific information from partner institutions overseas and presentation of that material to Core committees for course approval. Working throughout the summer months, the KSB pilot made progress only on a few courses, which raises doubts about its scalability.

Vice Provost and Dean Jessica Waters and Professor Cindy Bair Van Dam (chair of the Core Committee) expressed their commitment to ensuring that most students who want to go abroad are able to fit it into their course of study. They have been working to find ways to review curriculum proficiently and expeditiously with abroad partners while also working with on-campus advisers to address students' concerns and manage complications associated with requirements.

Discussion among senators highlighted the challenges of balancing two highly valued components of an AU education: the opportunity for leaps in personal and intellectual growth that so often accompany study abroad, and engagement with “an intellectual core that all students participate in equally” (quoting the 2017 Core Curriculum proposal). The chair invited suggestions from senators and any other members of the university community who have fresh ideas about how to address complications at the intersection of Study Abroad and the Core (including strategies for granting major credit for courses taken abroad). She noted that the Senate will continue to stay involved in these discussions.

Honors Advisory Committee – Patrick Jackson

Honors Director Patrick Jackson informed the Senate that a series of proposed changes to the AU Honors Program will be coming forward later in the Fall semester, based on a review of the program by an external review and the university task force. In the meantime, Professor Jackson presented several proposed changes for immediate Senate consideration so that these can be implemented expeditiously:

- **Regulation 10.1.1** – “In order to receive the American University Honors Program notation on the final transcript, students in the American University Honors Program must graduate with a cumulative GPA of 3.5, earn a “C” or better in each University Honors course, and have an average of a GPA of 3.0 or better in all courses required by the University Honors Program.” (The previous cumulative GPA floor was 3.67. Average of 3.0 in all classes remains the same – no change proposed.) After much discussion, the Senate **VOTED** 12-10-2 in favor.
- **Membership Change to Bylaws** – The Honors Advisory Committee has requested to add to the membership a seat for the “outgoing” Faculty Director. The rationale for that change was explained: “With the constant changes that the current AU Honors program is

experiencing, it makes sense for there to be a continuum of knowledge and administrative experience from one Faculty Director to the next.” The Senate **VOTED** 23-0-1 in favor.

For the Good of the Order – Karen Baehler

Professor Baehler stated that the Provost Office has suggested that the Faculty Senate take over the selection process for faculty awards. A proposal for how to do this will be coming back to the full Senate for discussion and participation in the next few months.

Professor Baehler stated that the senate leadership is working to form an ad-hoc senate committee to look at the *Faculty Manual* specifically for obstacles to interdisciplinary teaching and scholarship. She requested that if anyone is interested in being a part of this committee to contact the Senate leadership.

Professor Baehler repeated the invitation for anyone with suggestions regarding the AU Abroad/Core integration issues to please contact Senate leadership.

Senator Stacey Marien reminded the Senate that tomorrow is the Faculty lunch on the lower level of the library. All are welcome!

Provost Myers informed the Senate that the replacement for VP Terry Flannery has been completed and the new VP for Communications and Marketing is Matt Bennett, a double alum from AU.

The Meeting was adjourned 4:50pm.