

MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE 2020-21 UNIVERSITY SENATE  
September 17, 2020

Members Present: 42

Members Absent: 5

1. The meeting was called to order by the Chair of the University Senate, Tarek Mahfouz, at 4:00 p.m.  
Any substitutions were asked to email the information to Bethany Allen, Undersecretary.

Members Present: V. Birk, J. Blythe, N. Bogart, C. Bohanon, C. Braden, M. Carter, K. Chipman, M. Clayton, K. Coker, C. Dailey, O. Frausto, K. Gayes, L. Gerstein, K. Hennessee, J. Hopwood, K. Kessler, M. Kovach, S. Lee, D. Lewandowski, T. Mahfouz, S. Martin, M. McCarthy, M. McGriff, C. McIntosh, G. Mearns, V. Rapatz, S. Rivera-Mills, C. Sanburn, N. Seely, C. Shue, J. Shimkus, S. Smith, S. Snideman, J. Sponseller, A. Stefanski, J. Truitt, J. Tye, M. Watters, D. Wheeler, D. Whitton, S. Wilczynski, R. Yantz

Substitutes: None

Members Absent: S. Fulton, E. Lucas, N. Perera, J. Place, K. Reese

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of April 23, 2020.

Motion carried.

2. Elections:

- A. Elections of Executive Committee University Senate.

The Chairperson of Governance and Elections Committee for 2019-20, Karen Kessler, presided over the election of the chair of the Senate and Senate Agenda Committee.

1. Chairperson – Tarek Mahfouz

The floor was opened for nominations. There were no additional nominations from the floor.  
Tarek Mahfouz was elected chairperson by acclamation.

2. Vice Chairperson – The floor was opened for nominations. Suzy Smith self-nominated. There were no additional nominations from the floor.

Suzy Smith was elected Vice Chairperson by acclamation.

Suzy Smith will also serve as Chair of the Governance and Elections Committee.

3. Secretary

The floor was opened for nominations. Connie McIntosh self-nominated. There were no additional nominations from the floor.

Connie McIntosh was elected Secretary by acclamation.

- B. Senate Agenda Committee election

1. The floor was opened for nominations. Darren Wheeler self-nominated. There were no additional nominations from the floor.

Darren Wheeler was elected to serve on the Senate Agenda Committee.

3. Announcements

- A. Reaffirmation of Standing Rules (Enclosure #1)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Standing Rules.

No nays noted. No abstentions noted.

Motion carried.

- B. Schedule of Meetings in University Governance System (Enclosure #2)

- C. Next Scheduled Meetings

University Senate – Thursday, October 1, 2020, 4:00 p.m., WebEx

Senate Agenda Committee – Monday, September 21, 2020, 2:00 p.m., WebEx

- D. Overview of Senate System – Tarek Mahfouz, Chairperson- Tarek provided background information about the

governance system. He provided a diagram showing how the Senate, Councils and committees are arranged within the system.

E. Approval of Senate Actions

**Does not require Board of Trustees Approval:**

1. Policy for Allegations for Research Misconduct
2. Priority Scheduling Revision- Section IV-86
3. Faculty Qualifications
4. Non-Tenure-Line Faculty Reconsideration Policy
5. Professional Education Committee revisions

**Does require Board of Trustees Approval:**

1. President Salary Increase Proposal
2. Board of Trustee Membership Proposal
3. Undergraduate Education Committee Suspension and Elimination of Academic Programs
4. Promotion and Tenure Committee- Document Revisions

F. The Computer Technology program including career and vocational training has been moved from the ISOM department under the College of Business to the Center for Information and Communication Sciences under the College of Communication Information and Media (CCIM).

G. On May 20, 2020 it was reported that the new University Senate constitution was ratified by a final university wide vote of 1,268 Ayes and 89 Nays.

2. Recognition of Deaths

There was a moment of silence to recognize the death of the following:

Dr. C Wade Jennings  
Professor Emeritus of English  
Retired 1998  
30 years of service

Dr. Theodore N. Van Cott  
Professor Emeritus of Economics  
Retired 2015  
38 years of service

Dr. Billy Paschal  
Professor Emeritus of Psychology-Educational Psychology  
Retired 2000  
32 years of service

Dr. Carmella E. Mansfield  
Professor Emerita of the Business Education and Office Administration (now ISOM)  
Retired 1985  
18 years of service

3. Questions Directed to President Mearns

President Mearns spoke briefly about three items.

1. Enrollment data for the incoming freshman class.
2. Budget. The Board of Trustees will be reviewing the proposed budget plan tomorrow, September 18, 2020.
3. Update on the university's response to COVID 19. There has been a substantial lowering of the positive trend seen during the first two weeks of class. Testing had been increased.

Questions were asked including but not limited to the following topics:

1. Academic freedom- best practice to meet in person. Is there any consideration for faculty who are hopeful to increase in person classes? The Provost explained that we are still learning what is and isn't working, working to determine the flexibility for specific situations in preparation for spring. A survey will be utilized soon, allowing faculty to provide opinion and personal experience that is working. This information will be considered when making plans for the spring.
2. Concerns about the disproportionate amount of women faculty effected by COVID-19. How is this being considered for promotion and tenure, etc. The Provost is monitoring this situation and has had some discussion with the Scholarship Advisory Committee who works closely with the Research office and the Sponsored Projects Administration. The Provost also plans to speak to the University Promotion and Tenure Committee as well as bringing this topic up for discussion with the Academic Leadership Group.

3. US News and World Report ranking- is this a concern of the administration? President agreed that the results were a disappointment and accepted full responsibility for the administrative oversight. The data provided was not complete meaning old data was used by US News and World Report resulting in an unbecoming ranking. This situation will not happen again in the future.

5. Committee Reports

- A. Governance and Elections Committee – No new information to report currently. The committee is set to meet October 1, 2020.
- B. Faculty Council – Jon Truitt- Jon has been working on completing the appointments to various committees. The council heard from Alan Finn, Vice President for Business Affairs about the changes to the retirement plan. Information will be available for everyone to review.
- C. Professional Personnel Council – Sam Snideman- The council met on September 10, 2020. Sam has been elected the new Chair. No new business has been considered at this time. He will begin making his committee appointments soon.
- D. Student Government Association – Connor Sanburn/Dylan Lewandowski- Student Senate is going very well this fall and they have met a few times. They are working to encourage students to vote. They are including anyone on campus to vote. They have partnered with Athletics and Resident Life to widen their reach. They have forty-five (45) seated Senators. They are very happy with the participation in the Student Government Association.

6. Report by Chairperson of Senate – Tarek Mahfouz – Gantt chart (Enclosure #1) - Issues in the Senate System

Tarek Mahfouz reviewed each item briefly, highlighting the current location and ongoing nature of each. These items included:

1. Core Curriculum Revision- The Core Curriculum Committee membership was extended for an additional year to allow for continuity. They are continuing to work on this revision. Tarek provided some basic background information. The committee plans to hold forums to determine concerns regarding the proposed framework. The Academic Leadership Group will be involved to answer questions and help facilitate the forums.
2. Graduate Education Committee- Taught/with policy revision- The current proposal included a 75% rate for taught/with classes, minimizing the taught with courses. There was a second proposal authored by Bruce Frankel to be considered by the committee. This proposal will be returned soon.
3. Board of Trustee Membership Ad hoc- Tarek provided background information on this item. A meeting with the Board of Trustees and Ad hoc committee should be scheduled soon for discussion on how to proceed.
4. Undergraduate Education Committee- BA/BS Program Distinctions- This item was sent back to the Undergraduate Education Committee for further clarification. The committee's first meeting was September 14, 2020.
5. Undergraduate Education Committee- Credit for Prior Learning- This item was sent back to the Undergraduate Education Committee to continue working on it.

7. Question and Answer Period: There were no additional questions.

8. Unfinished Business: There is no unfinished business currently.

9. New Business:

- A. Membership of University Senate (Enclosure #4)- as of September 11, 2020- The membership was briefly reviewed. It was noted that Sangwon Lee should be listed as Marketing and Tarek Mahfouz should be listed as Construction Management and Interior Design. Those corrects will be made.

10. Other Items:

- A. Faculty Council committee appointment letters are in the process of being sent out to appointees.

11. Adjournment:

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 5:06 p.m.

Motion carried

Respectfully Submitted,

Connie McIntosh, Secretary