



FACULTY SENATE

Executive Council
April 17, 2023, 4:00 – 5:30 PM
Minutes

Present: Professors Borchert (President), Eyler (VP), Bonifield (PSC), Delaney (SAC), Everse (CAC), Julianelle (at large), Kervick (CAC), Lopez-Vicuna (at large), Paris (at large), Read (ERTC), Rodriguez (FPPC)

Absent: Professors Cushman (RSCA), deRosset (at large), Knodell (FPPC), Preston (RSCA), Prue (SAC)

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 PM on Microsoft Teams

With no objection, Thomas Borchert made the following changes to the meeting agenda:

- Remove item 8: review memo/summary of roundtable.
- Add item 3.5: CAC materials for Senate Consent Agenda

1. **Minutes** of the March 2023 meeting were approved as written.

2. **Chair's Remarks** – Thomas Borchert made the following remarks:

- Year-end reports from chairs of Senate standing committees are due Friday, April 28th.
- A retreat for the Executive Council will be held on Wednesday, May 24th, 10:30 AM – 2:00 PM in Waterman 427A. Lunch will be provided.
- A compromise solution has been reached regarding the named lecture series. The President and Provost have committed resources for a coordinator for the four major named lectures. A single committee will develop a theme and guidelines will be developed for choosing the lecturers. The chair of the RSCA will serve as the Senate representative on the committee.

3. **Status of Academic Priorities Council** – Thomas Borchert and Evan Eyler reported that rather than establish a new committee, the President and Provost suggested that the Faculty Senate Executive Council be brought into their regular planning systems. The Executive Council along with some deans and Vice Provosts, would meet twice per year (early summer, late fall). The first meeting will likely be early June 2023.

3.5. **Curricular Affairs Consent Agenda** - Stephen Everse and Colby Kervick presented the following items for inclusion on the Faculty Senate consent agenda:

- No-contest Termination Special Education Minor with Endorsement (CESS)

- New Undergraduate Minor in Global Public Health (CNHS)
- New Undergraduate Minor in Public Health Equity and Advocacy (CNHS)
- New Undergraduate Certificate in Gerontology (CESS)

Motion: Stephen Everse moved that the four items be included on the Faculty Senate consent agenda. The motion was seconded and **carried unanimously**.

4. **Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) proposal change** – Colby Kervick and Stephen Everse proposed shortening the circulation time for curricular proposals from the current 30-day circulation to 15-days. The reasons for the proposed change include: 1) unit curriculum committees are doing their jobs of searching out potential conflicts and having proposers get letters from more people/programs, 2) very few comments are received and comments are historically submitted in first couple days, and requests for a copy of the full proposal are rarely received after the first 24 hours, 3) a desire to streamline the review process for faculty-driven curricular changes in order to get the changes into the catalog in a timely manner. Discussion included support for a streamlined process, the current challenge of meeting catalogue deadlines, and the desire to be more responsive to faculty led curricular proposals. The next step is a discussion and vote by the Curricular Affairs Committee at their May meeting to change the operating procedures, reducing the circulation window and streamlining the process. If the CAC approves the proposed change, the CAC co-chairs will prepare a memo to present to the Faculty Senate at the May meeting.
5. **Student Affairs Committee (SAC) report: Revised Religious Holiday Policy** – Thomas Borchert reported that the SAC is currently considering a revision to the Religious Holiday Policy. The suggested changes are attached to these minutes. The Executive Council was asked for guidance on the question of the role of the Faculty Senate for this potential policy change. Should there be a discussion and vote in the Senate, or a report to the Senate by the SAC? Discussion included the need for the policy revision, the types of potential accommodations; expectations of students, faculty, and role of Dean’s offices as mediating body; religious holidays versus religious practice; and the desire to embed religious accommodations in other policies/practices.
6. **Research, Scholarship and the Creative Arts Committee (RSCA) Report: Academic Freedom Policy Revisions and Resolution on Open Access and Open Science**
The RSCA approved a revision to the Academic Freedom Policy. The revision is attached to these minutes and will be presented to the Faculty Senate for discussion at the April meeting, with a potential vote by the Senate in May.
The RSCA approved a resolution on Open Access and Open Science which calls on UVM to increase Open Access practices. The resolution is attached to these minutes and will be presented to the Faculty Senate for vote at the April meeting. Discussion included the need for mechanisms to be developed for documenting and promoting Open Access and Open Science.

7. **Proposal for Faculty Senate Artificial Intelligence (AI) ad hoc working group** – Thomas Borchert presented the following proposal:

In the six months, with the release of the third version of ChatGPT, the problem of artificial intelligence within higher education has taken on a new importance. While artificial intelligence systems have been a part of US society for a longer period, the increased ease and quality of outputs creates both potential for the use and abuse of AI in the contexts of teaching and research. Moreover, the journalistic accounts of these systems, their promise and peril, both in mainstream media and in higher ed focused venues such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, have often had a breathless tone rendering it difficult for members of the faculty to know what to be concerned about, appropriate levels of concern, and appropriate modes of response. While UVM offices such as Writing in the Disciplines and the Center for Student Conduct have begun the work to provide faculty with guidance on these matters, this work has not always had clear venues for getting to the Faculty.

We therefore propose to establish an ad hoc working group comprised of representatives from WID, the Center for Student Conduct, and the Faculty Senate Executive Council the goal of which is to provide faculty (through the Faculty Senate) with guidance for addressing AI matters in teaching and research. This working group will expand on the work of the WID and CSC and present this guidance to the Faculty Senate.

Tentative timeline and composition:

Initially, once established, this working group will meet once before the end of the contract year, once during the summer, and three or four times as needed during the Fall 2023 semester. The Senate will pay for summer meetings for faculty who are nine-month employees. The goal is to present guidance to the Senate by December 2023. The working group will be comprised of: Susanmarie Harrington, the Director of WID, Deanna Garret-Ostermiller, Assistant Director Center for Student Conduct, four members of the FS Exec Council, one of whom is either the President or the Vice-President of the Senate.

Discussion included the desire for representation from ERTC, CAC and SAC because the concern about AI cuts across committees, and the suggestion that each Senate committee appoint someone to the AI work group.

8. **Review memo/summary of Roundtable** – This item was removed from the agenda.

9. **Agenda for P&P Meeting (Tuesday, April 18, 4:00 – 4:45 PM)** –

- Graduate Education – co-location resolution
- Senate response to graduate education goals

10. Draft Agenda for Faculty Senate Meeting Monday, April 24, 4:00 – 5:30 PM on Teams –.

Motion: Stephen Everse moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and carried.

4:00	1. Faculty Senate President’s Welcome Remarks – Thomas Borchert <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for Nominations – Special Election for Member at Large
4:05	2. Consent Agenda (Vote) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of the March 2023 Faculty Senate Meeting • Curricular Affairs <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) No-contest Termination Special Education Minor with Endorsement (CESS) 2) New Undergraduate Minor in Global Public Health (CNHS) 3) New Undergraduate Minor in Public Health Equity and Advocacy (CNHS) 4) New Undergraduate Certificate in Gerontology (CESS)
4:10	3. Resolution on Open Access and Open Science (Vote)
4:20	4. Academic Freedom Policy – Discussion of Revisions approved by the Faculty Senate Research, Scholarship, and the Creative Arts Committee (RSCA)
4:30	5. Reports that do not require a Senate vote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricular Affairs Report – APR Dept of Mathematical Sciences and Statistics; Substantial Revisions to the Early Childhood Special Education Major and approval of reactivation of the Major reflecting the approved changes.
4:35	6. Update on Learning Management System (LMS) transition - Wendy Verrei-Berenback, Assistant Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
4:55	7. Update on University Finance - Richard Cate, Vice President for Finance and Administration
5:15	8. New Business
5:30	Adjourn

11. New Business

- Thomas Borchert asked the Executive Council for permission to add their names to a letter of support for a grant proposal being submitted by Dean Linda Schadler (CEMS) to Howard Hughes Medical Institute for a teacher training grant.
- President Garimella would like to reinstate the end-of-year reception for the Faculty Senate. An email was sent to member of the Senate to gauge interest/availability to attend a reception after the May Senate meeting. Response rate was low (44 responses), and 24 responded they would be available to attend.
- The May Executive Council meeting will include a discussion of the meeting modality for AY 23-24.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM.

<https://www.uvm.edu/registrar/religious-holidays>

Current policy

Religious Holidays: Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. Each semester students should submit in writing to their instructors by the end of the second full week of classes their documented religious holiday schedule for the semester. Faculty must permit students who miss work for the purpose of religious observance to make up this work.

Dates of religious holidays can be found on the Interfaith Calendar. Two versions are available: one is the [Interfaith Calendar for the current academic year \(PDF\)](#), the other is a [multi-year Interfaith Calendar \(PDF\)](#).

Suggested Revisions

Religious Holidays and Practice: Religions may be practiced in many different ways, and can impact participation in classes variably. Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice, and when religious responsibilities come in conflict with class duties, students and instructors should work together to find reasonable accommodations. Regarding religious holidays, students should submit in writing to their instructors at least one week prior to their documented religious holiday schedule for the semester. Faculty must permit students who miss work or exams for the purpose of religious observance to make up this work. In addition, faculty are encouraged to review the calendar of holidays maintained by the UVM Interfaith Center to proactively plan course schedules and exam schedules. Students for whom regular practice may impact class beyond holiday observances (such as fasting or midday prayer) should consult with their instructors about ways to accommodate.

Dates of religious holidays can be found on the Interfaith Calendar. Two versions are available: one is the [Interfaith Calendar for the current academic year \(PDF\)](#), the other is a [multi-year Interfaith Calendar \(PDF\)](#).

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Commented [TB1]: If faculty don't agree to this, what avenues do students have for appeal?

[Academic Freedom Policy](#)

[Changes approved by the Faculty Senate Research, Scholarship and the Creative Arts Committee \(RSCA\), April 13, 2023](#)

103 Academic Freedom

The Faculty Senate adopted the following statement on academic freedom on September 23, 1954 and was approved by the Board of Trustees on October 16, 1954 and revised and adopted by the Faculty Senate on November 20, 2008 and approved by the Board of Trustees on February 7, 2009:

Academic Freedom and Responsibility

We, the faculty of The University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, in the spirit and tradition of free universities throughout the world, are agreed upon the following statement of principles on academic freedom and responsibility. We believe that incorporation of these principles into the organization of The University of Vermont and State Agricultural College will re-emphasize the importance of academic freedom to the basic health of the University, and also serve as a statement of policy on the rights and responsibilities of faculty members at this institution. It has been our intent to state these principles in terms broad enough so that they may be valid not only in these critical times when academic freedom and personal liberty are in jeopardy both at home and abroad, but also in the future insofar as the future can be foreseen.

The Necessity of Academic Freedom in Higher Education

The main purpose of a university has always been, must always be, to stimulate the thinking and the creative powers of its students and its faculty. As an institution it deals in ideas, not only old and accepted ones but new ones that may be full of explosive power. If they are explosive, they are bound to be disconcerting, even painful, to some on the campus and to many beyond its borders. Inevitably they will be called dangerous by the timid and short-sighted, but to those who really believe in the fruitfulness of human thought, the real danger would appear only if the flow of such ideas should cease. For then indeed sterility would have taken over our campus. Our faculty would no longer deserve the name of intellectuals and our students, regardless of degrees attained, could no longer claim to be educated. They would leave our campus accustomed only to the commonplace, satisfied with the mediocre, ignorant or afraid of ideas which catch fire. Academic freedom is therefore not solely a right or privilege of the faculty but is the fulfillment of the obligation on the part of the university to provide an atmosphere in which intellectual growth may take place.

Academic Freedom and Special Responsibilities of Faculty Members

We subscribe to the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom [and the 1970 Interpretive Comments](#) of the American Association of University Professors which provides:

- a. Faculty are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the university.
- b. Faculty are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. The intent of this statement is not to discourage what is “controversial.” Controversy is at the heart of the free academic inquiry which the entire statement is designed to foster. Instruction may occur in an atmosphere of controversy so long as what is taught is placed in an appropriate context, is germane to the subject of the class, as determined by the faculty member and consistent with disciplinary standards, and assists students in mastering or appreciating the significance of the subject.
- c. Faculty are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of the university. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the university.

Commented [A1]: Addition from the AAUP 1970 interpretative comment.

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[We also subscribe to the 2014 report of the American Association of University Professors on Academic Freedom and Electronic Communication which provides:](#)

- a. Academic freedom, free inquiry, and freedom of expression within the academic community may be limited to no greater extent in electronic format than they are in print, save for the most unusual situation where the very nature of the medium itself might warrant unusual restrictions.

Commented [A2]: From the 2014 AAUP report on Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications.

In addition, there are recognized qualifications which must be attained and maintained before the privilege of being a member of the academic profession can be considered a permanent one: satisfactory performance as a teacher, scholarship, and high moral standards.

Responsibility of the Institution to the Faculty

The University must defend tenaciously the right of its members to think and express their thoughts freely and to make those choices within the law guaranteed to every citizen. This includes the right of dissent since any democratic institution ceases to merit the name democratic when this fundamental right is denied. Never is this duty more imperative than in those times when the public opinion of the community would restrain or curtail the free play of ideas. The universities, whose roots extend back into the centuries, have a tradition and duty to maintain an independence of judgment in the face of public opinion.

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Academic Freedom and Tenure

Tenure is an indispensable pre-condition for academic freedom. It is, in fact, a guarantee that the institution subscribes to the principle of academic freedom, and that its members may not be dismissed without adequate cause. Termination of tenure should occur only in cases of bona fide financial exigency in the University or when it has been demonstrated that the teacher lacks professional or moral fitness or competence as a teacher.

In the interpretation and the application of these principles we shall expect the University authorities to be quick to protect its heritage of academic freedom, in doubtful cases remembering that an excess of freedom is always less dangerous than an excess of constraint.

Resolution on Open Access and Open Science

Approved by the Faculty Senate Research, Scholarship, and the Creative Arts Committee (RSCA)
April 13, 2023

Whereas the University of Vermont is a land grant institution whose mission is to “create, evaluate, share, and apply knowledge” (<https://www.uvm.edu/mission-and-vision>); and

Whereas “Our Common Ground” calls on members of the University community to abide by the values of Innovation which calls for us to “address important community and society needs,” and Openness which calls for the “open exchange of information and ideas” (<https://www.uvm.edu/president/our-common-ground>); and

Whereas the free exchange of research and scholarly information is also a matter of equity and consistent with the values of Our Common Ground; and

Whereas the University of Vermont is a member of the Higher Education Leadership Initiative for Open Scholarship (HELIOS), “a cohort of colleges and universities committed to collective action to advance open scholarship within and across campuses...to promote a more transparent, inclusive, and trustworthy research ecosystem” (<https://www.heliosopen.org/>); and

Whereas the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy has changed guidelines requiring that federally funded research be made publicly available (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/news-updates/2022/08/25/ostp-issues-guidance-to-make-federally-funded-research-freely-available-without-delay/>)

Therefore, be it resolved that the Faculty Senate calls on the different colleges and schools of the University to develop policies and procedures promoting open access sharing of scholarly output by:

Educating faculty and students to promote literacy on the importance of open access publishing and open science and facilitating faculty participation in open access and open science practices; and

Be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate calls on colleges, schools and departments of the University to review their incentive structures in hiring, reappointment, promotion, and tenure to ensure alignment with open scholarship requirements of major research funders and acknowledge the value added in each discipline through open access publishing, open science, and/or other openly available products of scholarship; and

The Faculty Senate calls on the administration of the University of Vermont to encourage open access and open science practices by providing institutional resources to this end and supporting departmental review and development of incentive structures; and

The Faculty Senate calls on individual members of the faculty to incorporate open access principles into regular practice, as for example by depositing preprint or postprint publications, as permitted by author agreements, and other work into open access repositories at no cost such as that of the University of Vermont Libraries or by writing open access funds into grants where appropriate.