

University Faculty Council Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2025

3:30pm HCC Digital Auditorium

Members in Attendance: Davis Oldham (Chair), April Wynn (Parliamentarian), Kelly Swiney, Alex Dunn, Kim Kinsley, Sayan Sarkar, Christy Irish, Jennifer Walker, Mindy Erchull, Caitie Finlayson, Michael Benson, Elizabeth Johnson-Young, Patricia Orozco, Jonathan Levin, Karen Anewalt (Secretary)

Guests: Troy Paino (President), Tim O'Donnell (Provost), Filiz Tabak (Dean COB), Keith Mellinger (Dean CAS), Pete Kelly (Dean COE), Kevin Caffrey (Senior Associate Registrar/UCC), Miriam Liss (UFAC Chair), Chris Garcia (Associate Dean COB), Brooks Kuykendall, Gary Richards, Deborah O'Dell, Wes Hillyard (Dean for Academic Success & Integrity), Debra Schleaf (Assoc Provost for Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment & University General Education Committee), Amy Filiatreau (University Librarian)

1. Call to Order
 - a. There are three proxies today Caitie Finlayson for Melina Patterson, Christy Irish for Janine Davis, and Davis Oldham for Mara Scanlon.
2. Approval of previous meeting minutes.
 - a. **Motion to approve the March UFC minutes.**
 - i. Amended to correct March minutes section f to use the term “shouldn't” rather than “should” in discussion of including college-level appendices in the Handbook under Old Business, item f, bullet v.
 - ii. Unanimously approved.
3. Reports
 - a. President Troy Paino: President Paino provided an update from the BOV meeting. The BOV received the Faculty Handbook changes and will taking time to review them before voting later this summer. The Board's main items of business at their meeting were approving the budget for fiscal year 2026 and setting tuition and fees. They approved a 2.5% tuition increase, 4% increase on the comprehensive fees, 2% increase on housing, and no increase on dining. For residential students, it is a 2.1% overall increase on the cost of attendance. The budget was approved based on conservative estimates of enrollment projections. The Board did not initiate any directives or recommendations based on political pressure. President Paino views one of his roles as making sure that we can fulfill our mission as an institution and that faculty & staff can focus on working with students without outside interference. To the best of our knowledge none of our international students have had their visas revoked. Because we're not an R1 institution, our finances are not being affected in the same way that some other schools in Virginia are. We're ending the year in a good place. President Paino thanked faculty and staff for the work they do with students each day.
 - i. Questions:
 - ii. The Zoom link is not working and some time was spent troubleshooting.
 - iii. Jonathan Levin: Could you say something about allied health fields?

1. President Paino: This is constructive and positive item that the BOV has been focused on. A few years after I came to UMW, I observed that we had a missed opportunity to be more involved in health sciences generally. And the more we learned about the acute need for additional health care workers in this area, the more we felt it was our responsibility as a public institution to be part of preparing those workers. Last year, Dr. Chris Newman was appointed to the BOV. He was the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) during COVID, and helped us through that time, and now is the CMO and Chief Operating Officer. The health care system needs to partner with us to meet the regional needs. Last year we hired a top healthcare system/education consultant, Tripp Umbach, to do an analysis of how we might build programming strategically over the next five years and learned a lot. Mary Washington Healthcare also hired Tripp Umbach to do an analysis from their side. Dr Newman shared a report from that analysis last week. It showed that the regional needs are even greater than we imagined. We rank in the second percentile of physicians per capita in the US, which puts us in the same category as rural areas of North Dakota in terms of citizens having access to primary care physicians. So we've found that we have an acute need and we're the only four-year university in this region. We're in the fastest growing region of Virginia, with a little over half a million residents (city of Fredericksburg and the four surrounding counties). Half a million is a critical population threshold for health care systems, and since we've just passed that, it puts MWHC in a new category in terms of the type of care they should be able to provide (rather than sending patients to Richmond or Charlottesville). Dr. Newman shared that they added 100 additional positions last year but they still aren't coming close to meeting the needs of the region. If we don't step into this opportunity, other institutions are ready to step into this region to partner with MWHC. One thing that MWHC is looking to do is to bring in a medical school. A few years ago, they started a residency program which has really taken off. And they want to become more of a teaching hospital; they think training their residents is the best way to meet the needs in this region. So now the question is how quickly can we build these programs – things like a Masters of Nursing.
- iv. Caitie Finlayson: I am a social science representative. A few constituents reached out to me with concerns after reading the report from the Student Affairs & Campus Life Advisory Committee meeting report, specifically about the student protests on campus last May. One specific question is related to cancelling the protests. What specific standards do we use to cancel a protest? And secondly, the minutes talk about "outside agitators." But we're an open campus, so how do we define who can and can't be on campus?

1. President Paino: I'm not sure what report you're referring to.
2. Caitie Finlayson: Chief Hall met with the Student Affairs & Campus Life Advisory Committee and the report is the minutes from that meeting.
3. President Paino: We have the ability to make restrictions that are content neutral based on whether we have adequate resources to ensure the ongoing safety of campus. And that's really the major driving force in terms of when we make a decision to put restrictions on any form of speech, regardless of the content of it. Last year the decision was made after social media went out inviting all-comers to campus and having outsiders setting up temporary domicile on our quad. And campus and local law enforcement felt they were not resourced to monitor the situation 24/7.
4. Caitie Finlayson: So do we have that written somewhere, that students can't invite outsiders to campus?
5. President Paino: Context is important, so the situation is very, very context-dependent and sensitive in terms of what's going on at that particular point in time. The decision is always content-neutral and is based on the safety risk to campus. The determination a year ago was that we did not have the resources and the city did not have the resources to ensure the safety of our campus 24/7 with people from outside campus living in tents on our quad, not to mention the high risk of counter-protesters on the campus. My number one responsibility is to ensure the safety of our students on campus.
6. Caitie Finlayson: Another question is about the chalking policy. The policy says that students aren't allowed to chalk brick. Much of our campus is brick and so this faculty member wondered if other alternatives have been provided for students to be able to speak?
7. President Paino: We're not alone in Virginia in regulating where students can chalk on campus. The issue is the challenge of maintaining campus and the burden that chalking puts on our staff that maintains campus. There are other places for students to express themselves on campus.
8. Mindy Erchull: I'm also a social science representative and have been getting email about this set of minutes. I have two points to raise which are related to the protests, but also to broader campus policies. Students were arrested and we hope that was a last resort action. The issue is that the students who were arrested were not well communicated with. What is the university's policy about how to communicate with students that have been arrested?
9. President Paino: What do you mean they weren't well communicated with? We communicated with them a lot and provided a lot of off-ramps. So I would not characterize it in that way.

10. Mindy Erchull: That's not how students have characterized it.
11. President Paino: Well I'm sorry to disagree. We communicated, stated many times, pled with them, gave them a lot of hours and opportunities to take the tents down.
12. Mindy Erchull: That all happened before they were arrested. We're talking about after.
13. President Paino: I don't know what communication they had with the Commonwealth Attorney so I can't speak to that. I communicated directly to the Commonwealth Attorney the university's position that we did not want to pursue charges against these students and that we wanted to handle it on campus through Student Conduct.
14. Mindy Erchull: All of the students did not clearly understand that the charges were being dropped. Some of them showed up at court before they knew.
15. President Paino: I think they had to show up in order for the charges to be dropped. Ultimately, it's the Commonwealth Attorney's call whether to take our recommendation, so it would have been wrong for me to call the students. These are not the first students arrested on campus where we have had to work with the Commonwealth's Attorney. And it is consistently our practice that if we feel it would be best to handle things on campus through Student Conduct, we will make that recommendation. Typically the Commonwealth's Attorney will take our recommendation unless there is violence or destruction of property involved.
16. Mindy Erchull: The second issue is the language of "outside agitators" in the minutes. We're interpreting that as non-UMW students, faculty, or staff. We're a public campus and we have a big focus on community engagement on and off campus. How does this language and focus on improper presence of outside people align with our focus on engagement collaboration with the broader community.
17. President Paino: People are welcome on campus. I think you're taking this out of context in terms of the specific circumstances that we're talking about with the protests. We have outsiders of all political stripes coming on campus and walking and they are free to do so. But we don't have them setting up temporary domicile on our quad. So that's where we start drawing the line. That's what was happening – outsiders were pitching a tent and living on our campus. It's content neutral so no matter what the cause is, we would probably be asked to remove them from campus because they pose a safety risk.
18. Caitie Finlayson: I think we agree that outsiders living on campus isn't acceptable. But, is there an official policy that prohibits "outsiders in tents" because if not, maybe we just need to spell that out.

19. President Paino: We added the tent prohibition for this reason. We added that to our policies to be more consistent.

- b. Provost O'Donnell's Report: We have several awards and prizes that are typically given to students at the end of the year. We've been informed by Financial Aid that the new financial aid regulations from the US Department of Education require that those must count as part of a student's total award package during that academic year. So when we present the Darden Award, those students will have their financial aid recalculated because of the financial element that is part of the award. What we're doing now, is to identify students who have won these awards or are candidates for the awards to work with Financial Aid to determine whether or not there's an impact. So far, we haven't found any impact and we're working to minimize the impact if any is found. If you have any questions, please email me or Katie Turcotte.

There was a question raised with the Curriculum Committee Reports about whether there's appropriate funding for a Masters in AI and Business. That is still to be determined. We will put together a proposal to SCHEV for this new program and that will need to be approved by the president, myself, and the BOV. In that proposal, we'll need to demonstrate that we can afford this by doing the cost analysis and estimating the return on investment. Those are the next steps to determine whether this program or any program goes forward. I've asked Rita, Kevin, and our Deans to take a look at the program approval process. I believe we ask for too much up front including a syllabus for every course that will be taught in the program which doesn't yet exist and may have different staffing in several years. I don't think that's the best approach for new ideas. I think we need to instead take the best ideas the faculty generate, get the minimum necessary documentation to submit a SCHEV proposal, recognizing that if approved, additional work will need to be done to fully map out the program. I'm hoping that we can come back next year with a process that reduces the workload on faculty.

Provost provided a construction update on Virginia Hall, which is almost complete. The fencing around Monroe Hall will come down for commencement, but work will continue after that. Monroe will be ready for fall. And the project at Simpson Library continues.

The Provost thanked the Handbook Committee that worked last summer and carried it through this year to present the updated Faculty Handbook to the BOV.

- i. Questions:
- ii. Caitie Finlayson: I understand that chair salaries are decreasing next year and I wanted to know if specific tasks are being taken off of the Chairs.
 - 1. Provost O'Donnell: I think that's probably a question that would be best addressed by the Deans. What I've done is provide the Deans with a budget and they're working with their direct reports and Chairs to think about what roles and responsibilities are

needed and to move appropriately through that. I've told them that if we get through this fiscal year and find that we need to make adjustments and we have the budget, we're going to make the adjustments.

c. Dean's Reports

i. Dean Keith Mellinger: Research & Creativity Day will be the last day of classes. This is year 19, so next year will be a big one. Betsy Lewis is our new Director of Undergraduate Research and she's been working hard to upgrade the whole event. We'll have posters in two areas and there will be food served during the poster session. And there are events all over campus so please check the website for the schedule.

1. Questions:

2. Caitie Finlayson: I heard that Chair salaries are going down next year, at least in CAS. So what will be taken off Chairs' responsibilities?

3. Dean Keith Mellinger: I shared with the Chairs some research that the University Budget Advisory Committee did on Chair salaries at peer institutions to see if we are out of line with our compensation. Between that data and the budgetary constraints that the Provost provided, I'm working on a new model for next year and hope to email Chairs this week with an offer for the pay next year. And then we'll re-evaluate in a year. If there's still more on their plate and they need to be compensated better, then we'll consider that. My hope is that as we move into a new model with Directors and the new Associates position, which I haven't announced yet, that we can find a way to balance workload a little better and take a little bit off their stipend and also reduce their responsibilities. I have been protecting their course reduction because what I've heard is that for many of them the time is actually the more important thing. Another related point that I'd like to make is that I think it's important to separate out the academic year and the summer. When you look at other institutions, that's a big difference. So for the next year, Chairs will get a 9-month contract with additional expectations for the summer with a separate stipend. If they don't want to perform those duties in the summer or want to pass the duties to someone else in the summer, they'll have the opportunity to do so.

ii. Dean Filiz Tabak: Submitted a written report.

1. No questions.

iii. Dean Pete Kelly: Submitted a written report.

1. No questions.

d. Student Government Report (Will Thompson): No report.

e. University Staff Council (Shanita Mitchell): No report.

- f. UFC Chair’s Report (Davis Oldham): No report.
 - g. UFC Vice-Chair’s Report (Melina Patterson): No report.
 - h. Faculty Senate of Virginia Report (Patricia Orozco): The Faculty Senate of Virginia will have a meeting on April 26 at 9am.
4. University Committees – minutes and reports
- a. No questions.
 - b. **Motion to approve all committee minutes as submitted.**
 - i. **Unanimously approved.**
5. Unfinished Business
- a. Motion: To temporarily expand the UFAC to 6 members to include 1 member from CPSC, MATH, or ECON. This is in response to concern regarding representation of departments leaving CAS on standing committees.
 - i. Discussion:
 - ii. Davis Oldham: I have an update on that situation. An opening on UFAC allowed interested faculty to run for the open position in a university-wide election. So I’m not sure where that leaves us.
 - iii. Karen Anewalt: I talked to Math and Computer Science faculty, and all agree that this is no longer an issue.
 - iv. Caitie Finlayson: I talked to faculty in Economics who also agree that this is no longer an issue.
 - b. **Motion: To update quorum requirements in UFC Rules of Order (Appendix L)**

Current version of L.3: “A quorum for UFC meetings of record is a majority of voting members that includes at least one member from each member election category (CAS, COE, COB, At-large).”

Revised version: “A quorum for UFC meetings of record is a simple majority of the UFC membership.”

 - i. Davis Oldham: Because of the changes to UFC membership, the current language doesn’t apply and should be updated.
 - ii. **Unanimously approved**
6. New Business
- a. Election of Officers for 2025-26
 - i. (Davis Oldham): We need to elect new officers for UFC next year.
 - ii. Questions:
 - iii. Christy Irish: Are the new members here?
 - 1. Davis Oldham: Yes, some are and others contacted me to let me know that they couldn’t be here today but they did not nominate

themselves for positions. Next year, the Handbook will state clearly who votes on the leadership, but I think the Handbook this year doesn't say whether it's the current members or upcoming members who vote. I thought it would be cleaner to do it now.

2. Jennifer Walker: So wouldn't the vote include the UFC group for next year?
 3. Davis Oldham: That's what the new Handbook says, but right now it's a little unclear. Even if we don't want to vote today, we can still collect names of interested people. We could vote electronically or wait until the fall.
 4. Jonathan Levin: I thought that it created less of an issue when we made the elections a little later in the timeline.
 5. Mindy Erchull: Technically the members who will be on the UFC next year are not all members of the UFC now. I think in my time on UFC the new members have been eligible to serve as officers but are elected by the group in the previous year.
- iv. Provost O'Donnell: I think it's important that we have someone that is identified as a representative of the faculty over the summer months. Last year I did a survey of other institutions and found that we were one of the few that had someone in the leadership role in the summer without compensation. During the summer we initiated this compensation and we'll continue it. I just need to know who that person will be -whether it's Davis until Aug 15th or a new chair that you may decide together sometime before May 15th.
- v. Davis Oldham: Is there anyone here interested in being Chair?
1. Jonathan Levin: I have expressed my willingness.
 2. Davis Oldham: Thank you. And if we're not going to vote today, anyone is still welcome to nominate themselves for Chair.
- vi. Kim Kinsley: The Handbook says that the officers are elected at an organization meeting held within 30 days of election. So when is the election?
1. Davis Oldham: I think with two exceptions, we already have a full roster for UFC next year so the elections have already happened.
 2. Kim Kinsley: Does that mean that we have to have the officer election within 30 days from now?
 3. Davis Oldham: That's why I put this on the agenda. We could do the vote electronically but I do think it would be smoother in person. If anyone is interested in the other positions: Vice Chair, Parliamentarian, or Secretary, now would be a good time to express that. If it turns out that more than one person is interested in a position, then I can arrange an electronic vote for that position.
- vii. Christy Irish: Has a call for officers been sent out to the new UFC members?
1. Davis Oldham: I probably could have made that more clear. I think I hinted at it but perhaps some didn't interpret the message in that way. So I can send another message and make that clear.

2. April Wynn: Couldn't you send out a call to the new UFC membership saying that nominations are accepted until a specific date?
 3. Davis Oldham: Sure.
 4. Christy Irish: So can we decide the date when we're going to send that, how long we're going to give for nominations, and when the vote is going to take place?
 5. Davis Oldham: Sure I can send the email out this week and give people a week to submit nominations. And then we can have a week to vote.
 6. All: Sounds good.
- viii. Jonathan Levin: I don't remember what the Handbook Committee said about this notation of 30 days following election because it's a kind of fiction since we no longer have elections for UFC. Everything is an internal department decision and departments will do things at different ways at different times.
1. Davis Oldham: Next year the Handbook says that the UFC elections are done before committee elections/appointments. I think we're going to have to try out the process and see what happens.
 2. Mindy Erchull: Can I suggest that the 30-days language be revised next year, perhaps tying it to department meeting dates. Realistically for UFC selections to happen before UFC elections, it will have to be done in March department meetings. So you could say something like "by April 1st". And then it would make sense to have UFC Officer elections by April 30.
 3. Jonathan Levin: Can we also remember that we need to identify a UFC member willing to sit on the UCC?
- b. Curriculum Committee Motions
- i. Davis Oldham: Before we discuss, there's a correction to item 15. The program title should be "Master of Science in AI and Business" rather than "Master of Science in AI and Business Analytics."
 1. Dean Filiz Tabak: That is correct.
 2. Davis Oldham: And I believe that's corrected in CIM now?
 3. Chris Garcia: Yes.
 4. Davis Oldham: And then there are courses listed here in support of these programs, and everyone understands that these can't be offered in fall.
 5. Kevin Caffrey: That's correct.
 - ii. Questions:
 1. Miriam Liss: Is CPRD 108 going to be a new gateway into the Contemplative Studies minor?
 2. Davis Oldham: I don't know.
 3. Jonathan Levin: I assumed so because it's not a new course, just a number change.

4. Kevin Caffrey: It is connected to the minor.
 5. Miriam Liss: So the CPRD 108 course used to be CPRD 104?
 6. Jonathan Levin: I sit on UCC and my understanding is that these new courses replace the previous courses like CPRD 104.
 7. Kevin Caffrey: The department is working through a large number of changes and anticipates submitting them this fall. If a student has already declared the Contemplative Studies minor now, then the requirements for them haven't changed.
 8. Davis Oldham: The chair of UFC next year needs to make sure to have a careful discussion of whether the UCC is still needed or whether a new model is needed.
 9. Motion to approve all UCC changes as a batch.
 - a. Unanimously approved.
- c. From University Academic Affairs Committee: Motion to update designation of OER to "no cost/low cost course materials".
- i. Questions: No questions.
 - ii. Unanimously approved
 - iii. Davis Oldham: Tim, does this live anywhere other than the Provost's website?
 - iv. Provost O'Donnell: No.
- d. From University Academic Affairs Committee: To update the requirements to declare a major to allow students to declare earlier. Proposed language for the Catalog:

A first-time, first-year B.A./B.S. student is eligible to declare a major or minor by submitting a major or minor declaration form through the Office of the Registrar webpage following advanced registration during their first fall or spring semester.

A transfer student is eligible to declare a major or minor by submitting a major or minor declaration form through the Office of the Registrar webpage following their initial advising meeting in the Office of Academic Services or during a Transfer Student Orientation.

Students with questions about majors/minors should contact or visit the appropriate academic department or college. Students can change to a different major and/or minor after their initial declaration by submitting a new major change form online.

Students going into a major in Education or Business must adhere to additional requirements as specified by those degrees.

- i. Questions:

1. Mindy Erchull: Is this really just a change for first-year students? Does this change anything for transfer students?
2. Wes Hillyard: Nothing changes for transfer students.
3. Davis Oldham: As a natural science representative, I received some comments about this. First, UMW sells itself as valuing the liberal arts and finding what you want to do before you decide what to settle down into. Is this change in policy changing that ethos? Second, I heard is that sometimes people declare a major but then find that they're not able to progress because they haven't been successful in prerequisite courses. Does letting students declare earlier make them more emotionally attached to their initial choice even though they may not be successful in that choice.
4. Jennifer Walker: The flip side is that more students are coming in with a large number of gen eds completed due to increased dual-enrollment options in high school. So they aren't necessarily taking a lot of exploratory courses before getting into their major.
5. Jonathan Levin: I'm in favor of this. Times have changed and students are selecting their direction earlier. It's better to allow students to have the option of getting an advisor in their major earlier.
6. Mindy Erchull: It's very difficult to advise students who are on a very specific path outside our own department. And we also have a GPA requirement in Psyc for the psych stats course and that means some students can major in psychology.
7. Karen Anewalt: I wanted to make a similar point. Computer Science also has a GPA requirement and some students aren't successful in their first attempt at the introductory courses. But if they receive special permission to take the course a third time, they know they have to select a different major if they aren't successful. So even if they declare earlier, there's still that defined exit point that some students will reach. And you can always refer students to Academic Services and/or Career Services if they need someone to talk through options with them.
8. April Wynn: This will allow students to have a major advisor for their second year, which seems like a critical point. Also, this change allows students to declare a major earlier but doesn't require them to do so. So we'll still have students exploring who don't declare first year. This is just giving those students who already have a selected direction the option to declare.

ii. **Motion to approve**

1. **Unanimous**

iii. Provost O'Donnell: Does this make the catalog for next year?

iv. Kevin Caffrey: Yes.

e. **From University General Education Committee: Motion to change the Community Engagement designation requirements to require fewer CE hours and**

also to use term “beyond the classroom experience” rather than “out of class experience.” The full proposed language is:

Learning Outcomes for Courses Designated Community Engagement are listed below, with our suggested edits. Community Engagement courses must include out-of-class a beyond the classroom experience that involves at least 15 10 hours of work. Community-engaged classwork usually involves working with a 2 community partner to identify and complete a service project beneficial to the community partner. This CE process can involve any and all of the following steps, which should be tailored to the purpose of the course and/or assignment. This process ideally involves communication with the community partner, co-creation and definition of the goal of the project with the community partner, working on the project to accomplish goals, presenting the results of the project to the community partner, receiving feedback on the project and making final changes, and producing final deliverables. For example, a class may work with a local homeless services nonprofit organization to identify data to collect for the organization, design and conduct the data collection, conduct the data analysis, and then analyze and present the data report to the organization to help them answer a research question.

- Work that is both considered Beyond the Classroom and Community Engaged can include the following:
 - Communication (emails, phone calls, zoom meetings, in-person conversation, etc.) with community partners as part of a planning process to set up a volunteer project or program, regardless of whether it is conducted in class or out of class;
 - In-class community-engaged project design, planning, implementation, or analysis;
 - Out of the classroom, in-person volunteer work at a volunteer site
- i. Questions: No questions.
 - ii. **Motion to approve changes as shown.**
 1. **Unanimous**
 - iii. Davis Oldham: Where do those requirements live?
 - iv. Debra Schleef: As a notation in Banner and also in the Catalog with the Beyond the Classroom description.

- f. **From Honors Committee Motion to designate HISP 105 as Honors**
 - i. Questions: No questions
 - ii. **Unanimous**

7. Announcements:

- a. Davis Oldham: Thank you everyone for putting up with me and especially to Rachel Graefe-Anderson for her mentorship.

Meeting adjourned at 4:47pm.