

*Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting
May 3, 2023*

The complete Recording for this meeting can be found at:

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

Present: Professors: Lilian Baeza-Mendoza, Garret Martin, Thomas Merrill, Maria Gomez, Mauro Tiso, Dan Abraham, Laura Beers, Yijiang Zhao, Sarah Irvine Belson, Randall Blair, Mirjana Morosini, Alan Levine, Nikhat Ghouse, Ken Anderson, Shawn Bates, Jim Quirk, Katie Holton, Bryan Fantie, Kelly Joyner, Jennifer Axe, Rhonda Zaharna, Dario Bernardini, Jennifer Poole, Alan Isaac, William Ryan, Mieke Meurs, Robert Kelley, Jennifer Steele, Provost Peter Starr, Dean of Faculty, Monica Jackson

Chair's Report—Lilian Baeza-Mendoza

The chair of the Faculty Senate, Lilian Baeza-Mendoza, opened the meeting promptly. She made several announcements as part of her Chair's Report.

- The minutes of the April 5, 2023, Senate meeting were **VOTED** on and approved 15-0-1.
- The membership of the Faculty Senate, along with the chairs and members for Senate committees, for the 2023-24 academic year were announced.
- The Senate **VOTED** 14-0-2 in favor of Professor Randall Blair (SOC), additional, and Professor Katie Holton (CAS) as the at-large senators and members of the Senate Executive Committee.
- The annual reports of the Senate committees were presented.
- Lilian Baeza-Mendoza gave a brief overview of the accomplishments of the Senate in 2022-23, including the Continuing Appointment status and the Senate seats for OGIS and OGPS.
- The Senate honored Jessica Waters with a resolution as she prepares to leave her position as Dean of Undergraduate Affairs and Vice-Provost for Academic Student Services.

Provost's Report—Peter Starr

Provost Starr made several announcements:

- Bridget Trogden, currently of Clemson University, will become the new Dean of Undergraduate Education and Vice-Provost of Student Services over the summer.
- Provost Starr thanked Professor Tom Merrill and the Senate University Awards committee for reviewing nominations and making selections for university awards. The awardees were recognized at the recent Faculty Recognition Dinner.
- The first to second year retention rate for undergraduates is higher than last year. If faculty members know that a particulate student is a retention risk, please do alert an advisor or an associate dean.

- The budget outlook for the 2023-24 academic year is not particularly good. The most significant problem is graduate enrollments, especially in the master's programs. The budget shortfall for next year may be between \$30 and \$45 million.
- The university is reviewing small master's programs and trying to boost the BA/MA programs.
- The Kogod School of Business is winding down its partnership with 2U, the online education platform.
- Provost Starr and Karen Frosolid Jones, Assistant Vice Provost of Institutional Research and Assessment, will come to the Senate with the results of the Campus Climate Survey for students in the fall. Student ratings of faculty went up in this survey, but student views of university responsiveness and communications are down (in part in response to the Leonard Hall incident).
- The Working Group on Sexual Assault is coming forward with recommendations for improving university processes around sexual assault.
- The Continuing Appointment proposal will be considered by the Board of Trustees at the May 19, 2023, Board meeting. Units will need to work on guidelines over the summer.
- Sponsored research is still doing very well.

Discussion: Administrative Growth—Steve Silvia

Senators and members of the community had a conversation about the nature and extent of administrative growth at the university. Professor Steve Silvia (SIS) started the discussion by stating that the university's announcement that it was searching for three new Vice-Provost positions raised concerns in many faculty in the light of our current budget shortfalls. Several Senators agreed that there was a perception that there was excessive administrative growth at the higher levels of the university and raised concerns. Provost Starr responded to these concerns by talking about the three new positions. There was a consensus that the Senate needs to investigate the data around this issue.

Action Item: Undergraduate Regulation Change—Brad Knight

The Senate considered and voted on a proposal to make it easier for students who study abroad to substitute classes taken abroad for Core classes. This proposal will primarily affect students in the AU Cornerstone program. The Senate **VOTED** 21-0-1 in favor.

AU Core Annual Update—Martyn Oliver and Brad Knight

Martyn Oliver (CAS) and Brad Knight (Core) presented an update about the AU Core. The Core offered 944 sections of classes last fall and 890 classes this spring. Senators asked questions about student unhappiness with AUx1 and AUx2 and about academic freedom

Presentation—Rethinking AU's Retention and Graduation Approach—Ashlie Prioleau

Ashlie Prioleau, Assistant Vice President for Student Success and Retention presented a series of slides about the university's retention and graduation issues and about the university's plans to

address these issues. Senators asked whether faculty unhappiness relates to the student retention issues.

Update: Working Group on Faculty Engagement—John Heywood

Professor John Heywood (WCL) gave an update on the work of the Working Group on Faculty Engagement. The Working Group has been reviewing data from the Faculty Climate Survey and holding focus groups in schools as well as other particular groups of faculty, seeking to understand both problems and possible solutions. The Working Group has asked for an extension to complete their work and expects to present a report to the Senate sometime in Fall of 2023.

Update: Task Force on Service—Taryn Morrissey and Garret Martin

Professor Taryn Morrissey (SPA) and Professor Garret Martin (SIS) gave an update on the work of the Task Force on Service. They have conducted a survey and expect to present a report to the Senate sometime in the Fall of 2023.

For the Good of the Order & Changing of the Gavel Ceremony—Lilian Baeza-Mendoza, Garret Martin, and Tom Merrill

Senate past chair, Garret Martin, who will be completing his three-year term on the senate, expressed gratitude to his colleagues on the Senate and the all other faculty members for their collaboration. Chair of the Senate, Lilian Baeza-Mendoza, who is moving from chair to past chair, noted the achievements of the Senate this year and encouraged faculty to participate in university service. Professor Baeza-Mendoza then passed the gavel to Professor Tom Merrill, who will be chair of the Senate in AY 2023-2024.