

*Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting
December 5, 2018*

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, Andrea Pearson, Anthony Ahrens, Kyle Brannon, Stefano Costanzi, John Douglass, Chris Edelson, Max Friedman, Jolynn Gardner, Maria Gomez, Robert Hauswald, John Heywood, Alan Isaac, Derrick Jefferson, Peter Kuznick, Emily Lindsay, Garret Martin, Danielle Mysliwec, Mohamed Nimer, Zehra Peynircioglu, Jim Quirk, Richard Sha, Cathy Schaeff, Joran Tama, Interim Provost Mary L. Clark

Professor Worden called the meeting to order at 2:36pm

Chair's Report – Elizabeth Worden

Approval of the Nov 7, 2018 Minutes

Professor Worden opened the floor for any edits and discussion on the November 7, 2018 minutes. No discussion was had, and the Senate **VOTED** 23-0-1 in favor.

Provost's Report – Mary L. Clark

Provost Clark updated the Senators of the retention efforts at the undergraduate level. She stated that AU posted a 98 percent student retention rate this year from fall 2018 to spring 2019, based on registrations as of December 4. This is the highest fall-to-spring retention rate ever recorded at AU: the equivalent last December 4 (2017) was 93.6 percent. Retention was higher this year for several groups that have been a focus of retention efforts, including African-American and LatinX and students not in living-learning communities. Vice President Fanta Aw and Provost Clark will be visiting all academic units in the spring semester to explain AU's strategic focus on retention as a positive, asset-building strategy related to the important goal of community building, and to discuss faculty's role.

Athletics Report for AY 2017-2018 – Billy Walker

Athletics Director Billy Walker presented the overall state of the athletes for AY 2017-2018. He stated that overall GPA for AU student athletes was 3.39. More than 84 percent of athletes had GPAs over the required 3.0. The athletics department is now tracking retention rates and will report to the Provost's office moving forward annually. Director Walker announced several of the special awards that athletes received and the overall distribution athletes across of academic units and programs.

Update and Discussion with Senate Budget Committee – John Douglass

Professor Douglass stated that he is a member of the University Budget Committee and that also present from the committee included Assistant VP of Finance Nana An, VP for Academic Administration Vi Ertle, Professor Leigh Riddick, and Librarian Olivia Ivy.

VP An stated that the University Budget began meeting in early October. She presented an overview of what the schedule and process of determining the budget for the next two years would like. She stated that the Board of Trustees will review the proposed budget at the late Feb meeting. Several highlights from the overview where;

- New revenue opportunities
- Missed enrollment targets – examples include graduate face to face, WCL, non-degree and SPExS
- 4 percent budget cut for two years
- Funding new opportunities to support the new strategic plan
- Other funding from all units
- Fundraising

Further discussion was had regarding the discount rate at AU in comparison to other competitors included concern on the issue of retention. Data has shown that retention remains a large factor in both the returning student and in the upper-class students. Data has also shown that students leaving have expressed that they would remain at AU if it was possible, indicating they are happy with their experience at the University.

VP Ertle also added that the current percentage of full pay students is diminishing, and they are bargaining with the many other institutions that they may choose from to receive their best offer. She expressed her concerns that this group is growing and needs to be handled with caution.

Provost Clark stated that the budget call speaks to the request for identifying new revenue initiatives and the 2 percent in cost savings intended to balance the operating budget and get the university back to a healthy place. The strategic plan anticipates investments above the operating budget of 23 million. The Board of Trustees designated 11.2 million, approximately half, from reserves to fund the strategic plan.

Provost Clark also stated that the BOT affirmed the Strategic Plan at the November meeting which will be rolled out in early Jan. It is closely aligned with what has been presented at the retreat and the here at the Senate presentation including three principle imperatives to include learning, research and community.

Tuition Resolution – Elizabeth Worden & Max Friedman

Professor Worden opened the floor to discuss the presented Tuition Resolution edited from the previous meeting in November. Further discussion was continued regarding the current budget and to a tuition increase. Concerns were expressed on the history of fundraising and what the future would be to improve the current unsuccessful status of this process.

After further discussion and edits the Senate **VOTED** 17-5-3 in favor. The final resolution reads;
Given that AU's tuition price is already 25th lowest out of 25 peer institutions, but the actual cost paid by students is 9th highest, the university should raise the tuition price in order to produce more revenue, enabling it to raise the discount rate to provide more financial aid to students and to provide necessary revenue for its academic mission. We also suggest that financial aid be indexed to tuition raises so that students receiving aid do not face an increase in tuition costs with possible impact on retention.

CFA Term Faculty Service on CFA Manual Change – Elizabeth Worden & Max Friedman

Professor Worden opened the floor for discussion on the proposed changes to the faculty manual regarding term faculty service on the CFA. Several concerns and support were expressed and brought forward from various units. Concerns and support included:

- Pressure from the administration would be placed on term faculty
- Future advancement of term faculty to associate and full professors will increase and expand the current pool of possible eligibility to fill these seats
- Open the pool to all term faculty and not restrict to a selected rank

The Senate **VOTED** in favor 20-2-1

For the Good of the Order – Elizabeth Worden

Professor Quick stated that the Academic Integrity Committee has begun their work. The committee membership includes faculty, students and staff campus wide. Several meetings have taken place looking at the current code and other institutions best practices. Specific topics of discussion include violations, sanctions, process and appeals. The committee will be setting up a forum for faculty to provide feedback in the spring and a draft document will also come before the Senate next semester.

Professor Martin stated that there are some concerns on filling out forms for the Academic Support and Access Center (ASCC) and faculty are feeling not very well equipped to process these forms. He asked for direction on how to receive training and what other resources are available.

VP Waters stated that the ASCC falls under her office and organizing a presentation for specific units or even a presentation to the Senate would be easy for her to arrange.

Professor Lindsay expressed concern on issues concerning how to handle students who show stress in disruptive behavior. CTRL has also provided trainings in the past and will continue in the future.

Professor Baehler added that the Beyond SET's task force will be bringing forward their draft report in the spring for senate review at the February meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.