

*Minutes  
Faculty Senate Meeting  
October 4, 2023*

*The complete Recording for this meeting can be found at:*

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

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**Present: Professors:** Thomas Merrill, Jennifer Axe, Lilian Baeza-Mendoza, Ximena Varela, Mauro Tiso, Dan Abraham, Kristina Crona, Yijiang Zhao, Beverly Peters, Emily Peterson, Randall Blair, Mirjana Morosini, Alan Levine, Clarissa Ihssen, Ken Anderson, Jim Quirk, Katie Holton, Bryan Fantie, Chris Tudge, Paula Weissman, Justin Jacobs, Dario Bernardini, Joseph Graf, Jason Mollica, Jason Snyder, William Brent, Maria Gomez, Jennifer Steele, Acting Provost Vicky Wilkins, and Dean of Faculty, Monica Jackson

### **Chair's Report – Thomas Merrill**

The chair of the Faculty Senate, Thomas Merrill, opened the meeting promptly. He made several announcements:

- The minutes from the September 6, 2023, meeting were **VOTED** on and approved 27-0-0.
- Updates were provided on several working groups/task forces:
  - The Administrative Growth Study Group has been formed and has begun their work. Their charge is to clarify the data and facts surrounding the extent of AU administrative growth in recent years, in response to the two memos distributed towards the end of AY 2022-2023 and the discussion during the May 2023 Faculty Senate meeting. Elizabeth Worden is serving as the group's chair.
  - Acting Provost Wilkins has released requested salary data, which is now available on the website of Deputy Provost Monica Jackson.
  - The Service Taskforce, chaired by Garret Martin and Taryn Morrissey, has distributed the draft of their report, and presented their findings at this meeting.
  - The Working Group on Faculty Engagement, chaired by Beverly Peters and John Bracht, has distributed the draft of their report and they will present their findings at the November senate meeting.

### **Provost's Report – Vicky Wilkins**

Acting Provost Vicky Wilkins made several announcements and provided updates regarding important matters:

- US News & World Report rankings have been released: AU fell thirty-three spots, to #105. The administration has been working to investigate and has many concerns regarding methodology, limited data sources, and reproducibility of the results. Some issues/concerns include that only publicly available data was used (some of which was inaccurate), incorrect

cohorts were reported, number of first-generation students only includes those with Federal loans and excludes those who did not take out loans and those with financial aid provided by AU, and biased publication counting metrics. Additionally, seventeen of the nineteen factors considered in the rankings were changed this year and many of the changes do not reflect the core values of our institution, for example the class size metric was dropped. Despite these issues, there are certainly places where we can improve including faculty salaries, retention rates, and graduation rates. However, there is also a question as to whether we want to strive to increase our ranking based on the flawed methodology and a system that heavily deviates from AU's educational beliefs (such as striving to maintain small class sizes). These issues are not solely a problem at AU, many other similar schools like Elon also experienced large drops in ranking.

- Our peer-assessment ranking shows our study abroad program is number two in the nation.
- The faculty/staff committee has been elected and a search firm has been selected for the upcoming SOC Dean search. We hope to have the new Dean in place by July 1, 2024.
- The CTRL Executive Director search is continuing. Anyone eligible for a faculty appointment can apply. A committee has been selected and is hoping to have the new Executive Director in place by January 1, 2024, though it may be delayed to June 1, 2024. The new director will be expected to teach one course a year, help with student-faculty research, and help faculty find research agendas.
- The team working on the Middle States reaccreditation process has produced a 120-page draft of our self-study report. More details and information sessions regarding the report and the process will be coming out soon.
- We are rapidly approaching our official enrollment census date and are still on track for the estimated \$30 million budget shortfall. An official announcement will be coming out next week once the census date has been reached.
- Although it has not been completed in recent years due to COVID, the annual Conflict of Interest reporting form will be sent out soon. Each unit will have someone who handles that process for them.

### **Annual Faculty Data Presentation – Monica Jackson**

Deputy Provost Monica Jackson presented a variety of faculty data, disaggregated in several ways. Highlights covered at the senate meeting include:

- There is roughly an even split in terms of gender of the faculty, as 50.5% identify as female, 48.9% identify as male, and the remainder did not disclose.
- There is roughly an even split in terms of track of the faculty, with 50.8% being tenured or on the tenure-track and 49.2% being non-tenure-track (term, continuing, or pre-continuing). This ratio has been maintained for about eight years. There are currently fifty vacancies for tenure-track positions, with searches occurring this year to fill thirty-five of those positions.
- In terms of race, we have been making large strides to diversify. Last year 70% of new faculty hires identified as people of color. Currently, 29.0% of AU faculty identify as people of color.
- CAS remains the largest school, with 43.8% of the total faculty.

- An institutional goal was set previously to have over 50% of term faculty in each school on multi-year rather than single-year contracts. Progress has been made and most schools have achieved that goal. Next year, the data will also include the number of term faculty who have moved to a continuing appointment.
- All data includes those in administrative roles who maintain a faculty appointment.

### **Service Taskforce Report Presentation – Garret Martin & Taryn Morrissey**

The nine-membered taskforce completed their investigation on faculty service, distributed their draft report, and presented on the highlights from their research. The group was tasked with investigating the tensions regarding service at the University, particularly the issues surrounding the service burden and service equity, and to uncover strategies for promoting equity and improving service. Their work began in Fall 2022 and the data was from faculty using surveys and focus groups. The faculty who responded/participated was quite representative of the total faculty body.

The taskforce has made nine recommendations:

1. Clearly define service to distinguish teaching vs. service and internal vs. external service
2. Service dashboard to enhance transparency
3. Develop service rubrics and/or matrices to set expectations and improve transparency
4. Consider a range of rewards, incentives, and compensation for performing service
5. Enhance faculty member autonomy in selecting service assignments
6. Conduct periodic service audits at the unit level
7. Develop a range of accountability tools for engaging in and performing service
8. Better onboarding of new faculty with respect to service expectations and opportunities
9. Shift the service culture to see it as a key tool of self-governance rather than a necessary burden

The Senate **VOTED** and accepted the report 21-0-0

### **Presidential Search Resolutions – Thomas Merrill & Kristina Crona**

In response to faculty unease stemming from representation in the presidential search process, two resolutions were considered. One was proposed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The other was proposed by John Bracht, John Willoughby, Patrick T. Jackson, and the local AAUP chapter and was sponsored by CAS Representative Kristina Crona. After discussion and vote, the resolution proposed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee **VOTED** 16-8-0 in favor.

### **Presidential Search Advisory Committee – Thomas Merrill**

The Faculty Senate has been asked to provide sixteen names to the Board of Trustees to serve on the Presidential Search Advisory Committee, the Board will then choose eight of those faculty. A proposal was approved for the selection process of the sixteen names following the scheme described below:

- 1 representative elected from each SPA, SIS, SOC, KSB, SOE, UL, OGPS/OGIS, and WCL
- 2 representatives elected from CAS
- 6 representatives elected through a University-wide, open election, run by the Faculty Senate
- The Senate **VOTED** 19-3-1 in favor