
The University Senate

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2023-24 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Faculty Senate Minutes: No. 4

Thursday, February 22, 2024
4:15 - 5:00 p.m.

The fourth meeting of the Faculty Senate for 2023-24 was convened on February 22, 2024, online via Zoom. At the time of this meeting, there were 151 voting members of the Faculty Senate. 101 were present.

1. Faculty Senate Call to Order

Interim President Jeffrey Ettinger

Interim President Jeffrey Ettinger called the meeting to order at 4:12 p.m.

1. Administrative Responses to Senate Actions (*Information for the Faculty Senate*)

None pending.

2. Approval of Minutes (*Action by the Faculty Senate*)

Professor Ned Patterson, clerk, Faculty Senate

Motion: To approve the minutes from the Faculty Senate meeting on November 30, 2023.

Approved.

3. Faculty Consultative Committee Report

Professor Mark Bee, chair, Faculty Consultative Committee

Professor Mark Bee, chair, Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC), made the following report:

Legislative Session

- In January, Bee and FCC Vice Chair Jenn Goodnough sent a letter to the Faculty Legislative Liaisons, Donna Spannaus-Martin and Rob Blair, outlining the FCC's direction and input for the 2024 state legislative session. That letter is included for information as item #8 on today's Faculty Senate agenda.
- Also in January, the FCC met with Melisa López Franzen, executive director, Government and Community Relations, to help coordinate messaging between her office and the Faculty Legislative Liaisons.

Unit Statements

- Over the course of the last year, the FCC loosely monitored progress around developing a new policy on unit/department statements. After the events of October 7, 2023, the conversation accelerated quite dramatically, resulting in a working draft of a policy that, by early December, was starting along a path of consultation within shared governance, beginning with the Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee (AF&T).
- Bee and Goodnough attended the AF&T meeting on December 8, 2023, where Executive Vice President and Provost Rachel Croson discussed the draft policy.
- At the FCC meeting on December 14, 2023, the FCC discussed the draft policy and the consultation plan with the chair of AF&T. It became clear that there were some concerns about the pace and depth of consultation that was occurring, and there was some desire on the part of AF&T to slow things down so that they could have additional time to more carefully consider how new policy on unit statements might intersect with academic freedom.
- In mid-to-late January, Bee and Goodnough started conversations with the Office of the Board of Regents and the administration to investigate the possibility of slowing things down. The Board of Regents (BOR) and the administration agreed to slow down, but not indefinitely.
- On January 31, 2024, AF&T submitted a resolution and corresponding statement, which will be discussed later in today's Faculty Senate meeting.

4. Faculty Senate Constitution Amendments (*Discussion and Action by the Faculty Senate*)

Professor Mark Bee, chair, Faculty Consultative Committee

Background:

This is a second vote on proposed changes to the Faculty Senate Constitution.

According to University Senate Bylaws, Article X: PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION, “an amendment to this constitution shall be approved either by a two-thirds majority of all voting members of the appropriate senate, as indicated in each section, at a regular or special meeting, or by a majority of all voting members of the appropriate senate at each of two meetings, the second of which shall be the next regular meeting.”

A majority of members of the Faculty Senate approved the constitutional amendments at the November 30, 2023 meeting, but the $\frac{2}{3}$ majority required to approve amendments in one meeting was not achieved. Corresponding amendments to the Bylaws and Rules were approved at the November 30, 2023 meeting.

The FCC approved the changes on November 2, 2023. 76 votes are needed to approve these changes.

Motion: To approve the [Proposed Amendments to the Faculty Senate Constitution](#).

Approved (87 ayes, 1 nay).

**5. AF&T Statement On the Development of Policies Impacting Academic Freedom
(Information for the Faculty Senate)**

Professor Eric Van Wyk, chair, Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee

On January 31, 2024, the Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee (AF&T) approved the [Statement On the Development of Policies Impacting Academic Freedom](#).

6. AF&T Resolution on the Development of Policy Regarding Unit Statements (Discussion and Action by the Faculty Senate)

Professor Eric Van Wyk, chair, Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee

Background:

On January 31, 2024, AF&T approved the [Resolution on the Development of Policy Regarding Unit Statements](#). The committee seeks Faculty Senate endorsement of the resolution.

Motion: To endorse the [resolution](#).

Discussion:

Professor Eric Van Wyk, chair, AF&T, explained the resolution. Senators offered the following comments:

- This is a complicated issue and time should be taken to study its implications.
- There could be concerns that people would construe departments choosing *not* to make statements on a given issue as not being concerned about that issue.

Approved (78 ayes, 5 nays).

7. FCC Letter to Faculty Legislative Liaisons (Information for the Faculty Senate)

On January 10, 2024, the FCC sent a [letter](#) to the Faculty Legislative Liaisons outlining the FCC's priorities for the 2024 legislative session.

8. Faculty Senate Old Business

None.

9. Faculty Senate New Business

David Jacobs, faculty senator from the School of Public Health, thanked Ettinger for his service as interim president.

10. Faculty Senate Adjournment

Ettinger adjourned the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office