

*Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting
May 5, 2021*

The complete Recording for this meeting can be found at:

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

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

The meeting was called to order at 2:35pm.

Chair's Report

The Chair of the Faculty Senate, Professor John Heywood (WCL), began the meeting with a review of the April 7th minutes. The Senate **VOTED** 21-0-0 in favor.

Professor Heywood made a series of announcements:

- A welcome to the newly elected Senators and Senate committee members for the academic year 2021-22.
- The annual reports for all the Senate Committees have been submitted and were opened for discussion and questions.
- The Athletics Report for the academic year 2019-20 did not happen in the fall of 2020 due to the COVID transition. Director of Athletics, Billy Walker submitted the information via a PowerPoint presentation, and will be presenting to the Senate in the fall of 2021 the report for AY 2020-2021. At that time, he will also address any questions from 2020.
- The Senate Executive committee nominated Professor Richard Sha (CAS) and Professor Mirjana Morosini (SIS) for the At Large Senator, and the Additional Senator for the Senate Executive Committee for the academic year 2021-22. The senate **VOTED** 19-0-0 in favor.

The Senate then presented three laudatory resolutions:

A laudatory resolution for the School of Professional & Extended Studies, read by the Chair, John Heywood.

Whereas the School for Professional and Extended Studies (SPExS) was created to expand and extend the profile of American University in 2012, and has had significant success both domestically and internationally;

Whereas the deans, faculty, and staff of SPExS enlarged its profile as an important contributor to American University's community through their work as valued partners on committees and councils;

Whereas under their leadership and self-governance, SPExS represented excellence in teaching and service to diverse communities—traditional, non-traditional, and marginalized;

Whereas SPExS programs such as the Washington Semester Program broadened perspectives to include sustainability and strategic communications along with programming for underclass students, including the GAP and Mentorship Programs;

Whereas the English Language and Training Academy was launched to prepare non-native English speakers with academic English instruction, with students who hailed from around the world, including a Nobel Prize recipient;

Whereas Graduate Professional Studies introduced niche graduate instruction with a pedagogical focus on project-based learning in areas including Evaluation, Human Resources, Sports Management, and Healthcare Management;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Faculty Senate, on behalf of the faculty of American University, **commends** the SPExS faculty, staff, and students; **expresses** its appreciation for their valued contributions that will continue through the University; **declares** that American University is a better place to study, teach, and work because of their efforts; and **wishes** every success to the entire SPExS community through their continued efforts at American University and beyond.

A laudatory resolution for Professor John Douglass (SOC), introduced by Senator Olivia Ivey (UL) and read by Past Chair of the Senate, Elizabeth Worden (SOE).

Whereas Associate Professor John Douglas has been on the faculty at American University for over forty years, and has announced his intention to retire effective August 2021;

Whereas he began serving on the Faculty Senate in 1982 and has sustained his commitment to faculty governance ever since, including serving as the Senate Parliamentarian, twice as Senate chair, and chairing multiple committees including the Committee for Academic Budgets and Benefits, the Committee on Summer Session and the Computer Resources Committee;

Whereas his leadership and participation on every iteration of the Committee for Academic Budgets and Benefits from 2001 to the present has exemplified the values of shared governance by giving voice to faculty needs from benefits packages to multi-term contracts while contributing to institutional financial stability by shoring up the quasi-endowment fund;

Whereas his commitment to faculty service was distributed between department, school, and university-wide work, leaving each better for his time and efforts;

Whereas his mentorship of junior colleagues on the Committee for Academic Budgets and Benefits ensures that faculty voices will continue to shape the institutions' financing of academic priorities;

Therefore the Faculty Senate on behalf of the faculty of American University *lauds* Associate Professor John Douglas for his lifetime of service, *extends* our sincere thanks for his steadfast commitment to American University, and *congratulates* him on a career well spent.

A laudatory resolution for Chief Financial Officer, Vice President and Treasurer, Doug Kudravetz, read by Vice-Chair of the Senate, Garret Martin (SIS).

Whereas Vice President Douglas Kudravetz has been at American University for over thirty-five years, the last seven as Chief Financial Officer, Vice President and Treasurer, and has announced his intention to retire in June 2021;

Whereas during the unprecedented fiscal challenges presented by the present pandemic, his long-term vision, planning, and his nimbleness in the moment, helped this University weather the storm better than most, and have positioned us to thrive as we emerge into the post-COVID world;

Whereas his stewardship of our finances laid the foundation without which this University could not have achieved all that we have achieved;

Whereas he oversaw the multi-year effort to make American University the first university in the country to become carbon neutral, as well as divested all public fossil fuel investments from the endowment fund; and

Whereas he oversaw the construction of the Hall of Science, the East Campus, and WCL's Tenley Campus, as well as the acquisition of the Airlie Center in Virginia;

Therefore the Faculty Senate on behalf of the faculty of American University *commends* Vice President Douglas Kudravetz, *expresses* its appreciation for his financial leadership, *declares* that American University is a better place to study, teach, and work because of him, and *wishes* him well in his retirement.

Provost Report

Provost Starr began his report by congratulating Professor John Douglass and Chief Financial Officer Doug Kudravetz for their service at the university. He also thanked the whole AU Community for their very hard work in this challenging past year and added a particular praise to Professor John Heywood's work as the Senate chair.

Provost Starr made the following announcements:

- There is currently a surplus in Undergraduate enrollment. While there will still likely be some melt over the summer, especially with international students, AU should still have a larger

first year class than usual in the fall, which will partly compensate for last year's smaller first year class.

- Graduate enrollment is currently up 39.9% as opposed to last year, but there will also be pressure on the international student front.
- There is still uncertainty about fall planning and seat planning in classrooms. He added that AU has already announced that vaccination for Covid-19 will be required for all students, and that similar discussions are underway for faculty and staff.
- The process of reassignment for SPExS staff was nearly completed, with all staff reassigned, and he ended his report by reminding all that while the enrollment data suggested good financial news, AU was not out of the woods yet insofar as the pandemic.

Dean of Faculty Report – Monica Jackson

Dean of Faculty Monica Jackson started her report with an update on faculty placement in SPExS, with the establishment of a faculty sub-committee to develop a fair and equitable process for reassignment. The reassignment established two separate processes, one for faculty on multi-year contracts and one for faculty with single year contracts.

DoF Jackson expects that the placement for faculty with multi-year contracts will be completed by mid-May.

The placement committee for faculty with single year contracts will send recommendations to the Deans, after a round of interviews for all SPExS faculty. The Deputy Provost hopes that the first tranche of placement will happen in early June, with the possibility for a few additional faculty members to be placed later during the summer. Finally, the Deputy Provost reminded all that there is a website and a FAQ with information about the realignment process.

Annual Financial Report

Chief Financial Officer Doug Kudravetz gave a presentation on the current state of AU finances. He covered recent numbers, including the \$27M shortfall for the academic year 2019-20, because of the sudden shutdown of the campus in spring 2020, which was slightly mitigated by the small profit during the summer 2020 semester.

AU conducted extensive financial planning and modeling during the summer 2020, with conditions changing rapidly. This included establishing various stress tests for the Fall 2020 semester once AU committed to going completely virtual.

CFO Kudravetz reminded all that the projected shortfall was just shy of \$100M for the academic year 2020-21, before breaking down various categories to explain the shortfall, and he highlighted parallel mitigation measures, such as furloughs.

CFO Kudravetz mentioned that the modeling assumed that the pandemic would have at least a three-year impact on AU's budget. He also outlined the amount of federal stimulus received by AU, and the conditions under which this stimulus can be used.

AU shifted to a one-year budget for Fiscal Year 2022, because of the continuing uncertainty, and opted for the first time in its history to not increase tuitions. The plan would be to return to the usual two-year cycle for the budget for Fiscal years 2023-24.

CFO Kudravetz reminded all that AU remains 90% tuition dependent and he discussed the growth of the University endowment, which now stands over \$800M.

A question-and-answer session followed, which included a discussion of Assistant Professor and Term Faculty salaries lagging as compared to peer institutions.

Core Membership Changes for Senate bylaws

Professor Cindy Bair Van Dam (CAS), the Chair of the AU Core Committee, and Brad Knight, the Director of the AU Core, presented a series of proposed changes to the membership of AU Core committees. Those changes reflected the dissolution of SPExS, the emergence of SOE as a distinct school, units re-evaluating plans to contribute to certain courses, and a reassessment of the student involvement on the AU Core Council. The Senate **VOTED** 19-0-0 in favor.

Graduate Regulation Changes

Dean of Graduate Studies Wendy Boland and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies Michael Keynes presented a series of proposed graduate regulation changes.

The proposed changes were grouped in a series of broad buckets:

- Acknowledging the dissolution of SPExS and the establishment of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.
- Allowing 500-level courses to be counted as requirements within master's degree programs.
- Fostering greater flexibility around cross-calendar enrollment, so to allow students to take courses in the calendar not aligned with their program.
- Small technical edits to clean up old language.

Undergrad Regulation Changes

Dean of Undergraduate Studies Jessica Waters presented two proposed regulation changes:

-The amendment to regulation 8.1.6 would allow students seeking a combined master's/bachelor's degree to satisfy AU Core requirements with cross-listed or other appropriated 600-level courses. The Senate **VOTED** 20-0-1 in favor.

-The amendment to regulation 11.4 would allow students in the new Cornerstone program to complete their Mentored Field Practicum in the first 30 credits. The Senate **VOTED** 18-0-1 in favor.

Faculty Senate Bylaw Changes

Professor Heywood thanked the members of the working group for their assistance with the revisions – Professor Elizabeth Worden, Professor Garret Martin, Professor Cathy Schaeff, and Senate Operations Coordinator Lura Graham.

Professor Heywood then reviewed the four major categories of proposed changes for the Faculty Senate bylaws:

- Clean up provisions, whether relating to formatting, keeping consistent names for committees, or acknowledging the dissolution of SPEXS. The Senate **VOTED** 23-0-0 in favor.
- Provisions relating to how meetings are conducted, be it clarifying how to trigger executive sessions or the rules guiding no-confidence votes for senior administrators. The Senate **VOTED** 21-0-0 in favor.
- Revisions to explicitly list course releases for certain positions on the Senate, as well as to provide clarity around vacancies and committee membership. The Senate **VOTED** 21-1-0 in favor.
- A proposal to widen the pool of Vice-Chair candidates to include all faculty who have served on Senate committees in the past five years. The Senate **VOTED** 17-2-1 in favor.

Intellectual Property Report

Professor Heywood first briefly introduced the report produced by the working group, with members jointly nominated by Provost Starr and Chair Heywood.

Professor Heywood thanked all the members who worked with him – Chair of the working group Professor Brian Yates (CAS); Professor Patricia Aufderheide (SOC); Professor Mike Carroll (WCL); Professor Jennifer Gumbrewicz (SPA); Professor Patrick Jackson (SIS); Professor Chris Lewis (University Library); Professor Aram Sinnreich (SOC); Professor Bei Xiao (CAS); Vice Provost for Research Diana Burley; Vice Provost and Chief Online Office Joseph Riquelme; Jeannine Bulbulia (Provost's Office); Dr Michael Piller (University Library); Carey Needham and Michael Scher (WAMU); and Justin Perillo (Office of General Counsel) - for their hard work throughout the academic year on this task.

The Chair of the working group, Professor Brian Yates (CAS), emphasized that the report outlined a comprehensive and flexible Intellectual Property policy, as well as one that was in tune with the interests of faculty.

After a further discussion, the Senate **VOTED** 22-0-1 in support of the proposed Intellectual Property policy.

DEI Guidelines Schedule

Dean of Faculty Monica Jackson and Associate Dean of Faculty Karen Baehler outlined a tentative schedule whereby each unit would amend tenure, promotion, and reappointment guidelines, with the goal of including:

- DEI elements presented in the Equity Task Force Report.

- The Provost's requirement of using teaching portfolios when assessing teaching for major faculty actions.
- And recognition of cross-disciplinary scholarship, following Faculty Manual revisions approved in the spring 2020.

After review, the Senate gave tentative support for the proposed timeline. The Senate **VOTED** 13-2-3 in favor.

Fall Accommodation Discussion

Professor Nina Yamanis (SIS) discussed two separate letters sent to senior members of the Administration of AU, which covered:

- How to accommodate Faculty who experienced severe disruptions during their sabbatical in the Spring 2020 semester.
- And a plea to accommodate the caregiving responsibilities of faculty, staff, and students in planning for the Fall 2021 semester and beyond.

The Senate discussed this presentation and acknowledged the need to follow up on these issues in the fall.

Changing over of the Gavel

Before passing on the virtual gavel to the Vice-Chair, Professor Garret Martin, the Chair said a few words to thank all the colleagues that he had worked closely with and who had supported him, during a challenging year, whether Senators, members of the Senate leadership, members of the administration, colleagues, and his family.

For the Good of the Order

Vice Chair Garret Martin and Past Chair Elizabeth Worden read a laudatory resolution to thank Chair Heywood and Senate Operations Coordinator, Lura Graham, for their leadership and diligence when confronting the many challenges posed by the pandemic.

Resolution in Honor of John Q. Heywood and Lura Graham
American University Faculty Senate
May 5, 2021

Whereas the COVID 19 pandemic created exceptional professional and personal challenges for the American University community during the 2020-21 academic year;

Whereas the Senate Chair and the Operations Coordinator worked diligently to adapt the work of the Senate to a new online platform while ensuring continued active faculty voice in university governance;

Whereas they responded with grace and timeliness to a constantly changing environment and the need for urgent decisions in the service of the University;

Whereas they led the Senate through their engaged faculty-staff collaboration while displaying poise, empathy, and humor under these extraordinary circumstances;

Therefore the Faculty Senate thanks and commends them for their dedicated service and for leaving the Faculty Senate a more robust, inclusive, and committed forum that is prepared to address future challenges.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50pm.