

UMW Board of Visitors
Faculty Representative Report
Rachel Graefe-Anderson, UFC Chair

September 1, 2022

The University Faculty Council (UFC) held our initial meeting of the 2022-23 academic year on August 16, the second day of ‘pre-week’ activities. We welcomed new UFC members and there was a call for nominations for a Secretary and a Vice-Chair of the UFC as we had not elected a member to either position at the end of last year. Suzanne Sumner volunteered to serve as Vice-Chair and was elected by acclamation. There was no nominee for Secretary and Kristin Marsh volunteered to serve temporarily by taking minutes for the organizational meeting underway and for the upcoming August 19 “retreat” (further discussed below). Because the UFC planned to meet again on August 19, the election of a permanent Secretary was tabled.

Chris Ryder was appointed to serve as the UFC representative on the University Curriculum Committee. We discussed upcoming University Faculty Organization Committee (UFOC) elections to fill Margaret Ray’s vacated seat as well as the need for an additional election for Spring 2023 to fill David Rettinger’s seat (due to his departure from the University at the end of this calendar year). We also discussed curriculum processes, the agenda for the August 19 retreat, and meeting modalities (which will remain zoom for the Fall semester). The January UFC meeting was moved from January 18 to January 20 due to other University meetings. For your information, please find the meeting agenda and draft minutes linked here:

- [UFC Agenda 8/16/2022](#)
- [UFC DRAFT Meeting Minutes 8/16/2022](#)

The UFC held an additional meeting on August 19, 2022 to discuss upcoming challenges and initiatives that the committee will need to be ready to address early in the academic year. This meeting was held from 12-3 and then adjourned to give faculty time to move to George Washington Hall for the Honor Convocation. Melissa Wells and Christy Irish volunteered to serve as co-Secretaries with Melissa taking minutes at UFC meetings and Christy attending the additional meetings at which executive committee members are present.

At this additional meeting, the UFC was presented with a summary of recent developments and current status of the QEP revision efforts, which will need to be approved by the UFC at its October meeting to meet the SACSCOC timeline. The UFC also approved revisions to online course designation proposals approved by the Distance and Blended Learning Committee (DBLC) and further discussed curricular processes and deadlines. Security and safety protocols were discussed briefly, as were some broader strategic concerns regarding resource allocation and meeting students’ needs.

Midterm evaluations were discussed as the UFC had approved changes to the procedure in April that would require faculty to enter letter grades and these changes were rolled back at the subsequent general meeting at the end of the Spring 2022 semester. It was confirmed that a requirement to submit at least an “S” for Satisfactory, “N” for Never Attended, or “U” for Unsatisfactory for all faculty and all classes was approved by the University back in 2020, but was never implemented/enforced. It was agreed to reach out to the Registrar’s office about that

implementation and to request further discussion (regarding options for the letter grade proposal) from the University Academic Affairs Committee (UAAC) at this time. For your information, please find the meeting agenda and draft minutes linked here:

- [UFC Agenda 8/19/2022](#)
- [UFC DRAFT Meeting Minutes 8/19/2022](#)

The next scheduled UFC meeting is September 21, 2022.

The UFC recognizes that we face substantial challenges in the upcoming academic year. The committee will continue to discuss and try to address faculty morale and workload concerns that became apparent during the last two academic years. Additionally, considerations regarding alternative terms (e.g. J-term) are ongoing and the committee expects an update from the ad hoc committee on this at its September meeting. Concerns regarding courses with high rates of withdrawals and low grades (D's and F's) and providing both faculty and students in these courses with resources will be part of an ongoing discussion as will the mid-semester evaluations. Integrating academics with Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) efforts and encouraging more interdisciplinary courses and programs will as well as we try to address the changing needs of our students.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Graefe-Anderson, Associate Professor of Finance
Chair, University Faculty Council