

University Faculty Affairs Committee meeting minutes

April 1, 2021

3:30 pm via Zoom

In attendance: Randy Reif (at-large, Chair), Jennifer Barry (at-large), Eric Bonds (CAS), Caitie Finlayson (at-large), and Lance Gentry (COB, Secretary). Beverly Epps (COE) was unable to attend.

Randy updated the committee on the most recent UFC news pertaining to our committee. The UFC has no idea when the equity study will start. We still have ongoing concerns about the timeline. We want to ensure that we are involved as planned, but we are not on contract during summer. The study will be conducted after, possibly well after, the 5% raise goes into effect. The UFAC should be involved in the survey development as well as the analysis and our expectation is that the survey development will be a large part of our Fall 2021 service.

The provost told the UFC that all visas were in process. Beth Williams (HR) is the point person for visas and all faculty with visa issues should contact her. In addition, they should CC the provost to ensure the administration is aware of it.

Randy then informed us that the provost would like to meet with the committee as a debriefing for the sensitive matter we recently handled, discuss her concerns with Section 4, and her thoughts on our memo about special assignments.

Our last meeting will be on April 22 from 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM. We will ask the provost to join us for the first 30 minutes and handle the confidential part of the meeting during the first 15 minutes. Jenny Barry will join us at 3:45 PM. At 4:00 PM, the new members of the UFAC will join us. During the latter part of the meeting, we will discuss our goals for next year and elect officers.

The committee then discussed and revised a memorandum of concern about how visas are handled for our international faculty (posted as an individual document).

Caitie briefed us on a recent AAUP subcommittee meeting. They were concerned about an ever-expanding service load that makes it more challenging for faculty to focus on teaching. Further, it seems that the administration persistently presented the need for faculty service as a crisis. Our committee discussed the demoralizing nature of the constant crisis narrative and the escalating invisible service expectations that result. Our concern is that the crisis mentality and service overload could lead to faculty burnout. No action items were generated, but the committee expects these minutes will aid in communicating the issue to the campus for further consideration.

The committee then adjourned at 5:03 PM.