

*The complete Recording for this meeting can be found at:*

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

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**Present: Professors:** Karen Baehler, John Heywood, Elizabeth Worden Randall Blair, Stefano Costanzi, Max Friedman, Jolynn Gardner, Maria Gomez, Robert Hauswald, Kelly Joiner, Peter Kuznick, Benjamin Leff, Emily Lindsay, Stacey Marien, Garret Martin, Tom Merrill, Lillian Baeza-Mendoza, Danielle Mysliwicz, Hannah Park, Andrea Pearson, Zehra Peynircioglu, Jennifer Poole, Rick Semiatin, April Shelford, Jason Snyder, Brian Yates, Provost Dan Myers, DOF Mary L. Clark.

The meeting was called to order at 2:31pm.

#### **Chair's Report – Karen Baehler**

##### **Approval of the April Minutes**

Professor Baehler opened discussion for the April 1, 2020 minutes. With no changes or discussion needed, the Senate **VOTED** 25-0-1 to approve.

Professor Baehler gave the following announcements.

- Thank you to the outgoing at-large and unit reps for their service. An additional thank you was expressed to several outgoing committee chairs.
- Several budget items that were approved during the AY 2019-2020 by the Senate will be put on hold and possibly addressed in the next fiscal year due to the budget impact from the COVID19 pandemic. Those items include the Academic Integrity Code office, the Ombudsperson and the term faculty sabbaticals and course load reductions.

#### **Provost's Report – Dan Myers**

Provost Dan Myers provided the following updates.

- The SOC Dean search was not successful and has been extended over the summer and fall
- The VP for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies searches are in the final interviews and offers will be going out soon.
- Dean Camille Nelson from WCL will be leaving and joining the University of Hawaii as their dean at the end of June. Elections are underway for an interim Dean, and soon to follow a search committee will be formed to start the process for a permanent replacement.

- Enrollment for summer classes is ahead of projections, probably due to the reduction in tuition. Fall undergraduate enrollments are in good shape now but must be watched closely through the summer. Graduate numbers are also up overall, which puts projections a little ahead, but final numbers for both depend on retention of students in the Fall.

Provost Myers thanked everyone for their outstanding work transitioning the students to online classes this spring. The results from the student surveys and notes he has received convey many heartwarming messages about the care that the students received this Spring. He knows what a stressful time this has been; the work of the faculty is very much appreciated.

### **Enrollment and Retention Task Force (ERTF) – Mary L. Clark**

Dean of Faculty Clark stated that she had met with the Senate Executive Committee and requested that the recent work of the Enrollment and Retention Task Force (ERTF) be shared with the senate regarding arrangements for the Fall. She informed the senators that President Burwell has appointed three task force groups working on the fall teaching models: 1) The ERTF led by Wendy Boland (Interim Dean of Graduate Studies) and Fanta Aw (Vice Provost of Campus Life); 2) Health and Safety led by Fanta Aw (VP of Campus Life), Dan Nichols (AVP of Risk Management) and Traevena Byrd (Vice President of General Counsel); 3) The Workforce Planning Task Force led by Seth Grossman (Chief of Staff, Office of the President) and Beth Muha (AVP Human Resources). The ERTF was constituted by the President and the membership includes, Karen Baehler (Faculty Senate), Deans Mary L. Clark, Peter Starr, Vicky Wilkins, Christine Chin, Wendy Boland, and Jessica Waters. From the IT side, Steve Munson (Chief Information Officer) and Joseph Riquelme (Chief Online Officer) are members, as are Matt Bennet (VP of University Communications and Marketing) and Sharon Alston (VP of Undergraduate Enrollment). This group has been looking at various models of teaching for the Fall, which include: face to face, online and a hybrid/combination version, all which will be able to convert easily to online only, if needed due to a recurrence of the virus. The Senators had a robust Q & A about the Fall models of teaching and adjustments for health and safety due to the pandemic.

### **Associate Professor Working Group Final Report – Steve Silvia**

Professor Silvia thanked the Senate for the opportunity to return and also thanked the members of the working group for their hard work. He extended a heartfelt thanks to Dean Clark for her many years of service and wished her well on her new endeavor.

Professor Silvia gave an overview of the challenges associate professors encounter when preparing to be full professors, based on what his working group has learned. These include lack of guidance, protection, structure, and support for this step in a faculty member's career. He highlighted the differences between the advancement process for an assistant versus associate professor and noted an opportunity to learn from the former to build an orientation process to assist with the track from associate to full professor.

Professor Silvia closed by stating that the report contains general steps, with details to come, He invited faculty feedback and suggestions for more detailed action items. He also expressed the importance of focusing on supporting women and unrepresented minorities in this promotion step. He then briefly went over the twelve action items listed in the report, followed by a Q & A. Professor Silvia encouraged additional feedback be sent to him via email at [ssilvia@american.edu](mailto:ssilvia@american.edu).

### **Distinguished Professor Selection Committee Proposed Senate Bylaws – Karen Baehler**

Professor Baehler gave a brief overview of the current practice for selecting Distinguished Professors and noted minimal guidance in the Faculty Manual apart from reference to a committee. The Senate Bylaws are silent on both the committee and the process. The intention of the proposed language is to address these gaps by establishing a committee with guidelines for membership and a committee charge like all other Senate advisory committees. If approved as part of the Senate bylaws, this language will be presented next fall to be considered as a change to the Faculty Manual since it is referencing the granting of a title.

Professor Baehler opened the floor for discussion. No discussion was had, and the Senate voted **24-0-2** in favor.

### **Term Limits for Senate Committee Chairs: Proposed Senate Bylaw Changes – Karen Baehler, John Heywood, Lilian Baeza-Mendoza, Maria Gomez & Randall Blair**

Professor Baehler informed the senate that the ad-hoc group's charge was to clarify the term limits for Senate committee chairs and especially the chairs whose committees have seats on the Senate and Executive Committee. The ad-hoc group proposed greater committee autonomy with respect to chair term limits, up to a 6-year cap, for committees whose chairs do not also sit on the Executive Committee. Term limits for chairs with Executive Committee seats remain at 4 years. In the discussion, some senators expressed concerns about having different term limits for different categories of senators. The Senate **VOTED** 22-3-1 in favor of the new language.

### **Delaying the Beyond SET Guidelines: A Resolution – Jordan Tama**

Professor Tama stated that the purpose of the resolution is to allow all units to postpone the implementation of the Beyond SET guidelines so that they have time to prepare carefully.

The resolution reads as follows:

*Given challenges created by the COVID-19 crisis, it is the sense of the Faculty Senate that the schools and departments of American University should be given two options for implementing the Faculty Senate's 2019 Beyond SETs Task Force report: 1) implement the new procedures during the 2020-21 academic year, or 2) delay implementation until the 2021-22 academic year.*

The Senate **VOTED** 25-0-1 in favor.

### **Senate Committee Annual Reports – Karen Baehler**

Professor Baehler asked the chair of the UCC, Andrea Pearson, to give a brief update on the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee's report.

Professor Pearson stated that she had sent a request to the Senate leadership to establish a cut-off date for proposal submissions in order to address the mass amount of proposals that are commonly submitted very late in the year, which then requires the UCC to work several weeks past the spring semester end date. It was determined by the UCC and the Senate leadership that the process will be reviewed next year to establish a series of deadline dates.

No other questions or concerns were addressed regarding the other submitted reports.

### **Resolution Honoring Deputy Provost and Dean of Faculty Mary L. Clark – Elizabeth Worden**

Professor Worden stated that as a tradition of the Senate, and in order to recognize the extraordinary contributions of our outgoing Deputy Provost and Dean of Faculty, the Senate wished to present the following resolution to Mary L. Clark in honor of her outstanding service at AU. The resolution reads as follows:

***Whereas** Mary L. Clark has served American University since 2001 in series of increasingly critical roles as Professor of Law, Dean of Academic Affairs and Senior Vice Provost, Interim Provost, and Deputy Provost and Dean of Faculty, and will leave her position on June 30, 2020;*

***Whereas** throughout her tenure in all of her roles she has consistently demonstrated that decency, compassion, and empathy are the hallmarks of true leadership;*

***Whereas** under her leadership increasing the diversity of American University's faculty, a critical component of our university-wide commitment to inclusive excellence, we have had several years of growth in diverse faculty hiring, culminating last fall with fifty-six percent of new tenure-line faculty hired identifying as faculty of color;*

***Whereas** she has been a valuable partner with the faculty as we implemented new phases of the AU Core and AUx together, helping to shape the dynamic American University learning environment for our students; and*

***Whereas** her leadership of the Learning for Undergraduate, Graduate, and Professional Students imperative of the American University Strategic Plan, Changemakers for a Changing World, was instrumental in the development of this key university goal;*

***Therefore** the Faculty Senate on behalf of the faculty of American University **commends** Deputy Provost Clark, **expresses** its appreciation for her leadership, **declares** that*

*American University is a better place to study, teach, and work because of her, and wishes her well as she moves to take her new position as the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor at the University of Denver.*

### **Health and Safety Update – Fanta Aw and Dan Nichols**

VP Aw stated that the Health and Safety Task Force is guided by the advice provided by the CDC and the DC Department of Health, which will guide the task force in preparing for the safety of the residential halls, visiting guests, faculty and staff returning to campus. She stated that the visit today is to update senators on the current topics being discussed and to gather feedback from the Faculty Senate and faculty at large.

AP Nichols stated that they are working closely to follow the orders from the Mayor's office along with the CDC and Department of Health. It is critical to follow phase one of the Mayor's orders first. All aspects of running the university must be examined and prepared for and will include physical distancing, barriers in common areas such as plexiglass, teleworking, redistributing workloads and PPE. It is important to know that all is being done to keep everyone safe and is being done to allow faculty to provide the core academic mission of the university in a safe manner. A robust Q & A was held and Professor Baehler thanked VP Aw and AP Nichols for the update, asking that they return over the summer to provide any updates as needed.

### **Update from General Counsel's Office – Traevana Byrd**

Vice President and General Counsel Traevana Byrd thanked the Senate for the opportunity to come and update all on the class action lawsuits that have been filed against the university. At the current time AU is named in two lawsuits filed by students who are seeking reimbursement for tuition covering the period when classes moved online (2<sup>nd</sup> half of Spring semester).

VP Byrd stated that as her office moves forward with these cases, she would be happy to return to the Senate to touch base with an update over the summer.

**For the Good of the Order** – Professor Heywood thanked Professor Baehler for her amazing leadership and followed with a farewell to Professor Elizabeth Worden.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:20pm**