

*Minutes  
Faculty Senate Meeting  
October 14, 2020*

*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:** John Heywood, Garret Martin, Elizabeth Worden, Laura Beers, Randall Blair, Mike Cabot, Elizabeth Cotter, Todd Eisenstadt, David Haaga, Robert Hauswald, Olivia Ivey, Kelly Joiner, Benjamin Leff, Tom Merrill, Lillian Baeza-Mendoza, Mirjana Morosini, Hannah Park, Britta Peterson, Jennifer Poole, Rick Semiatin, Richard Sha, Cathy Schaeff, Jason Snyder, Jennifer Steele, Laurie Stepanek, Brian Yates, Acting Provost Peter Starr, Interim DOF Monica Jackson

Professor Heywood called the meeting to order at 2:30pm

**Chair's Report – John Heywood**

Professor Heywood stated that the special meeting was called to address the unresolved questions of amending Pass/Fail options for the fall semester, which were raised during the Faculty Senate meeting on October 7 2020.

Acting Provost Peter Starr introduced the discussion by emphasizing the equity challenges associated with online learning. He also mentioned the resolution passed by the AU Student Government Undergraduate Senate which also called for extending the Pass/Fail option for all courses in the Fall semester.

Provost Starr discussed a variety of options on the table for the undergraduate and graduate programs and reminded all that any decision taken for the Fall semester would also apply in the spring. The Provost then outlined an additional middle ground option:

- On the graduate side, students would be allowed, as a COVID exception, to change one course to Pass/Fail during a delimited period after the posting of the grade, for both the Fall and Spring semesters.
- On the undergraduate side, the range of courses that could qualify for Pass/Fail would be expanded to include major, minor, and Core courses. Students would also have the option to change a course to Pass/Fail during a delimited period after the posting of the grade, for both the Fall and Spring semesters.

Professor John Heywood then reviewed how the discussions and voting will proceed. The Senators asked a series of questions, including about the proposed middle ground put forward by the Provost, and requested data about the number of Pass/Fail requests in the Spring 2020 semester.

The Senate **VOTED** on the following:

- The Faculty Senate approved a vote to consider changes to the Undergraduate rules for the Academic Year 2020-21. The Senate **VOTED** 16-7-2 in favor.
- The Senate approved the middle ground proposal put forward by the Provost, namely that: “the range of courses that could qualify for Pass/Fail would be expanded to include major, minor, and Core courses. Students would also have the option to change the course to Pass/Fail during a delimited period after the posting of the grade, for both the Fall and Spring semesters. The Senate **VOTED** 23-3-1 in favor.
- It approved a vote to consider changes to the Graduate rules for the Academic Year 2020-21. The Senate **VOTED** 19-4-20 in favor.
- It approved the middle ground proposal put forward by the Provost, namely that: “students would be allowed, as a COVID exception, to change one course to Pass/Fail during a delimited period after the posting of the grade, for both the Fall and Spring semesters”. The Senate **VOTED** 20-3-1 in favor.
- the Faculty Senate debated the question of when students would be able to decide when to opt for Pass/Fail, whether by the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> week of the semester or after the end of the semester. The Faculty Senate voted to opt for after the end of the semester for the Pass/Fail deadline, with the exact deadline to be determined later. The Senate **VOTED** 22-1-1 in favor.

The Faculty Senate tabled the discussion of whether the amended Pass/Fail options should apply to the summer semester, considering the high degree of uncertainty regarding the development of the pandemic.

Professor Heywood adjourned the meeting at 4pm.