

*Minutes  
Faculty Senate Meeting  
November 1, 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, 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:

- Updates were provided for the Presidential search advisory committee:
  - The Faculty Senate's open election for six of the seats has been completed
  - Units have either completed their elections or have elections in-progress
- CFO, Vice President and Treasurer Bronté Burleigh-Jones recently addressed the AU community to announce upcoming conversations regarding arming AUPD. No decision has been made on this issue and a working group of various campus representatives has been formed to be a part of this discussion. Vice Chair Jennifer Axe will be representing the Faculty Senate. Additionally, Jane Palmer is doing a survey to collect thoughts on arming the AUPD.
- The Middle States group is about to complete its Self-Study draft, which will be released to the community shortly for a public comment period.
- Last meeting, the Service Taskforce presented. Steps are now being made regarding the implementation of these recommendations. The definition of "service" as presented in the Faculty Manual will be discussed at the upcoming December Faculty Senate luncheon and will then be presented to the community for discussion next semester.
- The Administrative Growth Study Group, chaired by Elizabeth Worden, has had their first meeting, and is starting their work.
- The minutes from the October 4, 2023, meeting were **VOTED** on and approved, 24-0-0.
- A proposal was presented and approved regarding changing the Faculty Senate bylaws to align committee names with the newly renamed Board of Trustees committees. The Senate **VOTED** in favor 24-0-1.

## Provost's Report – Vicky Wilkins

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

- Clarification was made that there is no fully formed proposal or decision regarding arming the AUPD. There has been an overall report on security, a working group has been formed, and there will be an upcoming conversation.
- We have had a rough couple of weeks and our community has been strained. Many faculty and students are feeling fear, stress, and anxiety. The provost's office has been working to provide members of our community with the resources and support they need, such as information regarding anticipated walkouts, connections to Human Resources and other parts of campus, etc. Please reach out to the provost's office for more information or assistance.
- To provide greater transparency, Budget Forums with Acting Provost Vicky Wilkins and CFO, Vice President and Treasurer Bronté Burleigh-Jones were held and a recording is available for those who were unable to attend. The final Fall 2023 enrollment count (census) has been completed and a community report was sent out. Over the next several months, Spring 2024 enrollment will be tracked, and updates will be provided. Thus far, if we meet our Spring 2024 enrollments and retention, areas for budgetary mitigation have been identified and we have been able to cover the current budget deficit. A PowerPoint will be sent out as well, with information about what faculty can do to help with enrollment and retention, such as faster application reviews and allowing prospective students to sit in for a class. Graduate enrollment has also been a topic of conversation as an area where we have missed our enrollment targets in the past. Work is being done, through multiple offices, to provide accurate projections.
- Progress is being made on opening the UClub. Currently, the initial space in the tunnel should be ready in February. If there is strong support and success in the initial tunnel space, then the UClub may return to its previous location on the bridge.
- A safety webinar was announced for Friday (November 3<sup>rd</sup>), to provide information regarding what goes on around campus daily.
- Acting Provost Vicky Wilkins and Deputy Provost and Dean of Faculty Monica Jackson have been sharing lunches with new term and tenure-track hires.
- The Service Taskforce has been having productive conversations and is coming to meet with the Deans to talk about the definition of service and ideas for a dashboard or other service-organizing tool.
- Acting Provost Vicky Wilkins has been asked to remain in her position for an additional year to maintain continuity while the Presidential search is completed. A Provost search will then be carried out next academic year. Although she is happy to accept the offer to remain in the Acting Provost position for an additional year, she clarified that she will not accept a permanent Provost offer without a full search.

## **Dean of Faculty's Report – Monica Jackson**

Deputy Provost and Dean of Faculty Monica Jackson made several announcements and provided updates regarding important matters:

- AU was the recipient of a \$1 million NSF ADVANCE grant to improve the culture and climate for faculty here, particularly for term faculty.
  - Several events have been held, such as the inaugural symposium on Race and Gender in STEM which aimed at forming connections between faculty and students. Another is planned for the spring semester.
  - A mentorship program has been started for faculty moving from associate to full professor on the tenure track and senior professorial lecturer to Hurst senior professorial lecturer on the term line. There are two cohorts with roughly ten faculty in each. The tenure-line cohort is being led by Dean Linda Aldoory and the term-line cohort is being led by Meg Bentley. There will be another cohort for next year.
  - Ten mini grants, which can be used for anything related to research, were awarded. The winners will be announced soon.
- This is the second year of the revamped program reviews, which should be completed every eight years. There are roughly sixty programs on campus and last time there was a review, only five units completed their review. Currently, six units are undergoing their review. We would like to get back on track completing these reviews every eight years. Programs should be hearing from their deans soon regarding when they should start their review.
- An announcement regarding the search for the Assistant Vice-Provost (formerly titled the Executive Director) of CTRL will be coming in the next few days. They will start accepting applications soon. There is no pay increase associated with the change in title, the positions were banded as equivalent by Human Resources.
- Assistant Dean of Academic Integrity Alison Thomas sent out an announcement regarding the revamping of the Academic Integrity Code this year. There will be several sessions to collect faculty input.
- The first cohort of continuing appointment faculty is currently going through the process. The Dean of Faculty's office is on target with their implementation plan. So far, fifteen continuing appointments have been awarded. The contracts are being granted on a rolling basis with many more continuing appointments expected soon, as many eligible faculty files are still in the review process.

## **President Sylvia Burwell's Visit**

President Burwell acknowledged that it was a difficult time on campus and around the world. During her visit for this semester, she wanted to focus on three main items:

- Celebrating faculty achievements:

- In SPA, an \$800,000 DHS grant was awarded to the Polarization Extremism Research and Innovation Lab (PERIL), led by Cynthia Miller-Idriss and Brian Hughes, to expand their animated video work.
  - In KSB, Jennifer Oetzel's book *Business Adaptation to Climate Change* was awarded two prizes for the best book by the Academy of Management in the Organizations and the Natural Environment division and in the Social Issues in Management division.
  - In SOC, the Center for Media and Social Impact, led by Caty Borum, was named as a community partner with the Kennedy Center and recently had a sold-out event focused on how to save democracy.
  - In CAS, Anastasia Snelling was awarded \$2.8 million by Novo Nordisk for her work to cultivate an equitable food system in the district.
  - In SOE, Michael Gibbons and Terence Ngwa, who directs the Antiracism Administration, Supervision, and Leadership certificate program, traveled with eleven students to Senegal for a twelve-day experiential learning trip.
  - In SIS, Claudine Kuradusenge-McLeod, director of the Department of Peace, Human Rights & Cultural Relations founded the Mass Atrocity Research lab to expand analysis of mass atrocities with the goal of becoming the region's intellectual hub in this field.
  - In WCL, Olinda Moyd led the first symposium of the Decarceration and Reentry Clinic.
  - In OGPS, Beverly Peters directs our M.S. in Measurement & Evaluation program, the AU MSMET team placed in the top 5 in the world-wide, American Evaluation Association case competition.
- Giving faculty an opportunity to ask President Burwell questions. During the extended Q & A session, President Burwell discussed:
    - Things that she wished she had known about AU before starting her presidency, including that the structure of incentives do not promote community and the lack of a unifying identity/feature for the AU community.
    - Inclusive excellence successes during her time here and potential next steps.
    - Her reaction to the WGFE report and key points to pass on to her successor.
  - Giving faculty time to provide input to President Burwell's question regarding missed enrollment targets and low retention, what are the faculty's best ideas to improve? Responses included:
    - Lack over community at all levels (student, faculty, and staff)
      - Faculty feeling undervalued
      - Separation of faculty into tenure- and term-line was disruptive to community building
    - Nothing in common that makes us feel good about ourselves
      - Change-makers marketing should be our unifying feature
      - Should adjust our curriculum as needed
    - Students come to AU for DC, but we should make students want to come to DC for AU

- Standardize websites across units that display alumni data on things like post-graduation jobs obtained and average salaries
- Investigate/reevaluate the degree of administrative growth

### **AUx1, 1.0 Credit Pilot Proposal – Bridget Trogden**

AUx1 was originally designed and offered as a 1.5-credit course. Last year, a 1.0-credit pilot version was run after approval by pertinent stakeholders. There is now a proposal to extend the 1.0-credit pilot for an additional year, while the data collected is being analyzed and adjustments are being made to the course and other aspects of the Core curriculum. Without approval of this extension, AUx1 will return to the original 1.5 credits for next year. The proposal to extend the 1.0-credit program was **VOTED** on and approved, 21-1-1.

### **Teaching Race and Power at AU – Sara Kaplan, Bridget Trogden, and Amanda Taylor**

Material related to race and power is currently being taught in many places and departments across campus. A working group is being formed to evaluate what work has already been done, what strategies are working, and what strategies are not. The group will also be collecting input from faculty who do research in this area, with the goal of improving the undergraduate curriculum and providing a more cohesive approach to teaching race and power.

### **Working Group on Faculty Engagement Presentation – Beverly Peters & John Bracht**

Having completed their work and having submitted their final report to the senate, the Working Group on Faculty Engagement presented their findings. Highlights included a general timeline of their work and predicted/recommended next steps.

The results of recent faculty climate surveys were used to form four “baskets” or areas on which to focus; shared governance, compensation, working conditions, and DEI. Suggested next steps include Faculty Senate reform, improving faculty interest and engagement in shared governance, greater faculty involvement and transparency on the Board of Trustees, investigating general compensation and salary compression issues, continued improvements on working conditions and culture, and strengthening our DEI work.

Regarding shared governance, a positive example of Scott Bass’s AU 2030 project was described. Faculty were invited to submit proposals detailing areas or ideas to which resources should be allocated. A few proposals were then selected and received funding and/or other resources. Another idea for improving shared governance is to use recent, less positive, examples as case studies to determine what steps could be improved upon in the future. The Senate **VOTED** 19-1-1 in favor to accept the report.

**The meeting was dismissed at 5:00pm**