

**UFC Meeting**  
**Wednesday, April 13, 2022**  
**Online (via Zoom)**

**UFC Members Present:** Ben LaBreche (CAS, Arts & Humanities), Marcel Rotter (CAS, Arts & Humanities, UFC Parliamentarian), Miriam Liss (CAS, Social Sciences), Margaret Ray (CAS, Social Sciences), David Rettinger (CAS, Social Sciences), Suzanne Sumner (CAS, Health, PE, & STEM), Larry Lehman (CAS, Health, PE, & STEM), Ian Finlayson (CAS, Health, PE, & STEM, UFC Secretary), Alex Dunn (COB), John Marsh (COB), Rachel Graefe-Anderson (COB, UFC Vice-Chair), Janine Davis (COE), Teresa Coffman (COE), Melissa Wells (COE), Andrew Dolby (CAS, At-Large, UFC Past-Chair), Chris Ryder (CAS, At-Large), Kristin Marsh (CAS, At-Large, UFC Chair).

**Guests:** There were approximately 40 people logged into the meeting including Tim O'Donnell (UMW Provost), Keith Mellinger (Dean CAS), Ken Machande (Dean COB), and Pete Kelly (Dean COE).

A recording of this meeting can be viewed at <https://ufc.umw.edu/recordings/> (UMW login-required).

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM.
2. The [minutes from the last UFC meeting on March 9, 2022](#) were unanimously approved with 18 yes votes.
3. **Reports:**
  - a. President Troy Paino
    - i. President Paino was not able to attend.
    - ii. He has said that the state is being especially slow approving the budget. That and the incoming class will go towards determining our budget next year.
  - b. Provost Tim O'Donnell
    - i. Provost O'Donnell thanks us for our work on the recent major fair.
    - ii. We have an open house and destination day coming up this week. Both events look to be very well attended.
    - iii. The early retirement proposal is off to the state for feedback.
    - iv. We have contracted a firm for the gender equity study, and should have a contract with them soon. They will work with us over the summer and we should hear back from them in early August.

- v. Our search advocates training program is rolling out this semester. This program is designed to educate faculty and staff on diversity and inclusion issues to better prepare them to serve on search committees.
- vi. The courageous conversations series is also being developed. This series of workshops will be available for faculty and staff.
- vii. Once we have a budget approved, the budget office will work to get appointment letters out next month.
- viii. June orientation will have 5 sessions over three weeks in June. Provost O'Donnell encourages us to help and be present with this.
- ix. He also thanks those of us who participated in the administrative surveys. That information will be made available to us. All of us will receive the information from the provost study, and we will receive information on our respective deans.
- x. We have a general faculty meeting next Wednesday at 4:00. At this meeting decisions made by UFC can be reversed, and we also will confer degrees to our new graduates.
- xi. UFAC put out a motion addressing the expectation of attending graduation during a pandemic. Our public health advisory has continued working and monitoring the covid situation. Provost O'Donnell tells us we can ask to not be present at graduation. He explains that the importance of this is to get an accurate count of faculty attending so that there are not empty chairs on stage.
- xii. Suzanne asks about the mask situation for commencement. Provost O'Donnell tells us that we are welcome to wear masks, but they will not be required.
- xiii. Kristin asks whether the cost of living situation in Fredericksburg will be taken into account as part of the gender equity study. Provost O'Donnell responds that this study is of a different nature. We will not necessarily get information back comparing us to other schools in this or other regions.
- xiv. Jennifer Barry (Associate Professor, CPRD) asks about faculty visas. Past provost Mikhalevsky had said faculty dealing with communication delays in visas should raise that issue with her. Provost O'Donnell responds that Martha Link is the point person for questions surrounding visas. We should have worked past the

- communication issues that were a problem in previous years, but Provost O'Donnell encourages us to reach out to him if issues persist.
- xv. Miriam asks about where we can find information on the courageous conversations and search advocates programs. Provost O'Donnell responds that information on these programs will be communicated out by Victoria Russell through the center for teaching. Information will be present on the [Center for Teaching's website](#).
  - xvi. Kristin asks about continued support for individual faculty. Provost O'Donnell responds that until we have a budget there is nothing firm we can say. He stresses that we know we need to work on this area in order to restore these supports.
  - xvii. Kristin asks whether the budget situation also affects decisions on new hires. Provost O'Donnell responds that broadly, yes, although there may be areas we can commit positions to sooner.
- c. College Deans
- i. Dean Pete Kelly, CoE, submitted a [written report](#). It outlines some of the partnership work being done in CoE.
  - ii. Dean Keith Mellinger, CAS, has no report. He submitted the CAS report to the BOV.
  - iii. Dean Ken Machande, CoB, has no report.
- d. SGA Representative's Report (Brianna Reeves) is not present. The incoming SGA president, Joey Zeldin, is present, and introduces himself to us.
- e. USC Representative's Report (Justin Wilkes), [submits a written report](#). Charles Tate will be the USC representative next year.
- f. UFC Chair's Report (Kristin Marsh)
- i. [Kristin shared her written report to the BOV](#).
  - ii. Kristin reports back on the SGA's request to the BOV for multiple teaching modalities. Kristin brought a soft consensus to the BOV on this, which is that it is not feasible, and the BOV was receptive to that.
  - iii. Kristin asks whether we can have a formal position on this, stating that faculty are not expected to provide multiple modalities across the board.
  - iv. Provost O'Donnell is open to suggestions on this. He shares that the working group focused on digital learning has been discussing these concerns as well. He also tells us that the NSSE survey and the senior exit survey ask for feedback on this as well. So we will have data on student's views on online or hybrid classes.

- v. The BOV passed a resolution to rename the Eagle Resource Closet in honor of Gwen Hale, who championed first-generation college students and those with special needs or food insecurities.
- g. UFC Vice Chair (Rachel Graefe-Anderson), has no report.
- h. Parliamentarian and FSVA Representative (Marcel Rotter), reports that there will be an FSVA meeting this coming Saturday. He cannot attend, and asks for someone to attend in his stead.
- i. University Committees
  - i. University Curriculum Committee ([minutes 3/25/22](#))
  - ii. University Faculty Affairs Committee ([minutes 3/10/22](#), [minutes 3/31/22](#))
    - 1. Suzanne asks about the recommendations not to make changes to the faculty handbook relating to the honor code.
    - 2. Randy Reif (Chair of Faculty Affairs Committee) says that the movement to make this change has not come to the UFC yet, so does not want to address it out of turn. The UFAC committee doesn't like some of the language being used, and did not themselves support the motion. David Rettinger will send this motion to the UFC in the Fall semester.
    - 3. Suzanne clarifies that the CAS FC did not explicitly approve the proposed changes either, but simply provided feedback.
  - iii. University Faculty Organization Committee ([minutes 3/14/22](#), [minutes 3/28/22](#))
  - iv. University General Education Committee ([minutes 2/23/22](#), [minutes 3/16/22](#), [minutes 3/30/22](#))
  - v. University Sabbaticals, Fellowships & Faculty Awards Committee ([minutes 1/14/22](#), [minutes 3/25/22](#), [minutes 4/8/22](#))
  - vi. University Student Affairs & Campus Life Advisory Committee ([minutes 3/16/22](#), [minutes 3/30/22](#))
  - vii. Bachelor of Liberal Studies Committee ([minutes 2/11/22](#), [minutes 3/18/22](#))
  - viii. James Farmer Multicultural Center Advisory Committee ([minutes 3/18/22](#), [Cultural Programming and Collaborations Report](#))
  - ix. Journalism Advisory Committee ([minutes 4/1/22](#))
  - x. Writing Intensive Committee ([minutes 2/11/22](#), [action items 2/11/22](#))
  - xi. These minutes are approved unanimously with 18 yes votes.

#### **4. Committee Action Items for UFC Approval**

- a. [Distance and Blended Learning Committee Action Items](#)
  - i. Approved with 18 yes votes.
- b. [Honor Program Committee Action Items](#)
  - i. Approved with 18 yes votes.
- c. [University Faculty Affairs Committee Action Items](#)
  - i. Approved with 17 yes votes and one abstention.
- d. [University Faculty Organization Committee Action Items](#)
  - i. Approved with 18 yes votes.
- e. [University Curriculum Committee Action Items](#)
  - i. Approved with 17 yes votes and one abstention.
- f. [University Academic Affairs Committee Action Items](#)
  - i. Motion 1:
    1. Wes Hilyard (Director of Academic Services) talks about the proposed changes to the midterm grading scale. He tells us the current policy is a little ambiguous and doesn't necessarily provide a complete picture for students who are struggling. The proposal is to change mid-semester grading to match grades given at the end of the semester.
    2. Suzanne asks whether we still have an option that signifies that a student has never attended class. Rita Dunston (Registrar's Office) responds that yes, the N grade should remain an option in mid-semester grading.
    3. Randy expresses his support for this motion.
    4. Miriam asks for clarification about the presence of both letter grades and the pass/fail grades. Wes responds that those are for different sorts of classes (such as internships) and the grades will mirror what is on the final gradebook for each class..
    5. Cate Brewer (Senior Lecturer, Theater) tells us that there are students who do not take the midterm grades seriously enough and that the new system should send a clearer message.
    6. April Wynn (Director of First Year Experience) talks about the transition from high school. Having a letter grade is a more helpful indicator for new students. She also talks about the financial implications. Giving students a clearer picture will let them make smarter decisions regarding withdrawals or

financial aid. She explains that this information is helpful for advisors as they currently only can see if students are passing or not.

7. Ben asks whether we will assign grades for all students or just those doing poorly. Wes responds that we will enter grades for all students, like at the end of the year. There will be an option to put in a “no grade available” grade, for things like internships. Ben points out that this information is duplicative with Canvas. April responds that advisors cannot see Canvas.
  8. Kristin expresses her frustration that it is difficult to know accurately where students are at a given point in time. Kim Gower (Academic Affairs Committee Chair) responds that she understands the extra work it creates. She argues that the extra work should be worth it as it can help students.
  9. April argues that this change is a support for students in line with the covid grading scale.
  10. Melissa adds that it will help students who aren't quite at the U level get some feedback on their course performance.
  11. Motion 1 is approved with 15 yes votes and 3 abstentions.
- ii. Motion 2:
1. This motion will limit students who have a GPA below 2.0 to taking at most 13 credits, unless they seek permission from academic services.
  2. Suzanne asks about the financial aid implications of restricting students to fewer courses. Suzanne says that students who are at 15 or 16 credits have the option of withdrawing from one course while remaining full-time. With 12 or 13 credits they do not have that option.
  3. Wes says that students with poor performance sometimes sign up for up to 18 credits in order to “make up” the credits they did poorly on the past semester. This measure is intended to prevent this.
  4. There is an exception policy which allows students to go over 13 credits. They will just need to go through the exception process to ensure there is a check on their plan.
  5. Miriam raises the point that students will not be on track to graduate with 13 credits. By disallowing them from taking 15

credits, we force them to take an extra semester or summer classes, which will mean extra cost.

6. Wes responds that this measure only affects those who have already had academic problems. Ben adds that a student below a 2.0 GPA is already at risk to not graduate on time.
  7. Miriam asks how many students this will affect and how easy it will be to attain an exception. Wes responds that they would file for the exception through the academic services office, and it would not be too onerous. Rita adds that the number is relatively small. Students on academic warning are required to meet with academic services anyway. The conversation about taking more credits could be part of that meeting.
  8. Motion 2 is approved with 15 yes votes and 3 abstentions.
- iii. Motion 3:
1. This motion is to remove the restriction against students entering the BLS program after completing 30 credits in a BA or BS program.
  2. Motion 3 is approved with 17 yes votes and 1 abstention.

## **5. New Business**

- a. Election of new executive committee and other roles for 2022 - 2023:
  - i. Rachael Graefe-Anderson agrees to transition to UFC chair.
  - ii. Kristin Marsh will serve as past-chair.
  - iii. Marcel Rotter will continue as Parliamentarian.
  - iv. Suzanne Sumner volunteered to serve as vice-chair, with the caveat that she is rotating off after next year and could not become chair.
  - v. We will take this vote electronically so the new UFC members can take part.

## **6. Unfinished Business**

- a. UFOC
  - i. Melissa reports on behalf of UFOC that their committee had made recommendations to UFC regarding committee organization during the Spring 2020 semester. Because of the pandemic, we never followed up on those. She will look into those and plans to revisit them for Fall.
  - ii. UFOC would like more information on the interest of moving away from our current UFC model. She relates the concern of UFOC which is that it would create many more positions for their committee to fill.

She also worries it might place a burden on smaller departments, all of whom need a senator in a faculty senate model.

- iii. Kristin shares that she sees the benefit of a senate model being better communication channels between departments and governance. She also suggests that departments would be responsible for filling their senate roles instead of UFOC.

b. Update from the J-term committee:

- i. Michael Benson (Assistant Professor, Theater) tells us that the committee has had several meetings. Their first charge is to determine whether the J-term is a good idea pedagogically. They have done research and determined that yes, there is data to suggest it is.
- ii. Their second charge is to determine how it might work logistically. They are in the process of coming up with calendars. It is a difficult task to satisfy different concerns of faculty in the survey. They are concerned about changing the faculty contract.
- iii. Ideally they like a 3 week term. They are looking at different models including a December term, a January term and a May term.
- iv. Miriam asks what are the next steps? Michael responds that once they come up with calendars, they will bring a recommendation to the UFC or perhaps survey the faculty again.
- v. Ben asks whether they can share the research demonstrating the pedagogical advantages? Also, there is some concern about adding 3 weeks to semesters. The clarification is that students may be burnt out at the end of the semester. Michael responds that they can make the research available to anyone. To answer the second point, a J-term would be voluntary and students who need a break would take it.
- vi. Ben asks whether students need to be approved to take J-term courses. Michael answers that enrollment in J-term would be capped at 3 - 4 credits. He adds that students should ideally discuss enrolling in J-term courses with their advisor.
- vii. Kristin expresses concern about student finances and students overburdening themselves in order to finish quickly.
- viii. Melissa asks what the timeline is. Michael answers that they are meeting weekly to have a proposal ready for the beginning of fall.



But much depends on outside information and how quickly they can get it.

- c. Faculty workload and morale
  - i. UFAC will be continuing to look at this issue. Kristin will meet with UFAC at the beginning of their meeting.
  - ii. They will take inspiration from the WGST study and conduct a more representative University-wide study so we can have a better understanding of what people are going through.

Motion to adjourn at 6:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Ian Finlayson, with great thanks to Miriam Liss for her notes from the end of the meeting.