

University Faculty Council Meeting

21 January 2026, 3:30 pm Digital Auditorium, HCC Zoom link (for viewing only):

<https://umw-ss0.zoom.us/j/86129211870>

I. Call to Order. Attending: Andi Smith, April Wynn(self and proxy for Ginny Morriss), Ashe Laughlin, Brooks Kukyendall, Caitie Finlayson, Davis Oldham, Melissa Wells (as proxy for Janine Davis), Jared McDonald, Jodie Hayob-Matzke, Jonathan Levin, Karen Anewalt, Kelly Swiney, Kim Kinsley, Xiaofeng Zhao, Amrita Dhar, Kristin Marsh, Michael Benson, Michael Reno (self and proxy for Eric Gable), Miriam Liss , Will Mackintosh (proxy for Elizabeth Johnson-Young), Patricia Orozco, Ruth Arriaza, Scott Powers, Shumona Dasgupta, Suzanne Sumner, Filiz Tabak (ex-officio), Keith Mellinger (ex-officio), Pete Kelly (ex-officio), Tim O'Donnell (ex-officio), Troy Paino (ex-officio)

II. 19 November 2025 UFC Minutes.

Approved without Objection

III. Reports

1. President Troy Paino:

General Assembly in session. Several EO from Spanberger. Wants recommendations re higher ed governance. Bills in GA also regarding higher ed governance and financing.

Chance of rumors. Architectural consultants hired to look at Brompton by the board. For after Troy. The House is not accessible. Costs to maintain are too high. Even a challenging place if you had small children. University to examine future of Brompton. Again, about future presidents.

Suzanne S.: Farmer Hall flood. Wrench is now in CPIN suite.

Paino: Both Simpson and Farmer have needs. Addressed issues in stairwell at Simpson. Good news is new maintenance funding for Simpson is already in state budget. Need to determine how to proceed with Simpson.

Suzanne: Bookstore?

Provost: Textbook orders the same for summer and fall 2026. After that, new management will clarify the process.

Jeff: Yes, faculty will be able to order books through the new bookstore.

Jonathan Thanks to Adam for the mic. setup.

2. **Provost Tim O'Donnell Report**

[Linked written report.](#)

Change: faculty now have discretion re weather cancellation (whether to conduct class by Zoom or not). Be sure to communicate the plan clearly to students, in advance.

3. **College Deans**

- a. Keith Mellinger, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences
Searches. Hired someone in kinesiology. Candidates now for dean position.
Working with admissions on a targeted admissions/recruitment event, March 13.
- b. Filiz Tabak, Dean of the College of Business
[Linked Report](#)
- c. Pete Kelly, Dean of the College of Education
[Linked Report](#)

4. **SGA Representative's Report** (Amira Said)-- absent

5. **USC Representative's Report** (Lauren Bass)--absent

6. **UFC Chair's Report** (Jonathan Levin)—no report

7. **UFC Vice-Chair's Report** (Miriam Liss)—no report

8. **Faculty Senate of Virginia Report** (Patricia Orozco)

No Quorum to conduct online elections

IV. University Committees - minutes, reports, and action items

1. University Academic Affairs Committee
2. University Curriculum Committee a. [Minutes, 12/12/25](#)
3. University Faculty Affairs Committee
4. University Faculty Appeals and Grievance Committee
5. University Faculty Organization Committee
6. University General Education Committee a. [Minutes, 1/12/26](#)
7. University Sabbaticals, Fellowships, and Faculty Awards Committee a. [Minutes, 12/3/25](#)
8. University Student Affairs and Campus Life Committee a. [Minutes 11/6/25](#) b. [Minutes 1/12/26](#)
9. Bachelor of Liberal Studies Committee
10. Budget Advisory Committee
11. Distance and Blended Learning Committee a. [Minutes, 12/10/25](#)
12. First-Year Seminar Committee a. [Minutes, 12/3/25](#)
13. Honors Program Committee
14. James Farmer Multicultural Committee
15. Journalism Advisory Committee
16. Speaking and Writing Intensive Committee
17. Student Affairs and Campus Life Advisory Committee
18. Digital Intensive Committee

Approved all submitted minutes without objection.

V. Unfinished Business –None.

VI. New Business (includes Action Items from Committees)

a. Discussion of Strategic Action Plan

Jeff: Collect comments, edit, and then pass back to priority groups for implementation phase. Detailed implementation roadmaps and resource

requirements and then back to steering committee for timelines and then more feedback. To the Board by April or May or June.

Will M.: History/AmStud/Sociology. Discussion boiled down to a few points:

We don't recognize ourselves in this nor does it reflect our students. We bridge humanities and social sciences.

Treats humanities as service departments and excludes entirely the social sciences. Reminds us of what happened recently at Marymount in Arlington.

Questions about AI "centricness". Of the moment, not consistent with the university as knowledge center. Can't ignore environmental costs of AI.

Community is not merely school spirit. It means engagement with the community, not athletics and student life.

Glad there are more iterations to come.

How are the core competencies supposed to be integrated into the curriculum.

And, the stated competencies are not consistent with national surveys on what employers want.

More acknowledgment of what we've actually done in terms of pedagogy and community engagement. This document doesn't acknowledge or grapple with what we're already doing.

The concerns raised by the librarians that Simpson is a site of knowledge creation.

Jodie H.M.: Biology/Env. Sci.

Concerned about priority 1. AI era? focus on experiential learning and research programs. Faculty are burned out. Faculty are retiring and not being replaced. Rogers' science funds and expanding research. Our students are already top-notch researchers. We need to sustain this, but don't presently have enough for that—don't even have enough faculty to contribute an FSEM.

Scott Powers MLL: Statement read into the record. ([link](#))

Katie F. Geography: Didn't reflect us as a liberal arts institution. Didn't recognize ourselves in the document, so where do we fit in this plan. Again being asked to do more with less. Survey not anonymous. Feedback not taken into account. No mention of how faculty will be supported or faculty morale. So, no faculty buy-in. There's no evidence for why these are the best priorities. Pivoting just leads to reduced quality.

Karen A. Comp Sci: We already have cyber security program and data science programs, so...what's going on with those?

Suzanne S.: 1. Med School in 5 years seems too ambitious.

Shimona D. English/Linguistics Share concerns on the all-in on AI strategy. We're being asked to adopt without questions. What is entrepreneurship? What about critical thinking and creative thinking. Tension between immersive, experiential learning and increasing course caps and teaching loads. Two sentences on reimagined humanities, too abstract to know what it is.

Krystyn M., Sociology: How was this document written? Some sentences are contradictory. "Deep exploration of human experience in the AI age"? Moving beyond seat time? But, that's what's emphasized, yet we are already doing lots of out of classroom engagement. Sorry for the disrespect. Struck by entrepreneurship language.

Amrita: what's support for faculty especially w/r/t undergrad research? How will the funding work etc.? Travel is difficult without faculty, but there's no support for faculty to help undergraduate students as researchers.

Davis O.: "Teaching" appears a lot but the teaching center does not appear in the document. Couldn't part of our identity be in terms of pedagogy?

April W., Biology: 1. Priority 1. Are we replacing gen eds, adding, or what? 2. Where does critical thinking come in with the AI focus? 3. Struck by many terms: meaningful assessment, e.g., feels empty without details.

Xiaofeng Zhao: agree. Business has faculty with expertise in how to write a strategic plan: 1. Mission 2. Must be a strategic plan; very high level. Not about details.

Jonathan: (humanities center discussions). Does make humanities look like a service unit. Perhaps try to unpack "deeply explore human experience."

Miriam L., Psych: Need to value humanities and social sciences is important assuming the continuing evolution of AI. Why are humans even important? Should center on those existential issues.

b. UCC

- **New Course Proposals:** CPSC 170: Special Topics in Computing; BIOL 105 Career Exploration in Biology; BIOL 399: Biology Careers After Mary Washington; MDFL 255: Medical Humanities - The Intersection of Language, Culture, and Health; PSCI 325: Drug Politics in Latin America; SPAN 350: Lengua y Cultura Indigena.
- **New Program Proposals:** Master of Science in Counseling (MS) including courses COUN 501 through COUN 625.
- **Updated Course Proposals:** Education Studies (language change for minor clarification); Elementary Education Major (BSED) sequence and licensure updates; EDCI 531 (added EDCI 526 as pre-req).
- **Updated Program Proposals:** Changes to American Studies, Biology, Conservation Biology, Communication and Digital Studies, French, History, International Affairs, Music, Philosophy, and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.
- **Expedited Items:** Prerequisite corrections for EDSE 534 and EDUC 460; language changes for IDIS 241 and IDIS 242; removal of prerequisites for NURS 490 and NURS 480.

Motion Suzanne

Seconded

Approved without objection

c. UGEC

- **Course Approvals:** MDFL 201, GERM 313, BIOL 105, BIOL 399.

Katie

Andi

Approved without objection

- **Motion:** Formalizing the requirement for General Education Learning Outcomes to be included in proposals and syllabi at the time of submission to CIM.

Discussion about what this means. Who needs to approve.

Approved without objection.

d. **USFFAC:** Motion to amend the Faculty Handbook §2.6.7 to require committee members to be tenured.

April: But some awards are for non-tenured faculty, so...

Andi: Issue is about sabbaticals. If you're non-tenured and someone in your dept doesn't get sabbatical...so we want

Shimona: I served on this untenured and it was fine. And sabbaticals are so competitive. It was never my vote that mattered.

Andi: Unhappy feelings are possible...we're worried that some of that might be taken out on someone who's not tenured. Trying to avoid power issues.

Katie: I also served on this untenured. But, there were some awkward conversations afterward.

Miriam: A parallel problem with associate vs. full. Can't avoid all these issues. There are issues about what the criteria are and what the feedback process is.

Tim: All fair thoughts. There are some process changes in progress. Thanks to Andi and Christy Irish on this. If we could fund more sabbaticals, this would be less of an issue.

Melissa: Changes are coming. Still changing to only tenured faculty to protect untenured and also shares load with the senior faculty.

Andi: too few members to have some not involved in decisions.

Jonathan: practical implications

Andi: would just be a temporary fill in.

April: How many committees already only for tenured? Does it make sense to wait?

Melissa: Only appeals and grievance and P and T, so it won't limit.

Approved with 1 nay and 2 abstaining.

e. **DBLC Approved Courses:** CLAS 105, NURS 310, EDUC 461, CLAS 110, FINC 471E, English 202K1, SPAN 101, 102, 201, 202, PSYC 305, MDFL 201W.

Krystyn

Susanne

Approved with no objections

f. **FSEM Committee:** Global Dilemmas: The Politics of Accountability (Melissa Martinez); Dimensions of Leadership (Mark Jacobson).

Approved with no objections.

VII. Announcements

VIII. Adjournment