

University of Wyoming at Laramie

FACULTY SENATE

MINUTES

January 22, 2024

A regular meeting of the University of Wyoming Faculty Senate (FS) was called to order by Chair Robert Sprague at 3:13 pm on January 22, 2024, in the Family Room, University of Wyoming Union. Additional Faculty Senate members and guests were able to join via Zoom.

The Secretary Treva Sprout-Ahrenholtz called the roll and a quorum was met. The following Senators were not in attendance or represented by a proxy; Senators Boggs, Cain, Coupal, Dillon, Edwards, Lake, McCoy, Mocsary, Nejadmalayeri, Okpodu, Slater, Taheri, and Waggener.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the agenda; made, seconded and carried.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 11, 2013; made, seconded and carried.

The Chair reported that the president would not attend the days meeting, but that they would not be removing the item from the agenda.

The Chair reported that the President would be holding a Faculty Town Hall meeting at noon on Wednesday, February 28 at Noon at a location to be decided and on Wyocast.

The Chair reported that the Spring convocation would be held on April 28th at 3:00 p.m.

The Chair reported that the State Legislatures Joint Appropriations Committee had approved their budget for the following year and noted that the provost had spoken on the approved budget. The Chair reported that the Laramie Reporter's Jeff Victor had provided an excellent summary of both the original requests and approved content of the budget that had been sent to the legislature for review.

The Chair reported that there were three outstanding calls for faculty representatives on University committees and working groups, and reported that he had received some volunteers but is still soliciting volunteers for the Student Success Institutional Transformation Taskforce (SSITT) Committee, Committee on Conflict of Interest and Commitment, and the Campus Safety Working Group. The Chair reported that the deadline given to him by the President's office had already passed on the Campus Safety Working Group, but that there was still time to serve on the committee.

The Chair reported that the technology in the Senate chambers had been upgraded and that the problems the Senate had experienced the previous year had been fixed, and that they could now maintain the same configuration as in the Family Room and asked the Senate to consider moving into the Senate Chambers. The Chair asked the Senate to email him if they had opinions on meeting there for the rest of the semester.

The Chair reported that at the last Cabinet meeting UWPD Chief Holland had led a discussion of active shooter protocols on campus. The Chair reported that the seminar had been focused on the staff of Old Main, and consisted of the typical run, hide, or fight technique. The Chair reported that this had made him contemplate what to do if a faculty member was teaching in a classroom on campus during a similar scenario. The Chair reported that he had suggested that the Faculty Senate hold an active shooter session for the faculty on how to react within the classroom and to address any questions that the faculty may have. The Senate discussed and approved holding the session in a classroom inside the Classroom Building.

The Chair yielded the floor to Chair-Elect Fertig. Chair-elect Fertig reported that there are currently 2 open positions on the Executive Committee and encouraged the Senate to nominate members for the coming Academic year, as well as open position for Secretary and Chair-elect. Chair-elect Fertig reported that he would need their applications for those positions by February 7th so that they could be introduced to the Senate by February 19th and voted on by March 4th. Chair-elect Fertig reported that the Executive Committee would meet once a week and that in the past couple of years the Committee had meet once a year with the Board of Trustees for a luncheon and for a Christmas party at the Presidents House. Chair-elect Fertig then opened the floor to questions. No questions were asked

The Chair added that the Executive Committee was a fair amount of work, but that it was a deeply rewarding experience.

The Chair called for ASUW reports. No ASUW Representatives were present.

The Chair reported that President Smith of ASUW had resigned the previous week and that they were currently undergoing leadership changes accordingly.

The Chair called for Staff Senate reports. Office Associate Christina McDonald thanked the Senate and reported that Adam Comeau had been elected President, and that Senators would be elected in March, and asked the Senate to recommend any staff members that they felt would be a good fit. Office Associate McDonald reported that Staff Senate was working to reinstate language in the university regulations to allow staff release time to take University courses. Office Associate McDonald opened the floor to questions. A Senator asked what number of staff currently take advantage of that benefit. Office Associate McDonald responded that she did not know but that some supervisors had prevented their employees from utilizing that benefit when they had tried. The Chair reported that the issue had been brought to the attention of the President's Cabinet but had been postponed for discussion and that he was in favor of a resolution supporting Staff Senate's position. The Chair asked if there was a Staff Senate event in April. Office Associate McDonald thanked the Chair and reported that the staff appreciation

day would be held on April 16 from 11-1 and that Staff Senate would need faculty volunteers to serve food. This concluded Staff Senate's report.

The Chair called for the 2-13 SAPP Committees report. Secretary Sprout-Ahrenholtz reported that the Committee was continuing to wait on the 2-13 SAPP from Academic Affairs.

The Chair called for the Gen-Ed Committee's report. Secretary Sprout-Ahrenholtz reported that the Committee had selected a co-chair, Dr. Morteza Dejam, Associate Professor in Petroleum Engineering, to join co-chair Gifford. Invitation letters were sent to solicit chairs for the individual NextGen USP sub-committees, and these chairs are now working to invite faculty to be a part of those subcommittees.

The Chair called for general announcements. Senator Roberts reported that he was the Faculty Senate representative on the Provost's AI Committee and that the Committee would be circulating a survey on how faculty are currently using AI to determine what resources would be effectively utilized by faculty. Senator Roberts encouraged the faculty to respond to the survey. The Chair reported that AI would be crucial to education going further, noting that Arizona State had purchased a campus-wide license of ChatGPT, and that Wharton had negotiated a similar agreement with Microsoft.

The Chair stated that he had received a proposed Office of the Ombudsperson SAPP, and that he had decided not to pursue a formal resolution for the SAPP, but instead would open the floor to comments by the faculty senate, which he would convey to the General Counsel. The Chair reported that the office had been created for students and staff but had been utilized by faculty. The Chair reported that the SAPP was a copy of standard Ombuds procedures within higher education but noted that faculty were not expressly mentioned in the beginning of the SAPP. The Chair reported that there was some potential for the SAPP to contradict Resolution 2-2, a concern which he would be bringing forward to the General Counsel's office. The Chair then opened the floor to comments. No comments were made.

The Chair reported that three Resolutions were being introduced and that there would be some short discussion of the Resolutions and their respective programs. The Chair reported that the resolutions would be discussed and voted on at the February 5th meeting of the Senate.

The Chair introduced Resolution 450 in Support of a New B.S. in Applied Software Development degree. The Chair yielded the floor to the representatives of the School of Computing. Director of Engagement Raya Hegeman-Davis thanked the Senate and reported that the degree program had derived from WIPP funding and was aimed at supporting non-computer science students that aimed to enter the IT industry. Director Hegeman-Davis reported that the first two years of the program would be offered through community colleges and that the final two years would be completed online at the University of Wyoming. Director Hegeman-Davis reported that the School of Computing had been working both with the community colleges and campus stakeholders. Director Hegeman-Davis opened the floor to questions.

Secretary Sprout-Ahrenholtz asked if the degree was a Bachelor of Applied Science or a Bachelor of Science. Director Hegeman-Davis responded that it was a Bachelor of Science. One

Senator asked if there would be some form of University of Wyoming cohort during the Community college period. Director Hegeman-Davis responded that the creation of a Cohort was a goal but there was not currently enough staffing to maintain such a program. One Senator asked where he could go to receive more information. Director Hegeman-Davis responded that he could reach out to her or any of the staff within the School of Computing.

The Chair introduced Resolution 451 in Support of the Proposal to Move the Biodiversity Institute to the Haub School in the UW Organizational Structure and Budget. The Chair reported that Brent Ewers had planned on being present but was not available until 4:00 and would wait to introduce the Resolution until he arrived.

The Chair introduced Resolution 452 in Support of Updated Bylaws for the School of Graduate Education. The Chair yielded the floor to Vice Provost of Graduate Education James Ahern and Graduate Council Chair Saman Aryana. Vice Provost Ahern reported that the by-laws had changed starting in 2022 and that he had been working with the Graduate Council for the last year and a half. Vice Provost Ahern reported that the by-laws were focused largely on graduate faculty. Chair Aryana reported that the Graduate Council had been charged with reviewing the by-laws and collecting feedback after meeting with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, faculty members, and deans during that time before he yielded the floor to questions. No questions were asked. The Chair thanked Vice Provost Ahern and Chair Aryana.

The Chair returned to Resolution 451 in Support of the Proposal to Move the Biodiversity Institute to the Haub School in the UW Organizational Structure and Budget and reported that the change was mainly for accounting purposes and would not cause any physical changes to the program or changes to job descriptions before yielding the floor to questions. One Senator asked if the move was beneficial. The Chair responded that the Haub School was in favor of the change. One Senator asked how this would affect indirect grants. The Chair responded that he did not know and encouraged the Senator to follow up when Haub School representatives were present at the February 5th meeting of the Senate.

The Chair yielded the floor to Professor Brent Ewers, who explained that the Institute had derived from a task force and was entirely separate from the Berry Center and had been created with a separate endowment. Professor Ewers noted that there had been a plan years earlier to shut down the program, but the plan had been revoked due to public outcry. Professor Ewers noted that he had then accepted a directorship of the program and after several years had been informed by Vice president of ORED Chitnis that private monies could not be accepted in the current manner, prompting them to need to be housed within the Haub school. The Chair asked how the move would affect indirect funds. Professor Ewers responded that since the Institute did not receive grants, it would have no effect.

The Chair called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:10 PM; made, seconded, and carried.