

Call to Order – 4:00p

1. Approval of September 2024 meeting minutes - Approved

2. Announcements

- Senate: attention is to faculty and academic excellence
- Senate: cornerstone of shared governance representing faculty across the University
- Welcome to Angie Edwards, Anesthesiology, as Member-At-Large
- Amanda Kaufman is serving on the search committee for the new Dean of ZSR Library

- Reynolda Hall: new guest services station and DeaconOne card access
- Campus Climate Evaluation first round of discussions
 - Oct 30: for students, 5:30-7:30, Benson 401
 - Oct 31: for faculty and staff, 3:00-5:00, Benson 401
 - Nov 1: for faculty and students, 10:0-12:00, Benson 401

3. Old business

- Website updates: bylaws and photos forthcoming
- P&T in Medical School
 - Not a lot to add until next month
 - Will invite an assistant dean in the Medical School to a future meeting
- Potential issues needing planned messaging
 - possible R1 transition pending Carnegie regulation changes
 - SACSOC/QEP - underway
 - initiating Capital Campaign – will ramp up in coming months: Senate voice for faculty interests will be important

4. Current business

- Senate President and Executive Committee Report:
 - review of meetings on 09/27, 09/30, 10/03 (x2), 10/04, 10/08, 10/09, and 10/17
 - multiple meetings around academic freedom and processes around academic freedom and event cancellation
 - dissatisfaction and concern about process was widely expressed across these meetings
 - the Executive Committee expressed these concerns to President Wenthe and Provost Gillespie during 10/8 meeting

**** Special Presentation: Provost Gillespie – discussion of Academic Freedom and Responsibility**

- discussion of processes and challenges around invited speaker, Dr. Abdulhadi on October 7th
- history of protests around the speakers talks elsewhere, so considerations of event safety/security became important
- concerns about and criticisms of the perceived insensitivity of the timing of the event on October 7th
- Provost Gillespie and Dean Krasas emailed and had phone conversations with upwards of 80 individuals, primarily parents, about the importance of academic freedom and free expression
- President Wenthe and Provost Gillespie met with Senate President and CAFR Chair
- more concerns were raised that have not been publicly shared and in a subsequent meeting led the President to decide that the event could not be held on the scheduled date, October 7th
- email was sent to all university stakeholders communicating that decision
- Provost apologizes for the language used in communicating the decision and for a lack of clear communication during the process
- Provost Gillespie was in contact with the provost at Syracuse about their challenges with a similar event
- the challenge described by the Provost as balancing the values of humanity
- acknowledgment over faculty expressed concerns, particularly around the second recommendation of the After Action Review (AAR) of last summer
- Executive Leadership Team stands by decision but acknowledges the inadequacy of a single short message to the entire community and lack of targeted communication for different stakeholders
- no plans to infringe on academic freedom for faculty around the invitation of outside speakers
- plans to take into consideration safety and security concerns when inviting outside speakers

Questions/Responses by senators

- senator describes a successful community talk at the Unitarian Universalist Church and Winston-Salem State University and regret expressed at the fact that this event was not shared directly with the Wake Forest University community; proposes a newly scheduled talk
- senator asks how the same language used to describe this situation as unique could not be used to describe any event around which controversy might arise | Provost suggests that the particular context of the date was the dominant factor in the decision
- senator raises question about the public communication and how to rectify the impression communicated by it (particularly the language of “inherently contentious”) to the broader public | Provost replies that the effort will be to improve going forward: hiring around communications from the Executive Leadership Team and slowing process down for clear deliberation; this will be part of the Academic Freedom Statement conversations
- senator asks about the email’s statement that organizers had been contacted about the event not happening | Provost replies that not all co-sponsors were informed in advance and that a meeting could or should have been convened after the decision was made and communicated
- HI Director describes not being in communication during the process and gets clarity from the Provost about whether Dr. Abdulhadi could be reinvited (the answer from the Provost is “yes”) | Provost describes the date rather than security as the prevailing concern and that process for evaluating security needs overall
- senator asks about the timing seeming to align with the growth of the external petition | Provost insists that the petition was not a material factor in the decision
- senator asks about efforts to repair faculty morale, which has been damaged by the processes and communication | Provost suggests that we do need to build back morale and use other initiatives and feedback to build trust and community

-Senate President reminds the group that all faculty are welcome to Senate meetings

- Standing Committee Reports

-Integration Committee

-Met with Provost Gillespie and other Provost’s Office members on September 27th. Conversations beginning around opportunities for collaboration, research and course planning.

-Fringe Benefits

-There was a webinar for the first time before open enrollment. It was not as publicized as it could have been, but was useful.

-Met with new HR director, who was interested in committee’s ideas

-Capital Planning

-No report

-Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility

-Meeting tomorrow (10/24) to discuss the committee’s charge. No action.

- Current CAFR charge is limited to the review of dismissals of tenured faculty.

-Athletics

-good news: Women’s Soccer ranked #2; WFU Athletics Department named among best 7 Athletics Departments

-committee discussing transfer students. WFU is hiring a student-athlete transfer coordinator

-scooter use policy

-student-athlete wellbeing is a serious concern: only one sports psychologist on staff. Gender gap around mental health and increased online harassment of student-athletes.

-House decision involves significant changes around revenue sharing | President Wentz will attend November Senate meeting to address the implications of this important decision with serious financial implications

-senator asks about the location of new transfer director hire (restructured position) | reports to Jane Caldwell

-senator asks about any conversation/feedback on the \$750,000 payment to opt out of Ole Miss football game | Media report on home-home agreement that had a \$1M buyout clause, but the money was \$750,000. Buyout allowed a new home-home agreement with Oregon State that will be of more financial benefit to the university. Oregon State helped defray cost of buyout according to AD.

-Medical School

-No report

-College

-slide presented

- Workday issues around schedule building and academic hiring

-academic freedom discussion re: faculty morale

-Salaries Committee

-slide presentation in Appendix

-Analysis of Year over Year (YoY) Salary Data

-Mean and Median data from OIR

-some data are still missing, particularly regarding peer institutions
-see Appendix for data analysis

- Review of Peer Institution list – need volunteers
 - Senate peer institution list exists, but it needs to be updated.
 - looking for volunteers, please contact Senate President
- Connections with Senates at NC Universities most affected by Hurricane Helene
- Report outs from those serving as representatives on various University committees
- US News Rankings
 - All Universities: <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities>
 - WFU 46/436 and #35 “Best Value”: <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/wake-forest-2978>
 - Move to R1 is not tied to our rankings change; Carnegie is changing their rules and it’s nothing that we’re doing
 - Close in rankings to similar schools, such as Lehigh and Boston College; we’re in good company but need to tell our story better

5. New Business

- Adjourn – by 5:30p

End notes

Executive Committee Membership:

- Saylor Breckenridge (College/Sociology) - President
- Steve Virgil (Law) - Vice President
- Ryan Shirey (College/English/Writing Program) - Secretary
- Angie Edwards (Medicine) - Member-at-large
- Raja Chatterjee (Medicine) – Past President
- Mike Cartwright (Medicine) – Chair, Medical School Senators
- Amanda Kaufman (Library) – Chair, University Integration
- Ellen Kirkman (College/Mathematics) – Chair, Fringe Benefits
- Sarah Morath (Law) – Chair, Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility (CAFR)
- Jason Parsley (College/Mathematics) - Chair, College Senators
- Lauren Reid (Business) - Chair, Capital Planning
- Katherine Shaner (Divinity) - Chair, Salaries
- Michelle Steward (Business) – Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on the Faculty Handbook
- John Sumanth (Business) - Chair, Athletics