

University of Wyoming at Laramie

FACULTY SENATE

MINUTES

February 5, 2024

A regular meeting of the University of Wyoming Faculty Senate (FS) was called to order by Chair Robert Sprague at 3:19 pm on February 5, 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 not met. The following Senators were initially not in attendance or represented by a proxy: Senators Anderson, Bowman, Cain, Caulton, Coupal, Dillon, Harris, Lake, McCoy, Mocsary, Myers, Nejadmalayeri, Okpodu, and Stanescu. Senator Bialostok and Member-at-Large Alvarado were excused.

The Chair reported that since there was no quorum, the agenda and minutes could not be approved by the Senate.

The Chair informed the Senate that since there was no approved agenda, he would move forward and introduce President Seidel and Director of Internal Audit Danika Salmans.

The Chair introduced President Seidel to speak to the Senate.

The President reported that the legislative budget session was underway, and that the administration and the Board of Trustees were largely focused on this, but that he felt that overall, the University was doing well so far in the legislative session. The President reported that the Board of Trustees had approved a final University budget in July which was sent to the legislature in August, after which the Governor had held hearings, during which he had met with Governor Gordon and members of the State legislature. The President reported that the Joint Appropriations Committee (JAC) had approved or modified many of the University's proposed budget items. The JAC will draft the initial budget bill to be introduced to the State legislature next week.

President Seidel reported that the legislature generally accepted the budgets proposed by the committee in the past but acknowledged that this was less likely with the current legislature. The President reported that he anticipated that the University would regain money lost during budget cuts that took place his first year in office. The President reported that the legislature had approved a cost-of-living adjustment for all state employees, including University employees.

The President then reviewed the various budget items, requests, and responses by the JAC, all of which have been reported elsewhere.

The President reported that he was working on a comprehensive campaign with the aim of raising further funds for faculty and students.

The President reported that he was working with an external consultant to try and increase student enrollment as he had been directed by the Board of Trustees.

The President reported that the university had received a grant from the National Science Foundation. The President reported that the University was a partial recipient of one of ten grants to be shared with institutions in Colorado and aimed at advancing Soil and Mining development. The President reported that the details were yet to be determined

The President reported that he was excited about the Presidential Fellows, and that there were currently eleven of those programs underway and that he was planning on downsizing this program the following year to increase focus on each individual project. The President reported that one of the upcoming focuses was the training of the Universities middle management and trying to provide a more adequate support structure, with the project being planned for two years. The President opened the floor for questions.

The Senate asked if there was a plan for the leadership institute. The President responded that he was looking at increasing support for in-house talent, whether via promotions or placement outside the university and creating clear career paths for University employees.

The Senate asked if there was a clear plan regarding the implementation of the Freedom of Expression Principles. The President responded that the process was looking at trying to increase student awareness of university policy, and increasing the number of speaker series. The President reported that Cowboy State Daily had reported that UW had a lower record than Harvard regarding free expression. The President reported that looking in depth outside of the article showed that UW was far better than most universities regarding free expression but that he was glad of the opportunity to try and improve despite this.

The Chair introduced Director of Internal Audits Danika Salmans to discuss the annual risk assessment. Director Salmans reported that her office issued a survey each year and based on the results of the survey her office would generate a report which would later be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. Director Salman reported that the risk assessment allowed for a broader view of campus and improved strategic planning. Director Salman reported that the survey helped to assess culture across campus and within individual departments. Director Salmans asked the Senate to participate in the survey and encourage others to do likewise.

Director Salmans then opened the floor to questions. The Senate asked how the survey would be distributed. Director Salmans reported that it would be sent by multiple means, including the email accounts of Deans and through the all-faculty, all-student, and all-staff accounts. The Senate asked how long it took to complete the survey. Director Salmans responded approximately fifteen minutes. The Chair reported that the link would be going out this week and noted that faculty could provide excellent feedback to the administration.

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

The Chair called for Staff Senate reports. No Staff Senate representatives were present.

The Chair yielded the floor to Secretary Sprout-Ahrenholtz. Secretary Sprout Ahrenholtz reported that the Gen-ed committee had identified a new co-chair and were working to recruit sub-committee members and that campus involvement and feedback sessions would be held in the spring.

The Chair reported that since there was no quorum, there would be no discussion and vote on the resolutions on the agenda.

The Chair reported that Faculty Senate would meet February 19 despite classes being cancelled for Presidents Day, especially considering the lack of quorum at the day's meeting and that the resolutions scheduled for today would be voted on then. The Chair reported that they would be accepting nominees for next year's Executive Committee at that meeting.

The Chair reported that Misty Eaton, Director of the University Store would speak to the Senate on February 19, 2024 to give details of the equitable access program and to answer questions. The Chair reported that as part of the program the student Fee Book now included a \$299 fee for each of the fall and spring semesters for textbooks, and reported that he had been assured that there will be no impact on faculty ability to select the materials for their courses. The Chair noted that the program had an electronic textbook bias, but that if requested, print versions would be provided if available. The Chair noted that the program was not mandatory, and that students had a legal right to opt-out.

The Chair reported that the Regulation 2-2 complaint from the College of Health Sciences was not automatically terminated by the change in leadership in the College. The Chair reported that he was working to ensure that the process was completed.

The Chair reported that the initial slate of Executive Committee members would be presented at the February 19th meeting before yielding the floor to Chair-elect Fertig. Chair Elect Fertig reported that for any Senators interested there were three positions available and that he would require a brief paragraph on why they wished to serve and they would be required to give a stump speech to the Senate on February 19, 2024. Chair-elect Fertig encouraged any members wishing to run for election to reach out to him by the end of the week.

The Chair reported that the President will hold a faculty town hall meeting Wednesday, February 28 at Noon in the Union Family Room and on WyoCast.

The Chair reported that Professor Brad Rettler will present his Faculty Senate Speaker Series presentation, "Money for the Marginalized," at 4:10 p.m. Tuesday, March 26, in the Family Room and on WyoCast.

The Chair reported that the Take a Trustee to Class project would go ahead on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, and that the program would need to identify approximately six 11:00-11:50 a.m. classes for the Trustees to visit. The Chair reported that the Trustees would choose which class they wished to attend and encouraged the Senate to recommend faculty to host the trustees in their classroom.

The Chair reported that, as noted in the Provost's Thursday message, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is hosting gatherings for faculty to discuss equitable faculty workloads with fellow colleagues. The Chair reported that these sessions will be led by Vice President for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Zebadiah Hall. The Chair reported that he had been approached by the Provost's office to have a similar meeting with strictly Faculty Senators. The Chair proposed that such a session be held on February 26, March 18, or April 1.

The Chair reported that on a second count, a quorum had been met.

The Chair brought Resolution 450 in Support of a New B.S. in Applied Software Development Degree forward for discussion and vote. The Chair asked the senate if there were any questions for the School of Computing representatives. The Senate asked if the cross-listed courses were going to be removed. The Director of Engagement for the School of Computing Donna Karen Harris responded yes. The Senate asked if whether having similar course numbering and titles to other existing courses was going to be an issue. The Director responded that there would be different prefixes to indicate the different courses.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the resolution. Made, seconded, and carried. One nay vote was recorded.

The Chair brought Resolution 452 in Support of Updated Bylaws for the School of Graduate Education forward for discussion and vote. The Chair called for comments or questions. The Senate moved that Section II on page 4 be amended to "fixed-term, rolling contract, and fixed term rolling contract." The amendment was made and seconded.

The Senate moved to amend the amendment to read "or fixed term faculty with the permission of their department" in Section II page 4. Made, seconded and carried. Two nay votes were recorded.

The Chair called for a motion to approve Resolution 452 in Support of Updated Bylaws for the School of Graduate Education. The Senate moved to amend the resolution to include "or chair at the PhD level with a letter of support from their home department." The amendment was made and seconded. The amendment was made, seconded and carried. One nay vote was recorded.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the amended resolution. Made, seconded, and carried.

The Chair brought Resolution 451 in Support of the Proposal to Move the Biodiversity Institute to the Haub School in the UW Organizational Structure and Budget forward for discussion and vote. The Chair opened the floor for discussion.

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

The Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes of January 22. Made, seconded, and carried.

The Chair called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:54 PM; made, seconded, and carried.