

# University Budget Advisory Committee

## Minutes – 10/29/2020 meeting

Voting members present: Nabil Al-Tikriti (Chair, At-large)  
Stephen Davies (Secretary, At-large)  
Laura Bylenok (At-large)  
Chris Garcia (COB)  
Liane Houghtalin (CAS)  
Kyle Schultz (COE)  
Suzanne Sumner (At-large)

Non-voting members present: Michelle Pickham (Staff Advisory Council President)  
Patrick Catullo (Athletic Director)

Guests: Andrew Dolby  
Marcel Rotter (Member of UFC Executive Committee, and AAUP)

1. Our meeting was devoted to Ms. Pickham's motion that the Staff Advisory Council President should be a voting member of the committee. Ms. Pickham relayed that the UMW staff wants to increase their participation throughout institutional governance in general. This is due not only to staff being underrepresented in many important university discussions and decisions, but also to some feelings of resentment towards what is perceived as the more "privileged" position of the faculty (at least in some administrators' eyes). Ms. Pickham reported an increasing sense of "us vs them" between the faculty and staff. Dr. Sumner acknowledged that there has been a long history of such friction between the two groups at UMW. Ms. Pickham predicted that even having more opportunities to interact with faculty in important matters would be valuable in healing some of the hurt and changing those bad feelings. Dr. Davies voiced surprise in hearing that there was some measure of ill will between these two groups, and was echoed by other on the committee in affirming the broad and vital role of the staff to the institution. The general feeling was that this deeper issue should be addressed in addition to the more immediate question of voting rights on the UBAC.
2. We reviewed the history of the committee and how it has evolved to its present state. Originally, under President Hurley, it was a presidential advisory committee, not a UFC committee at all. Over time it evolved to be under the umbrella of the UFC, and that is why staff don't currently have voting power on it. Dr. Bylenok noted that from 2011-2015, the committee had no staff involvement at all, and only after that period enlarged to include a member from Athletics and a student representative.
3. Much discussion revealed a great deal of openness among the members towards possibly changing the focus, role, and reporting structure of the committee. Members seemed to acknowledge that the committee's stakeholders are much broader than just the faculty, and that voting should reflect that.
4. Dr. Dolby mentioned that he had already presented this general idea to the UFC to get an early look at its input, and found that the UFC was also amenable to changes in order to enable the UMW staff to be more productive shared partners in governance.
5. Dr. Houghtalin mentioned that since our committee's job is to monitor a decision-making process and make recommendations on it – unlike (say) the University Curriculum Committee, which has the specific job of approving (or rejecting) individual proposals – it makes sense for its

membership and even voting to be broadly inclusive. Mr. Catullo echoed that more participation would almost certainly be better than less, in order to form a more well-rounded deliberative body which reflected more views from the institution.

6. Dr. Al-Tikriti asked about the process for choosing voting staff members, should that come to pass. Ms. Pickham and Dr. Bylenok identified the straightforward solution of the current Faculty Handbook language, which already specifies how to select the (non-voting) members. Ms. Pickham did note, however, that the rank-and-file staff members do want participation to be more democratically representative, rather than just a few high-profile staff members, who are already commonly asked to serve on decision-making committees, being asked to serve here also.
7. Dr. Al-Tikriti expressed a strong preference for the faculty to still retain a majority voting bloc if staff members are extended voting rights.
8. Dr. Houghtalin also stated she was strongly in favor of separating our committee from the faculty organization structure of the UFC, since we are advisory and our scope is so broad. Dr. Rotter, Dr. Davies, and others expressed agreement with this principle. Dr. Schultz observed that broadening membership would also be more efficient in getting budget messaging promulgated to more people at once. Dr. Dolby also noted that all of the other UFC committees are explicitly under the faculty's purview as expressed in the Handbook, whereas this one is not. Dr. Bylenok stated, too, that if non-faculty are to be included among the committee's voting members, it makes even more sense for the committee to be separated from the UFC, since on other UFC committees, non-faculty do not vote.\*
9. Dr. Al-Tikriti delineated one possible future path for UBAC: retain the current six faculty members, plus Athletics and the SAC President, and add a student representative (who exists in the Handbook but not yet in reality). Then, add two new staff representatives that the SAC would choose according to whatever process they agree on. This would give a final total of six faculty and five staff, with all members voting. Finally, the entire committee would separate from the UFC and become a presidential standing committee. (Obviously, the UFC would have to vote on changing the representation and on dissolving the committee from UFC.)
10. In light of this appetite for change, the committee began outlining implementation steps. These include:
  - (a) **The committee voted unanimously (6-0) to immediately add two new non-voting members from UMW staff, at the SAC's discretion.**
  - (b) The committee will bring a motion to the next meeting of the UFC, with proposed new handbook language that adds the two new SAC non-voting members. (UFC will refer this to the UFOC.)
  - (c) **The committee voted unanimously (6-0) to explore the idea of shifting the committee from UFC to a presidential advisory standing committee, and to explore giving voting rights to all members of the committee.** In part, this will involve Dr. Al-Tikriti appearing at the next UFC meeting to present our reasoning and ask for input. It will also involve approaching President Paino for his thoughts on the utility of this approach and the right mix of members.

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\*Dr. Sumner noted a solitary exception to this: the Journalism Advisory Committee has an external member of the community with voting privileges.

(d) Drs. Dolby and Rotter will be meeting with representatives from other state institutions at the Faculty Senate of Virginia this weekend. They will elicit information about what our peer institutions do with their own budget advisory committees.

Upcoming meetings:

- Nov 5th: Melva Kishpaugh (Procurement and Contracts), Kathy Sandor (Business Services), and Paul Messplay
- Nov 12th: Lisa Bowling (Publicity and Media)