

Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting
February 7, 2018

***** The complete Recording for this meeting can be found at <http://www.american.edu./facultysenate/agendas-minutes.cfm>**

Present: Professors: Andrea Pearson, Todd Eisenstadt, Anthony Ahrens, Karen Baehler, Chuck Cox, Stefano Costanzi, John Douglas, Chris Edelson, Bryan Fantie, Doug Fox, Max Friedman, Nikhat Ghouse, Maria Gomez, John Heywood, David Kearns, Emily Lindsey, Mohamed Nimer, Zehra Peynircioglu, Jim Quirk, Naoko Wowsugi, Provost Scott Bass and DAA Mary L. Clark

Approval of the December 6, 2017 Minutes

Professor Pearson opened the floor for changes or comments on the December 6, 2017 minutes. The Senate **VOTED** 17-0-0 in favor.

Call for Vice Chair Nominations – Andrea Pearson

Professor Pearson called for nominations for the next vice chair, to be chosen from term faculty on a list of Senators serving in the past five years, requesting nominations be submitted in time for the ballot at the March 2018 meeting.

Provost’s Report – Scott Bass

Provost Bass reported the following items:

- The Faculty Manual reforms, most to codify the role of term faculty members and their rights, terms of employment and promotion ladders have been implemented.
- Vickey Wilkens has been appointed as the new dean for SPA.
- Applications for AU undergrad positions are near an all-time high, and “early decision” applications are at an all-time high. This year’s undergraduate pool has higher SAT scores than ever, and the pool of diverse candidates is up in some areas. Honors and Frederick Douglas applications are also very high.

Academic Regulation Revision – Jessica Waters

Vice Provost Waters presented the first of several reforms to the academic regulations. The following revisions were discussed:

- Edits were made to the Preamble The Senate **VOTED** 18-0-0 in favor.
- **1. Credit Hours** – The proposed changes were to, clarify the hours of direct instruction and outside hours necessary for credit, simplify structure of regulations, replace General Education committee with AU Core committee and include language regarding course review to ensure Federal/Middle States compliance. The Senate **VOTED** 16-0-1 in favor.
- **2. Graduation Requirements** – Changes were made to, make it clear the university requirements are dependent on year of matriculation. The Senate **VOTED** 15-0-1 in favor.
- **3. Grading System** – changes in this section include;

- a) 3.1-3.1.1 Replace gender pronouns with non-gendered “student” here and throughout the document.
 - b) 3.2 Make “Office of the University Registrar” consistent here and throughout
 - c) 3.3 Withdrawal should be tied to course drop
 - d) **Pass/Fail Grades** 3.4 – 3.4.4 Make clear that a “pass” is a c/2.0, removal of redundant information contained in (deleted) regulation 3.4.4
 - e) **Incompletes** 3.5- 3.5.4 Make clear Incomplete grade should only be awarded in consultation with student, make clear when Incomplete grade is available (when student is currently passing the course) and make clear that students in probation cannot receive an Incomplete grade
 - f) **In Progress** - 3.6 -3.6.3 Clarify designated courses. The Senate **VOTED** 17-1-0 in favor.
- **4. Evaluation and Course Policies** – 4.1-4.1.3 Streamline regulation, make clear student responsibility to communicate with instructor re: reasonably anticipated absences, make clear that excused absences include absences verified by Kay Spiritual Life; disability accommodation absences, and only varsity athletic events, make clear that excessive absences can fundamentally alter course and provide greater clarity regarding impact of excessive absences on course credit. The Senate **VOTED** 17-1-0 in favor.

New Title IX Hire, Carol Crawford, Introduction – Mary Clark

Dean of Academic Affairs Mary Clark introduced Carol Crawford; Crawford is the New Title IX investigator helping the DAA investigate complaints against faculty.

Background Screening for New Faculty Hires and Faculty Manual Provision to Address Sexual Harassment by Faculty – Scott Bass

A discussion was held regarding several issues relating to faculty, background checks, sexual harassment, and the campus climate. Provost Bass asked for Faculty Senate feedback regarding whether American University should join other DC-area institutions in seeking to conduct criminal background checks of faculty, including the sex offender registry. Faculty members conveyed opinions on both sides, with several asking how the information would be used in hiring and retention. Senate Chair Pearson sought volunteers for the formation of a faculty working group to discuss these issues further and perhaps help reach some sort of faculty consensus. The group will address the Senate in the coming months.

Faculty Manual Provision on Consensual Sexual Relationships Between Faculty and Undergraduate Students – Mary Clark

Mary Clark initiated discussion of a possible ban on consensual sexual relationships of faculty with undergraduates aged 18-22. The working group will discuss the issue further.

SETs Revisions and New Pilot – Andrea Pearson & Doug Fox

The Student Evaluation of Teaching (SETs) instrument has been revised and condensed. The Senate **VOTED** 15-0-3 in favor of piloting the questions in the current semester. The previous pilot participants will be asked to participate again.

Proposed Senate Bylaw Language for Removal of Senate Leaders and Senators – Todd Eisenstadt

A motion proposed by Professor Eisenstadt to approve proposed language for the Senate bylaws to codify the proposal, debate, and removal of the Faculty Senate leadership and Senators was discussed. The Senate **VOTED** 18-1-0 in favor of the language without substantive revision.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 PM