

## **University Faculty Affairs Committee (UFAC) Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, September 28, 2:30 p.m**

**Virtual Meeting through Zoom**

**Attendance:** Amrita Dhar, Smita Jain Oxford, Bradley Lamphere, Miriam Liss, Kyle Schultz (secretary), Jessica Zeitz (chair)

**Upcoming Meetings:** October 26, November 30

### **Continuing Business**

**Day of Democracy and Laboratory Courses:** UFAC reviewed and considered Dave Stahlman's response (included below) to UFAC's inquiries following its August meeting. UFAC supports giving all students the full opportunity to vote on Day of Democracy, but lingering concerns include whether students perceive Day of Democracy simply as a "day off", whether programming on DoD is substantial enough and warrant laboratory class cancellation. UFAC also wondered how, if at all, the program could determine whether its objectives are being met.

**Equity Study:** Provost O'Donnell reported to the UFC that Gallagher did provide a report with recommendations that were carried out by HR. Once HR has removed personal identifying information from the report, they will provide it to UFAC. Caitie Finlayson, former chair of UFAC, submitted a letter of concern regarding the Equity Study (included below). UFAC expressed concern regarding the lack of transparency in the administration's communications with Gallagher and subsequent actions.

**Faculty Morale and Burnout Survey:** This topic was tabled for the October meeting.

**Faculty Salary Negotiations:** UFAC is waiting for more information on this issue from the Provost.

**Immigration Process:** UFAC is waiting for more information on this issue from the Provost.

### **New Business**

**Sabbaticals:** During the prior academic year, UFAC inquired about the sabbatical process, seeking data describing the number of currently eligible faculty and the cost of awarding sabbaticals, with the goal of determining whether a regular and more equitable sabbatical schedule could be established. UFAC has not received a response. UFAC will add this issue to its agenda for discussion with the Provost.

**University Restructuring:** UFAC expressed concern about transparency of the reorganization process, including whether faculty across campus have equitable access to information given that department chairs may communicate information in different ways. Potentially contributing to this situation, a concern that no minutes are taken during department chair meetings was raised.

As well, UFAC expressed confusion about how the restructuring goal is connected to concerns communicated by President Paino. One issue addressed during discussion is SCHEV, which considers the number of degree programs offered contrasted with the number of majors. One UFAC member remarked that they had not heard about this as an issue during UFC discussions and It has not been made clear how the SCHEV problem is related to restructuring.

**Meeting with the Provost:** UFAC is looking for opportunities to meet with Provost O'Donnell, who has a standing commitment during UFAC's meeting time, perhaps by scheduling at an alternate time or having a smaller meeting with a subset of UFAC members. The chair will provide the provost with a list of possible times to meet during the week of October 23.

The meeting concluded at 3:35pm.

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Hi Jessica,

Thank you for reaching out. I'm happy to give more information about this. I've cc'ed the student club leader of Day on Democracy, Tonia Attie, on this to keep her in the loop.

We think there are a number of reasons why it's worth cancelling laboratory classes on Election Day. It seems valuable to give students the best possible chance to participate in elections and with their community, generally. I have attached here a memo I sent to the UFC chair for distribution in April 2023 for distribution. It outlines four reasons, listed here:

1. Current policy dilutes messaging and outreach from Day on Democracy.
2. Current policy disadvantages STEM majors in voting access and to civic programs on- and off-campus.
3. A plurality of college students vote in-person on Election Day rather than during early voting periods. (We should meet students where they are)
4. Institutes of higher learning are increasingly canceling classes on Election Day. For instance, UVA and William & Mary cancelled all classes on Election Day 2022.

Our extension of the Day, free from classes, is in keeping with our core *ASPIRE* values, particularly *Engagement*. I will also point out that then-Gov. Northam designated Election Day to be a state holiday starting in 2020, encouraging access to the ballot box.

At the UFC meeting in April, some were skeptical, citing disruption to their or colleagues' course schedules. While I empathize with these concerns—I teach lab courses myself—I question how troublesome this new policy could be. After all, the date of the Day is known well in advance of syllabus construction, etc., and so may be accommodated. I raised the point then that faculty regularly adjust to unscheduled disruptions, e.g., illness or weather-related closures, and classes. The value of having more of our students become civically engaged citizens at this early life stage is, in my opinion, worth the challenges of faculty altering course schedules.

I appreciate your and the committee's consideration. Please let me know how else I may be of help.

Cheers,  
---Dave

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From: Dave Stahlman  
To: Members of the University Faculty Council  
Date: April 12, 2023

Dear UFC members,

Thank you for taking the time during this very busy point in the semester to consider our position. We are grateful.

### **A bit of recent history**

UMW's Day on Democracy was established in 2019 through UFC. It was conceived and developed by Marina Castro-Meirelles '18 and a team of UMW students. Dave Stahlman, a then-Social Science chair, brought the motion to UFC. After negotiation and debate, a majority voted for the motion and Day was established.

A principal feature of the Day, and a primary point of contention at the time, was the original call to cancel all classes annually on the date of the General Election (typically, the first Tuesday in November). Several members of UFC raised concerns about laboratory courses and classes that meet only once weekly on Tuesdays. Hence, a bargain was struck to cancel only regular lecture courses on this day, leaving labs and once-weekly classes in session.

### **Revisiting the policy on canceling classes**

We think it is time to discuss extending the policy to extend to all classes on the Day.

1. Current policy dilutes messaging and outreach on campus and confuses students. A policy where all in-person course meetings are cancelled is simpler to communicate.
2. Current policy disadvantages majors in STEM fields with respect to civic engagement. A student that has a three-hour laboratory meeting on the Day will not have this time to vote nor to participate in ongoing volunteer opportunities (e.g., 2022's tree-planting event). Importantly, data indicates that STEM majors are already among the least likely to vote in elections; and one-in-5 non-voting college students cite "lack of time" as the primary reason they did not vote. See <https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/youth-2022-concerned-about-issues-neglected-campaigns>.
3. A plurality of students still vote in-person on Election Day rather than doing early voting. This indicates that ballot access on Election Day is important for students. <https://www.campusvoteproject.org/survey-results>
4. UMW was an early leader of what is now a trend on campuses in canceling classes on Election Day. More institutions of higher learning are following, and it seems likely that pressure to do so will mount in advance of 2024's General Election. In UMW's backyard, both the University of Virginia and the College of William & Mary canceled all classes on Election Day 2022.

### **Our ask**

We believe that extending the Day to encompass cancellation of all classes annually on the date of November's General Election, beginning in 2024, is appropriate. This supports UMW's mission of fostering good citizenship in its community and reinforces the messaging behind UMW's core *ASPIRE* values, particularly regarding *Engagement*.

September 26, 2023

Dear University Faculty Affairs Committee Members,

I understand that Gallagher, the firm hired to complete the equity study, has not yet provided the committee with a final report. As the previous chair of UFAC and a member of the ad hoc group that met with Gallagher throughout the process, I wanted to briefly reach out and reiterate the remaining concerns both the previous UFAC committee and the ad hoc group still had at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Gallagher stated they would do the following in their proposal for the equity study (see attached, page 5):

1. Our statistical assessment will determine whether salary inequities internal to the University exist for faculty that are related to gender, age, race, or ethnicity. We will also study trends to identify differences in salaries that may be due to systemic inequities.
2. Rates of advancement and retention will also be evaluated for recommended improvements. The University will provide data that has been tracked, including demographics for promotions, application for promotions, departures and replacements.
3. Whether salary inequities internal to the University exist for faculty that are related to compression, specific to the University's 2016 salary adjustment.
4. A comparison of the University's peer institutions in terms of equity, to include tenure and promotion, institutional advancement and overall salary equity. The University will partner with us to identify sources of data to support this comparison.
5. If inequities are found, our team would develop a plan to reduce and eliminate inequitable compensation over a specified and achievable period of time, ultimately improving salary equity for the University.

These points are in line with the UFAC Suggestions for Salary Equity study document that accompanied our October 13, 2021 meeting minutes and was approved by the UFC.

Our concerns:

At no point in the process has Gallagher provided us (the previous UFAC or the ad hoc group) written materials or copies of their presentations. We requested an agenda before each meeting as well and, with the exception of one meeting, never received one. We also specifically requested copies of their PowerPoints used in their Zoom presentations and never received them.

With specific regard to point 1, several members of the ad hoc group reiterated at every meeting with Gallagher that their statistical analysis needed to include more than just the reported *p*-values.

The notion of statistical significance is generally only meaningful when you're comparing a sample to a larger population. In essence, it is a measure of how confident you are that differences in your sample would also be seen in the larger population. Importantly, as it concerns our faculty salaries, *we have the entire population data*. Thus, reporting differences in actual dollars is critical and meaningful. We requested that these differences be reported on numerous occasions in actual dollars (rather than presenting percentage differences in salary, as Gallagher tended to do) and to rely less on a simple reporting of *p*-values, but these changes were not made.

Regarding point 2, we have not received any data. For point 3, they flipped through slides quickly over Zoom but again did not provide us with any documentation. The same is true of point 4. On point 5, I understand some equity adjustments have already been made, but this was after the last time we met with Gallagher in May 2022. While I appreciate that these changes may have been made in advance of the across-the-board raises, it is unclear what metrics were used to determine who should receive an equity raise and what calculations were utilized to ensure that the raises given were fair. It was also supposed to be reported by Gallagher how these equity adjustments would improve our overall equity measures.

I would encourage the UFAC, and the UFC, to ensure that we receive a comprehensive report from Gallagher addressing the points outlined in the original proposal. If there are concerns about privacy, as Gallagher raised during several meetings, I would remind the committee that our salaries are public record and there are numerous ways of reporting general trends regarding our institutional equity and plans for remedying issues found in a way that is open and transparent but still respects privacy.

I would also encourage the committee, and the wider faculty community, to pay close attention not just to the reported statistical significance values but also to the actual dollar amount differences in pay. In addition, we should take seriously the comparison of our gender equity ratio compared to peer institutions (and ensure this comparison is received). We as an institution should commit to being a leader in this regard and to developing a comprehensive plan to move the needle toward an ultimate goal of salary equity ratio of 1.0.

While I am on sabbatical this semester, I believe that the equity study project is critically important in aligning us with our ASPIRE values and I wanted to alert the committee to these remaining concerns.

Sincerely,



Caitlin Finlayson, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Department of Geography  
University of Mary Washington