

## Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – 9/28/2021

### 1. Attendance

	<b>Representation</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Committee</b>
P	Administration	N. Tina	Johnson	(21-22)	
P	Staff Council	Randall	Menard	(21-22)	
P	SG President	Amber	Lemelle	(21-22)	
P	Alumni Assoc	Dinah	Payne	(21-22)	
P	Adjunct	David	Lambour	(21-22)	
P	COBA	Christy	Corey	(19-22)	Administrative - chair
P	COBA	James	Logan	(21-24)	Budget
P	COBA	Dinah	Payne (SE)	(19-22)	Administrative
A	COBA	Gina	Rosa	(19-22)	Budget
P	COBA	Kabir	Hassan	(20-23)	Academic
A	COE	Martin	Guillot	(20-23)	Administrative
P	COE	Dimitrios	Charalampidis (SE)	(20-23)	Academic
A	COE	Donald	Barbe	(21-24)	Budget
E	COE	Vincent	Yu	(21-24)	Budget
P	COLAEHD	Laszlo	Fulop	(21-24)	Administrative
P	COLAEHD	Andrea	Mosterman	(21-24)	Budget
P	COLAEHD	Elaine	Brooks	(19-22)	Administrative
P	COLAEHD	Diane	Baas	(19-22)	Administrative
P	COLAEHD	Chris	Day (SE)	(20-23)	Budget
P	COLAEHD	Robert	Stufflebeam	(21-24)	Budget
P	COLAEHD	Chris	Surprenant	(20-23)	Administrative
E	COLAEHD	Brian	Seeger (SE)	(21-24)	Budget
P	COLAEHD	John	Kiefer	(20-23)	Academic
A	COLAEHD	James	Marchant	(21-24)	Budget - chair
P	COLAEHD	Chris	Broadhurst	(20-23)	Academic - chair
P	COLAEHD	Steven	Mumford	(19-22)	Administrative
A	COLAEHD	James	Roe	(20-23)	Academic
P	COLAEHD	Ryan	Gray	(20-23)	Budget
P	COS	Nicola	Anthony (SE)	(21-24)	Administrative
P	COS	Adlai	Depano	(21-24)	Budget
A	COS	Kraig	Derstler	(19-22)	Academic
A	COS	Sarah	Black	(20-23)	Academic
P	COS	Steve	Rick	(20-23)	Academic
P	COS	Simon	Lailvaux	(20-23)	Administrative
P	COS	Leszek	Malkinski	(20-23)	Administrative
A	COS	Rachel	Clostio	(20-23)	Academic
P	COS	Linxiong	Li	(19-22)	Academic
P	Library	Connie	Phelps (SE)	(21-24)	Administrative
P	Library	Lindsey	Reno	(19-22)	Budget

P – Present

A – Absent

E – Excused

## **2. Approval of the Minutes from 9/16/21**

The minutes of the 9/16/2021 meeting were unanimously approved.

## **3. Updates from Faculty Senate President (C. Day)**

The Senate President reminded the senators that a link has been set up for faculty to submit questions anonymously. Administrators are contacted for some of these questions, and they provide their input. The Senate Secretary has been posting the answers to these questions in a repository.

The committee organization within the Faculty Senate has been restructured. Previously, some committees were reporting to the Senate Boards. It was determined that this model had not been working very effectively. All Senate Boards are now committees. More specifically, the Senate Executive Board, the Administrative Board, the Academic Board, and the Budget and Finance Board are now, respectively, the Senate Executive Committee, the Administrative Committee, the Academic Committee, and the Budget and Finance Committee. Additionally, the Administrative Committee is revising the Senate bylaws to include the General Education Committee and the Courses and Curriculum Committee as Senate committees.

Currently, the Administrative Committee is working on the grievance and charges procedures. The Budget and Finance Committee has also been working on some assignments. Both committees will provide a report in our next Faculty Senate Meeting.

## **4. Updates from the UNO Office of the President (President Nicklow)**

President Nicklow informed the Faculty Senate that we now have a better idea of the extent of the damages caused by Ida. This information has been forwarded to the Risk Management Office and to FEMA. The cost associated with the damages is approximately \$14 million.

The student relief funds app was launched. Immediately after launching the app, about 900 students applied, and additional students applied later. Some students had issues with covering the cost for gas, rent, or food, and needed some assistance.

Students have been reminded of the requirements for vaccination (that they need to be vaccinated or ask for an exemption). Students who are vaccinated will receive \$100 according to the *Shot for 100* program that has been announced by the Governor.

Overall enrollment dropped for the first time in 4 years and is down by 5%, which translates in a budget reduction of about \$3-4 millions. Undergraduate and graduate enrollment, as well as transfer student numbers, declined significantly. Continuing student enrollment dropped by 3% and, therefore, our retention rates will drop significantly. We have similar reports from other universities. The fact that students are not able to meet with faculty or with each other in person may have affected enrollment, which is not surprising. One of our biggest concerns is graduate

enrollment. The new class of graduate students dropped significantly. Although COVID-19 and hurricane Ida have contributed to the enrollment drop, we do not want to use them as excuses to justify why we have not succeeded. We need to work together to improve enrollment numbers. On a positive note, we had the largest freshman class since 2009, and the third largest since Katrina.

## **5. Updates from the Academic Committee (C. Broadhurst)**

The Academic Committee has decided to investigate graduate student retention and support, and to determine why graduate students may be leaving the university. The plan is multifaceted, and includes emailing program coordinators and seeking their input, creating a climate survey and asking graduate students to complete it, contacting the VP of the Graduate School, and reviewing where graduate fees are used. The process will take a few months. The President said that student retention may not be the main issue with graduate student enrollment. In fact, graduate student retention has increased. The main issue is the drop in new graduate students. However, the President said that it is still a good idea to investigate graduate student retention, and that he is in support of the Academic Committee's efforts.

## **6. Web of Science Discussion**

There was a discussion about Web of Science and the possibility of UNO cancelling its subscription to the database. It is well understood that the cost of this engine is very high and that the university must cut costs. Some faculty members feel that Google scholar is an acceptable alternative, while others feel that Web of Science is a great database for people who do research and that it has features that cannot be replaced by other engines.

Last year, in April, the Library had sent a questionnaire to the faculty through department Chairs requesting feedback about some of the Library databases. The questionnaire asked faculty to provide information about which databases were most important to them, and which were less necessary. A total of 62 responses to the questionnaire were received (approximately 20 from the College of Sciences, approximately 20 from COLAEHD, and also some from the Colleges of Business and Engineering). The responses regarding Web of Science were mixed.

Although Web of Science may not be easily substituted by other databases, the cost is very high, and we need to have a push back in order to get a fairer price. We are currently negotiating with the company and we expect to hear from them soon (in the next four weeks or so). UNO is part of a consortium together with other institutions (including Tulane and LSU). Other institutions in the consortium have also agreed that the price they pay for Web of Science is too high and they also wanted to lower it, although we do not have information about how much they pay.

There was a suggestion to keep the engine for another year, if possible, because current statistics about its usage may not be accurate. It is possible that, due to the pandemic, faculty may have not been doing as much research during the past year. Therefore, they may have not used Web of Science as much. However, renewing for just one year may not be possible, because these are

multiyear products. It was also suggested that if the deadline passes and we do not renew, we may still be able to resubscribe, if UNO's budget situation changes or if the terms of the contract change.

A couple of institutions which were previously part of the consortium left the consortium a few years ago, but it does not seem that this affected the cost of the product significantly. The cost has been steadily increasing each year, and currently it is about \$25 per search. As a reference, it used to be about \$4/search several years ago.

The price for Web of Science was set before Katrina. However, the contract has not been reviewed since then, although the usage by UNO faculty may have changed significantly. Therefore, the company simply kept increasing the price each year. We want to ask them to look more closely to the current situation and come up with a more reasonable price.

#### **7. Discussion: Meet in person October 27, or remain in Zoom?**

There was a discussion about the Faculty Senate modality (should we continue meeting on Zoom or could the meeting possibly be in person?) Based on feedback from the senators, it seems that most prefer to continue meeting on Zoom, although some senators suggested meeting in person. There were also suggestions for a hybrid meeting which would allow some senators to join the meeting on Zoom, while others could attend in person. It was also confirmed that the UC rooms where Faculty Senate meetings were normally held are available, should we decide to meet in person. It was decided that the Senate Executive Committee would discuss the matter further during their next meeting on October 7, but most likely the next meeting will either be on Zoom or be hybrid.

#### **8. Old Business**

None

#### **9. New Business**

None

#### **10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25pm.