

University Faculty Affairs Committee meeting minutes
April 22, 2021
3:30 pm via Zoom

In attendance: Randy Reif (at-large, Chair), Eric Bonds (CAS), Beverly Epps (COE), Caitie Finlayson (at-large), and Lance Gentry (COB, Secretary). The committee was joined by Provost Nina Mikhalevsky. Jennifer Barry (at-large) joined about 4:00 after initial private session.

Nina and the committee privately discussed the UFAC Section 4 experience from earlier this academic year with a goal of determining what worked well and what we could improve. Dr. Barry joined when the committee moved to general discussion.

Provost Mikhalevsky shared her recommendations for what needed to be improved in Section 4 and suggested the UFAC tackle this in early Fall 2021.

The committee and the provost then discussed the upcoming pay equity study. All members were encouraged to provide questions about and for the study to Provost Mikhalevsky by May 17. Randy stated that our committee will compile a list of questions, organize them, and provide them to the provost.

The committee expressed their appreciation for the contributions of Beverly Epps, who is retiring after this semester and wished her a happy retirement.

Eric and Beverly had to leave at 4:35 PM.

The committee and the provost then discussed the UFAC's plans for continuing their work creating guidelines for special assignments. Randy will send Nina our current thoughts and the provost will review them and provide her feedback to the committee.

Nina also volunteered to provide any help she can while she is still here (end of June). The committee also expressed their appreciation for Provost Mikhalevsky's work and wishes her a happy retirement.

The committee asked about the visa issue, the provost updated the committee about the process. UMW's material is online, but most of the government's process is opaque and there is limited insight available to UMW about what the government is doing. UMW collects the paperwork and processes a bit of us, but then turn it over to private lawyers who work with individual faculty members and file the visa paperwork with the government. The key issue is that there are huge time periods where the government is processing paperwork and the faculty members hear nothing. Further, any time that a faculty member does not hear back from HR within 24 hours, they should follow up with the provost.

The provost left at 4:50 PM.

We appreciate the amount of information regarding the proposed equity salary survey. The provost and president have shown a real commitment to addressing the faculty

concerns regarding this pressing and timely issue. We still have some lingering concerns, however, that will need more time to address:

1. We are unsure that the company we are considering will be able to address the specific research questions faculty might devise since it was stressed that only a base salary analysis would be undergone.
2. We are concerned that such a quick turnaround at the end of the semester does not allow the UFAC enough time to shape questions that reflect the representative concerns of the faculty (we might consider a survey for example to address specific equity issues that demonstrate larger trends)
3. And most significantly, we are, as we expressed in our last meeting notes that this study will take place and then reported while faculty are off contract.

The provost also raised an interesting point about the President needing a plan set in place if the study were to show inequity. In this case, we would also like to hear what some of those plans might be given the ongoing budgetary concerns and the recent announcement that tuition would not increase next year and so our institutional budget is under further constraints.

The committee also has concerns about gender equity at UMW relative to other institutions in Virginia. While a recent AAUW study focused on research institutions, the AAUP has institutional data for institutions across Virginia and UMW has a relatively low gender equity rating compared to other colleges and universities in the state. We would like to understand the reason(s) for this relatively low ranking, and create a plan for how we might improve.

Randy and Caitie were nominated for next year's chair and secretary respectively and expressed willingness to serve. However, since we do not yet know the COE representative for next year or if that person (along with Eric) might have an interest in either position, we determined to postpone voting on officers until the full committee has had an opportunity to express interest in both positions.

The committee then adjourned at 5:05 PM.