

# Minutes of Meeting

Faculty Affairs Committee

Wednesday, Dec 1, 2021 at 12:00 PM

Location: Zoom

## Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 PM by James Beasley

**Members Present:** James Beasley (Chair), Suzanne Ehrlich, Hanadi Hamadi (FA VP), Mark Halley, Juliana Leding, Claudia Sealey-Potts, Kristi Sweeney, Elizabeth Gregg, Jennifer Wesely

## Members Absent:

## Guests:

Georgette Dumont

- **Approval of the Minutes**

- Minutes from November 18 meeting were moved by Hanadi Hamadi and were approved by the committee.

- **New Business**

- **Senate Model:**

The committee discussed answers provided by the Task Force to questions posed by Faculty Affairs on November 19, 2021:

1. *In the timing of the senate model, there doesn't seem to be a contingent plan for elections if the senate model is implemented past Feb 15 (line 83). If there is a delay, does the Task Force have a proposal for a transition?*

*In the event of a delay, the proposed start date could be adjusted by a friendly amendment.*

2. *In the eligibility of senate membership, there seems to be a situation in which the faculty senate could be comprised of all out-of-unit faculty (line 77). Is the task Force concerned about this possibility or have a proposal to address this situation?*

- a. *Although the chance of this is extremely low, it is not more probable than all the officers and committee chairs of the current structure being out-of-unit faculty. There are no current stipulations to avoid this scenario nor has it happened.*
- b. *We believe that UNF faculty know who can represent them well and we do not wish to limit their ability of choosing their representatives among the eligible faculty.*
- c. *The in-unit & out-of-unit classifications pertain to bargaining, and if the issues under discussion by the senate impact in-unit faculty in a different way than out-of-unit faculty, it perhaps is a bargaining issue that falls within the purview of UFF and should not be discussed by the senate. It should also be noted that, by definition, the president*

*of the Faculty Association—or a faculty senate if we move to that model—is out-of-unit due to her/his membership on the Board of Trustees.*

3. In the eligibility of senate membership, there doesn't seem to be a definition of faculty (line 78). While many other SUS senate bylaws define faculty here, is the task force concerned that faculty isn't defined in the bylaws?

*Membership in the UNF faculty is defined in the UNF Constitution; the FA bylaws do not define faculty for that reason. To define faculty per the suggestion above would require a revision to the UNF Constitution (the prevailing document). Constitutional review is scheduled for 2024. Opening the Constitution for review prior to that date has significant implications and dangers.*

4. In the representation of the senate for the faculty, it seems as if there could be confusion on whom a faculty member should go to out of all their elected senators (line 63). Does the task force have a proposal to communicate to faculty which of their senators they should take concerns to?

*There is no reason to delineate to which representative a faculty member would go for a particular issue (the senate members will change with time and thus their areas of expertise or department affiliation will also change). Faculty should use common sense to determine which representative (Senator) can best represent their interest(s). Faculty will be easily able to find their representatives on the Faculty Association website.*

5. In the vote of no-confidence section, it seems as if the senators could put aside the faculty's call for a no-confidence vote (line 586). What is the rationale for a senate vote before going to the faculty for vote?

*It is part and parcel of a representative system of government. A vote of no confidence in a senior administrator should be determined by senators who know the issues, who can gauge the political climate, and who have solicited their constituents' concerns. Again, in a republican system of governance, this is what representatives are for. Citizens in the U.S. have no right to a vote of no confidence in their leaders; they vote them in or out in the next election cycle or they petition said representatives to impeach the president. This is also the normal process per most faculty senates.*

6. It seems as if the senate model has the support of Academic Affairs. Are there any sections of the proposed bylaws that do not have the support of Academic Affairs?

*The senate model has not been vetted by Academic Affairs nor should the support (or opposition) from AA be a significant factor in choosing a system of faculty governance. AA has no power to disapprove or veto a duly elected vote by the faculty on their system of governance. That said, the provost has spoken favorably of UNF moving to a faculty senate.*

The committee discussed that the first question to the Task Force should have also included asking if there was a contingency plan for the election of Faculty Association President and Vice-President should there be a delay in the implementation of the new bylaws after February 15.

The committee discussed that the answers from the Task Force in the second question still do not address the concerns of the committee, that there are no provisions in the bylaws which would preclude the senate being completely comprised of out of unit faculty. The committee discussed

that despite the efforts of the task force to bring UNF into a model of governance more closely aligned with other SUS schools, most all other SUS bylaws identify the relationship between in and out of unit faculty for senate eligibility, with UCF not allowing for any out of unit faculty to serve on the senate. Most other schools allow both in and out of unit faculty to serve as senators, but this is clearly stated in most other SUS bylaws.

The committee discussed that the answer from the Task Force in the third question is understandable, but again most other SUS bylaws define faculty in the bylaws as well as in their constitutions.

The committee discussed that the answer from the Task Force in the fourth question did not adequately answer the committee's question. If the senate model is based on "representative government," then the committee discussed that a specific system should determine which senators represent specific faculty and/or departments.

The committee discussed that the fifth question should also have included a question as to why senators from every college would be able to vote on a vote of no confidence in one college. The committee discussed the lack of clarity in the Task Force proposal over which set of bylaws would take precedence in a no-confidence vote, the bylaws of the college or the version proposed by the Task Force.

The committee discussed that the answers to the sixth question were already known, that Academic Affairs is in favor of a "senate model," but there is still no understanding to what extent Academic Affairs is in favor of "this" model proposed by the Task Force. The committee discussed the lack of knowledge on how much support AA might have and commitment it would give for the establishment of a Policies and Procedures Committee (line 473).

The committee then discussed the role of the committee in moving the item forward to the Faculty Executive committee, the consequences of moving the item forward, and the consequences of not doing so.

The committee discussed the concern that the Board of Trustees has been told we will roll out a model when it has not been presented.

In its role of reviewing the proposal from the Task Force, the committee discussed whether the Task Force had completed its official charge (copied here):

*Special Committee: Faculty Senate Task Force*

#### **CHARGE**

*This Special Committee—empowered via Article 6, Section 12 of the UNF Faculty Association Bylaws—and hereafter referred to as the "Faculty Senate Task Force" is hereby charged with*

*a) providing a forum or forums (in addition to Faculty Association Meetings) in which faculty may discuss and debate the merits of moving to a faculty senate form of governance;*

*b) determining appropriate means by which to gauge UNF faculty members' interest in moving to a faculty senate (i.e., determining if there is significant interest in moving toward a faculty senate so as to engage in the work described below);*

*c) examining and presenting to the UNF faculty potential benefits of and models for a UNF faculty senate (based upon the models in other institutions in the State University System, the faculty senates at "comparable" or peer aspirant institutions, and/or developing hybrid models that might incorporate aspects of the current system while making the greater governing body representative in nature);*

*d) providing recommendations to the Faculty Association Executive Committee on the wording and execution of a faculty-wide vote regarding changes to the Faculty Association Bylaws to incorporate a faculty senate;*

*e) assisting the Faculty Association leadership (the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, and Committee Chairpersons) in implementing a chosen faculty senate model when or if faculty vote for such a change to the Faculty Association structure and mode of governance.*

#### **TERM OF EXISTENCE**

*The Faculty Senate Task Force shall exist for six months from its inception (September 14, 2020) unless and until it formally seeks and is granted an extension by the Faculty Association Executive Committee for an additional six month term.*

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

*The Faculty Senate Task Force shall consist of at least one representative from each of the university's academic colleges (including the Library) as well as five at-large members. The Faculty Association President and Vice President shall be ex officio members. A vacancy shall be filled promptly by appointment by the Faculty Association President, in consultation with the Nominations and Elections Committee, who shall be charged with finding appropriate candidates for consideration for appointment to these vacancies.*

#### **METHOD OF MEETING**

*The Faculty Senate Task Force shall meet as often as is necessary to conduct its business. A quorum (>50%) shall be required in order for recommendations and decisions to be forwarded out of the committee. Committee business may be conducted in person or virtually.*

The committee discussed whether parts A and B of the charge had been fully completed. The committee discussed that according to the Task Force minutes, the Task Force voted 6-3 not to send a follow up survey to faculty.

The committee discussed whether part C of the charge had been fully completed. The committee discussed the lack of additional models to review other than the one model provided by the task force.

A motion to move the proposed bylaws from the Task Force to the Executive Committee was made by James, seconded by Hanadi. The committee discussed the process of review after moving to the Executive Committee.

The committee voted 7 (yea), 2 (nay). Motion passed.

- **Open Forum**
  - Non-Member raised questions regarding the notice process of the Dec 1 meeting and thanked the committee for their review of the proposed bylaws.
- **Potential Future Agenda Items**
  - Next meeting
    - Academic misconduct
  - Future meetings
    - Discuss coordination with RC as they discuss flexible teaching loads
    - Review of FA Committees
    - Continue discussion on policy on academic misconduct
    - Discuss revisions to FAC charge
- **Adjournment & Next Meeting**
  - The meeting adjourned at 1 PM.
  - The next meeting will be December 9 at 12:15pm.