

Minutes
UCA Faculty Senate
October 10, 2023
Wingo 315, 12:45 p.m.

Attendance: College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences: Mayhew - aa, Mongno - aa, Smith - pp
College of Business: Hill - pp, Horpedahl - pp, Thomas - pp
College of Education: Rice - pp, Shaw - pp, Trumble - pp
College of Health & Behavioral Sciences: Engle - pp, Langster - pp, Rose - pp
College of Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Booher - pp, Chen - pp, Dunlap - aa, Le - pp
Unaffiliated: Hostetter - pp, Lebeau-Ford - aa
At-Large: Keith - pp, Okoli - pp
Part-Time: Colbert - aa

FS President Scribner - pp, FS VP Shires - pp, President Davis - pp, Provost Poulter - pp

Guests in attendance: Jennifer Rudd - Staff Senate President

Introduction Items:

I. Call to order: FS President Scribner at 1250

II. Comments: President Davis

Today I want to focus on pay, there are questions asking if administration is as attentive as they should be. The short answer is yes. The 2% pool we set up (1.9 million) is the 2% COLA and we are working on a three-year sequence (looking at the ROI for dollars). We know that student credit hours will be decreasing over the next few years. We are looking for our next pool (1.9 million) for the next 2% COLA. We are also doing a progressive model to increase the salaries of those in lower paid bands. A structure will be created. We are developing the FY26 budget; the third year of the three-year sequence. We have been proactive with these plans and we have had a plan for freeing up dollars without increasing tuition and fees exorbitantly. Our board would not even approve that (a major increase in tuition and fees). There is no increase in state funding either, not in any of the 50 states. There are three reasons for that: Corrections lawsuit reform, Basic education equalization, and Healthcare expenses on the rise. On a related note, someone said "We heard you budgeted for 4% increases, but it has only been 1%. Why can't we free up the remaining 3%?" This is an excellent question and one I would ask myself. We've budgeted for the year at 4% and the year isn't over. We still have spring and two summer sessions before that budget is "a wrap". We wouldn't make a change midstream now anymore than we would if we saw a growth in the middle of the year. We simply don't know the whole story yet. Salary and benefits: Remember that for every \$1 of salary, it costs UCA \$1.32 because of the benefits. This is built into the 1.9 million pools we speak of building for the annual 2% COLAs we are able to provide.

A question came from a retired faculty. "Would we consider lowering admission standards?" The intent is, of course, to increase enrollment. Let me just ask you, Faculty Senators, how do you feel about that?

Following a moment of silence Can I assume that's a "no"?

Thomas – That's a big question; what would be the impact?

Okoli – Isn't our acceptance rate over 90%? Wouldn't that indicate that our admission standards are already relatively low?

Davis – Yes, it is in the 90%, but our reputation and our stated admission requirements are clear. It is not common to receive applications from students who don't meet the requirements.

Poulter – I can tell you that when there are increases in applications, there are also increases in denials.

Davis – There are open access schools out there and those experiences are very different for students and for faculty.

Scribner – Does the funding formula get impacted if we lose students?

Davis – Yes, but mostly if they've made it to their junior year. These first year drop outs don't have much impact.

Keith – Open enrollments versus current standards – is there something in between?

Davis – We made admission standard adjustments in 2014 and in 2016. They were small adjustments, but they made an impact, which is what we want to do. We want to make a moral and ethical contract with our students and help them achieve; not fail. I feel like that is the middle level.

Poulter – Some changes we've made include being test optional. Our standards are:

High School GPA: 2.50 on a 4.0 (this marries with the Arkansas Challenge requirements)

ACT composite: 17 or higher

SAT: 930 or higher

ACT/SAT: 22 writing/language, 22 reading, 400 math

Scribner – Don't we also have transitional services?

Davis – Yes

Scribner – By all accounts, aren't we considered a stringent acceptance university?

Davis – Yes, we have hard and fast admission standards, and our standards are important. They represent who and how we serve.

Hill – Would there be room to adjust (increased enrollment) in the UCA Commitment? Could we still fund those students?

Davis – Yes, it shouldn't impact it.

Poulter – We have some struggling to meet students where they are now, we should focus on this and not changing admission standards.

III. Comments: Provost Poulter

I'd like to talk about German. I have received copies of the documentation trail from the decision-making process. There are currently nine students in the minor and this change will not impact their ability to graduate. I have asked for a copy of the memo those students received and when I receive it, I will remove all personal student information and submit a copy for Faculty Senate meeting minutes. I think it's important that everyone know the truth.

Our fall freshman last year – we denied 627 students last year which was up 44 denials from the previous year.

No action was required on adjustments to active military and their spouses if called into active duty. We did have some language missing on our admissions policy though and this has been corrected. It included information about tuition to be paid upon return.

A notification – there have been changes in some administrative structures and titles.

Kevin Thomas went from 4 units to 11 units. Academic Advising is now different. Enrollment Services has grown from four original units four years ago to its present eleven units. Some of this is from realignment in other areas (e.g. moving Office of Student Success) and others are expansion of services (e.g. moving from Transfer Advising to a full Office of Online, Transfer, and Returning Students Service). Moving into UCA Commitment we recognized in the early planning stages we would need a director of that program. The director will have to coordinate with a significant number of on- and off-campus units and partners.

IV. Comments: President Scribner

I have received a great number of questions and concerns about salaries. In our executive session we discussed this extensively. There are questions about the UCA Commitment and UCA Now. “When will faculty see these dollars?” “Can we have a long-term goal as well?” “What about staff?” We need to be able to talk about this together and with our constituents. Does anyone have comments?

Trumble – What was the outcome of that conversation in the executive session?

Scribner – President Davis addressed issues as always, but there were not any new revelations. I think it is our responsibility to keep the conversation alive.

Smith – President Davis mentioned a new pool related to the next COLA, is this an additional source of funding?

Scribner – No, each 2% COLA requires a separate “pool”; a term they use to collect the dollars needed to achieve the annual increase.

There was a time when UCA had little money in the reserve, now we have roughly \$90 million in reserve. President Davis is clear that this is not touchable money. The next three years will be challenging with decreasing enrollments.

Shaw – Undergraduate enrollments have been decreasing, that’s true, however; graduate programs have the potential for growth. Unfortunately, there is no recruitment plan for us outside of some grant funding to support our individual department recruitment efforts. While we are thankful for those dollars of support, we feel a more formal/centralized process for graduate student recruitment would be beneficial. I received \$2500/program. Our program is mostly word of mouth (library).

Hostetter – Where are those grant dollars from?

Shaw – They are internal from the graduate school.

Shires – As a music professor, I do a lot of recruiting wherever I am. It’s all very discipline specific. A centralized recruiter may not benefit us much.

Shaw – What about a college specific recruiter?

Shires – There is overlap, but so much is specific. We need more ability/support to recruit as opposed to someone doing it for us.

Trumble – The PhD program in the College of Education has a 60% acceptance rate, not related to applicants, but related to the decreasing number of faculty to manage them. There is a ripe harvest to be had but we get little money to support it. My program got money and the department designated to help me with the social media marketing we needed lost staff. That was the end of it, they never did help me. Someone adept at marketing WOULD really help with recruitment efforts. This is the kind of support I think we need. We need a hybrid of centralized/decentralized teamwork.

Scribner – I know we had a graduate student boost and it really helped us. Perhaps the undergraduate services could help us.

Thomas – Is there someone at the Graduate School who could help us?

Trumble – The Graduate School is better than it was, but we could still use someone to help us with marketing.

Rose – Dr. Gatto has mentioned difficulty retaining graduate faculty related to salaries.

Shaw – Even marketing to our own undergraduate students would be smart.

Smith – This is a question or suggestion to keep salary front and center regarding the COLAs. There seems to be an extreme need on the staff side. Salary adjustments are made to accommodate need. Is there opportunity to coordinate with staff senate to create a united lane for aggressive COLA prioritization of need for both faculty and staff?

Shires – Are you addressing equity?

Smith – I understand President Davis to say across the board COLA is not meeting specific hard hit needs.

Okoli – We should focus on faculty. We could look at attrition of Deans as an indicator of challenges we have. Also, we could track overload, etc. and ask for increased salaries via resolution. We could share our report with staff colleagues.

Scribner – We need to recognize that administration moves a lot (Deans, Chairs, etc.) while faculty tend to stay in place. We need to make our faculty needs clear in the long term, so that we can articulate these visions to a new provost, for example.

Rice – There is also a great deal of expense with a search to replace administration. Can we decrease turnover to decrease that cost? That would be a savings.

Scribner – They did work to increase the salary of some staff, so we know it can happen.

Thomas – I would like to see a long-term plan. Every year we are getting further under the cost of inflation and that is a long-term problem for us. We WILL get squeezed out and new people will say “You don’t pay enough”. We want a 5, 10, 15-year faculty salary plan. 2% each year is too low; but at least if we had that promise, we’d know how long we have before we have to move on.

Scribner – UCA has a 5-10 year plan for enrollment cliffs and such, but no such plan for faculty. What can we as faculty do to work with UCA moving forward to develop a 5-10 year payment/equity plan?

Hostetter – Does this fall under the Faculty Affairs Committee?

Thomas – There is a Faculty Salary Review Committee according to this Committee on Committee’s report.

Scribner – It is ok for us to ask these questions.

Hostetter – Faculty Affairs versus Salary Review Committee. Do we know who would work on this?

Scribner – *after reviewing committee descriptions* It sounds as though the Salary Review Committee would cover this.

Smith – Senator Okoli’s suggestions were great in pointing out cost not being directly related to salaries. There are costs associated with loss and overload. I think this is a role for Faculty Senate.

Hill – There is no conflict of interest if both review or look at the same issue. We may even get different results.

Shires – The committees have dually appointed members. We should call on them to work for us with their charge.

Hill – Yes, we may need to do some of the leg work that doesn’t fall under their charge.

Rose – Can we also look at adjuncts we use and their associated costs? Low enrolled courses and their associated costs?

Thomas – We’ve identified our metrics and indicators. One measure I have recommended (at executive session) is how many people apply for positions here? We need to measure things where the bang is worth the buck (pun intended). Let’s be sure our implications of the data are clear.

“I’d love to pay you more money, find me two million dollars.” This would be the answer. We need to consider solutions and our metrics can support that, let’s choose them wisely.

Shires – When I brought up the idea of the strategic plan addressing this (at executive session) I was answered “it’s there”. But I’m not satisfied with what the strategic plan says about this problem. We need a strategic plan addressing faculty compensation. There is currently no PLAN, just a comment.

Hill – It’s ok for us to let them know we want a strategic priority to invest in us. It helps if we have a solution, but we don’t have all the information to be able to solve this problem. We can articulate that we feel we are not a strategic priority – budget allocation identifies your strategic priorities. If we aren’t in the strategic planning document, we should be.

Rice – From a budget perspective, people give money to put their name on something and get acknowledgement. Finding extra money for us can’t be “sold”.

Hostetter – Other institutions have endowed chairs.

Scribner – Do we have any endowed chairs?

Chen – We did at one point.

Shires – This is a great discussion; it needs to yield something.

Scribner – Yes, I’ve had a lot of people come to me about the increase in health insurance in relation to inflation and a lack of cost of living adjustments. Amy Whitehead has rightly said that “be well” participation can get us to 2019 rates, but that still means we are \$40/month higher than in 2019/per person. Is this combination of inflation/insurance/COLA tenable over ten years, say?

Horpedahl – To Senator Rice’s point, The \$109 million campaign states endowments for scholarships/faculty support. What does that mean?

Scribner – UCA Now is a complicated combination of immediate and future funds.

Horpedahl – We could raise these dollars to support faculty. We do it for Senators/Public Politicians.

Scribner – People in the community do care about us.

Smith – Senator Hill framed the priority as the budget. In 2013-2014 instruction allocation was 35.55%, ten years later in 2023-2024 instruction allocation is 30.84%. In the last 10 years budget for instruction has risen by about \$500,000. while budget for institutional support has risen about \$5,000,000.

2013-2014 Operating Expenses		
Instruction	\$59,453,972	35.55%
Research	745,105	0.45%
Public Service	2,302,379	1.38%
Academic Support	10,962,877	6.56%
Student Services	6,319,218	3.78%
Institutional Support	13,919,502	8.32%
Physical Plant	13,198,230	7.89%
Scholarships & Awards	19,834,483	11.86%
Mandatory & Non-Mandatory Transfers	4,687,550	2.80%
Auxiliary	35,818,084	21.42%
TOTAL	\$167,241,400	100%

FY14 Annual Budget book pg. 7 (page 22 of the [PDF posted online](#))

2023-2024 Operating Expense		
Instruction	60,021,877	30.84%
Research	657,724	0.34%
Public Service	2,030,844	1.04%
Academic Support	12,679,397	6.52%
Student Affairs	7,052,977	3.62%
Institutional Support	19,825,206	10.19%
Physical Plant	12,879,836	6.62%
Scholarships & Awards	23,768,555	12.21%
Mandatory & Non-Mandatory Transfers	9,380,636	4.82%
Auxiliary	46,307,607	23.80%
TOTAL	194,604,659	100.00%

FY24 Annual Budget book pg. 7 (or page 22 of the [PDF posted online](#))

Booher – Equity in salary; in K-12 the LEARNS act has new teachers making \$50,000 minimum and we have full time faculty making less than that.

Scribner – What’s next?

Hill – A subcommittee Chair could take it on, or the President could charge it.

Hostetter – The Academic Affairs Committee is looking for a new charge – does our committee fit this or it more Faculty Affairs?

Thomas – Faculty Affairs can take it if the Senate wants.

Scribner – Yes, so charged. Replace your current charge. This is what our faculty wants us to do.

Thomas – What exactly is the charge?

Scribner – Make a faculty pay and merit a strategic priority in University Values and Mission with clarity of commitment in the next 5 – 10 years.

Thomas – We will schedule a meeting and have a foundational discussion.

V. Subcommittee Reports

a. FS Committee on Committees – VP Shires

We do need to suspend the rules to add on the additional appointments added to the document since the distribution last week. Would that be possible?

(Thomas – motion, Rose – second, favor – 17, oppose – 1, abstain – 0)

Approve new committee list as presented (Keith – motion, favor – 18, oppose, 0, abstain – 0)

Two openings remain.

b. Academic Affairs – Senator Hostetter

We were charged with exploring a resolution to change teaching in tenure and promotion to teaching and mentorship. We surveyed departments to understand what they are doing now in terms of mentorship, we reviewed last year's resolution on the subject, and we have decided to NOT move forward. Reasons include: **1.** Many departments counted mentorship in service or teaching and we did not wish to change their current practice preferences. **2.** There is the potential for this to be interpreted as a requirement because the charge included changing the title. Being a requirement is not the intention. **3.** The resolution that was done last year has already shown support for mentorship at UCA.

In addition, we support the resolution language being put in the faculty handbook.

Scribner – the Faculty Handbook Committee meets tomorrow. They have this information.

c. Faculty Affairs – Senator Thomas

We have a new charge. I will review the minutes tomorrow and set us up to meet by the end of the week.

d. Diversity, Belonging, Inclusion, and Equity – Senator Mongno

Senator Keith reporting – We have not had a meeting since the last Faculty Senate meeting. Nothing to report at this time.

Invited Guests: none

Action Items:

VIII. Approval of minutes from Tuesday, September 28, 2023 regular meeting of the Faculty Senate

One correction – the Department of Natural Sciences and Mathematics was listed merely as the Department of Mathematics on the first page. Motion to approve with edit. (Motion – Smith, second – Keith, favor – 17, oppose – 0, abstain – 1)

IV. Constituent Concerns

Hostetter – I have had a question about the faculty lounge, will this be for staff as well or only faculty?

Shires – I have also heard a staff member speak about how nice that would be.

Scribner – I have been pondering this as well. Administration is considered staff; do we want them in the faculty lounge? This is Faculty Senate money.

Hill – Administration is considered staff, but some are both. Many hold faculty appointments.

Shires – My viewpoint: We represent faculty; the lounge we fund should follow that logic. It doesn't restrict us from inviting guests or holding inclusive events. We need to sort it out. It is a faculty thing.

Scribner – Most Universities have faculty lounges not faculty and staff lounges. I've met with the physical plant and I'll meet with the micro committee to start getting quotes, etc. Does anyone know how many staff are on campus?

Rudd – I can check and get that for you.

Scribner – It is \$7,000 just to get the key card reader to restrict access.

Hill – Reminder – we are using faculty senate funds. Can we use it for a joint space for faculty and staff or are those faculty only funds?

Scribner – I'll meet with Lori Hudspeth and inquire.

Engle – This is something raised at the Senator/Constituent meeting at the beginning of the semester and the person who raised it does not feel as though it was addressed. It is regarding non-tenure track faculty achieving Emeritus status.

Langster – I am confident that it was addressed in the initial meeting of the year, it was bundled in the tenure process section. I will search the minutes and attach the comments to make the information easier to find.

*Poulter: Non-tenure track faculty on university committees is the topic here. **Some faculty would like us to change the particulars of the tenure process – we will not.** As far as who can serve on committees or senate, those rules are about protection for the faculty willing to step up and deal with difficult or challenging conversations. Tenured faculty have a bit more protection. Each department should discuss how to engage their non-tenure track faculty and allow them to serve. (Faculty Senate Minutes 09-12-23)*

Booher – Two questions regarding the academic schedule:

1. Why is Fall break Thursday and Friday instead of Monday and Tuesday when we have Thursday and Friday off for Thanksgiving break?
2. On the final exam schedule, why are M-W-F 0900 classes tested at 1400 and M-W-F noon classes tested at 1100?

Shires – I was on the calendar committee when we created fall break. I cannot recall all of the details, but I can tell you that it was evaluated carefully and determined that Thursday and Friday were the least overall disruptive.

Langster – I received a letter, I will synopsis it here and attach the full document for everyone's full review. Essentially, this constituent is very concerned about the exorbitant amount of OARS accommodations, the increasing varieties (including telling students how long a test answer needs to be to obtain full points), the lack of support for the graduate faculty with afterhours graduate students, as well as the terse and unhelpful responses of the OARS office when trying to accommodate as many as 1/3 of the class.

Reminders:

- The next regular meeting is on Thursday, October 26, 2023 at 12:45 p.m.
- Spring Planning: Senators should not schedule Tuesday/Thursday courses during Faculty Senate hours

Adjourn by 2:30 p.m.

(Keith – motion, Hill – second, Unanimous vote of approval)

CONSTITUENT CONCERNS

1. Submitted Online via Form

- a. “With no notice to department chairs, 244000 accounts were transferred to the Grants office (even though they are not grants, but rather endowed funds that have MOUs. They simply pre-date the UCA Foundation.) and chairs are no longer receiving statements with the total balances in the endowed portion of the accounts. UCA Foundation accounts used to receive an annual deposit (their share) of the money the Foundation made from investing the endowed portion. The last few years those accounts have received no additional funds (and in fact some scholarships not awarded) because "the market has not been good." There needs to be better transparency in these funds which belong to departments and have MOUs attached to them. The endowed funds with 24400 don't belong in grants. There needs to be an audit of the UCA Foundation to understand what is happening over there.”

- i. ANSWER: Chad Hearne, Executive Director of the UCA Foundation, replied:

1. An email was sent to all fund directors and dept admins in October 2020 regarding the transition from manual monthly emails to Reporting Xpress, where monthly contribution and detail reports have been generated since fall of 2020. I cannot speak to the 244000 accounts referenced, as I am unsure what is being referenced.

2. Due to the downward trend in financial markets since January 2022 (and still not fully recovered nearly two years later), we had endowment funds that did not have sufficient earnings to make the annual endowment spend for FY21 and FY23. However, as of June 30, 2023, most endowments were back above water and we were able to make most endowment spend transfers for FY24. Also, thanks to a planned gift, all scholarships, whether underwater or not, were able to be awarded for 23-24, so we are doing everything in our power to award all scholarships with limited funds/earnings available.
 3. We are audited annually by an independent auditor that was selected in a fully transparent RFQ process and administered by the UCA Foundation Audit Committee made up of our Board of Directors. For the FY22 audit, which is available on our website, we had a clean audit with no findings, recommendations, etc.
2. Submitted Online via Form:
- a. We need to know more about the recently announced changes in titles (and I assume salaries) for administrators tied to admissions. It seems like not a lot of substance but maybe a lot of money for those people. Only the current Director of Admissions seems to be taking on any additional duties. Senate should ask for and then share a report detailing salaries and additional duties for these administrators.
 - i. ANSWER: Provost Poulter replied:
 1. I understand the changes may seem to have come suddenly. However, additional responsibilities and work efforts have been growing for a few years. When Dr. Kevin Thomas was originally hired, he was charged with overseeing four departments which included approximately 60 staff. Since joining UCA, his position has grown to oversee 11 offices and roughly 100 employees, 10 graduate students, 80 student staff and 130 UCA Ambassadors; the Division of Enrollment Services and Student Success has a very similar makeup on staff and departments to Student Affairs. Therefore, the movement in Dr. Thomas' role is essentially aligning the scope of work with title and ability to represent the significant group he oversees. I will also add that the addition of the Office of Student Success, which houses several key programs, as well as developing our Office of Veterans Services to be a fully-functioning (and highly complicated, due to so many federal regulations) office have been huge changes in scope and responsibility.
 2. Moving into UCA Commitment, it was clear that this would require, at the very least, a Director position and, over time, a few additional staff in financial aid. Rather than creating an all-new position, we were able to promote Dr. Bryant, overseeing all aspects of admissions (which also

includes the office of Online, Transfer, and Returning Students, Tours, Marketing and Communication, Institutional scholarship policy, Campus Recruitment events) plus directing the complicated enterprise that is UCA Commitment. UCA Commitment engages several areas of campus, and must be coordinated. These include, but are not limited to: Undergraduate recruitment and admissions, community outreach, financial aid, ADHE, SOAR, Housing, Academic Affairs (e.g., Community-engaged learning, Service Learning, First Year Seminars, Living Learning Communities) First Year Experience, Office of Student Success, Office of Student Life, Career Services, Human Resources, and the Foundation.

3. Finally, Ashley Berry was moved to the Director role for Admissions to ensure continuity of leadership in a volatile hiring environment and impending enrollment cliff. She has proven to be a strong leader for the department and has served as an interim director twice over the last few years while the director was on maternity leave.
 4. I hope this provides some clarity in terms of the scope of work associated with the respective roles.
3. Submitted Online via Form
 - a. Why were we not made aware of this? This appeared in Staff Senate minutes:
 - b. Employee Benefits Committee
 - c. Insurance premiums will increase by 10%. This percentage increase is lower than other companies (15%) that are not self-funded.
 - d. The deductible and out of pocket cost are both going up by \$500. UCA will still pay 74% of the claim costs.
 - e. The discounts for the family health plan for which two UCA employees together on a plan get significant discounts will be going away. The plan discount will remain in effect, but new employees will not receive the discount.
 - f. The GAP plan will remain.
 - i. Although this increase is unavoidable, it is problematic because it equates to a declining net salary for faculty and staff even with COLA increases.
 - g. ANSWER:
 - i. Faculty Senate has expressed this concern to the administration.
 4. Letter submitted to Senator Langster:

I'm reaching out to share a concern that I have. I am curious if the faculty senate has dealt with these concerns in the recent past, or if there is a way for the Faculty Senate to advocate for more faculty support from OARS.

The number of students who have accommodations, and the types of accommodations approved, have risen exponentially over the past several years. This semester we've been told that the Testing Center cannot accommodate our graduate students who take night classes, because the Testing Center is not open in the evenings. We have 6 students in a current class who have been approved for a distraction free environment and additional time. They are in a clinical program and are at clinical sites all day, so they cannot come to campus during the workday. Conversations with OARS have been terse and unhelpful. It has been suggested that we place up to three students in a different classroom to take the exam while the other students take it in the regular classroom. Since the faculty member cannot be in several rooms at the same time, and the Testing Center cannot accommodate our students, we asked if there are proctors available to come assist. There are not. OARS suggested that we ask our administrative assistants to proctor for comp time. Our admins, who are not paid to do these things, do not wish to earn comp time by proctoring exams from 6-9 in the evening. It has been suggested we use other graduate students or student workers. Our graduate assistants and student workers are not paid to work in the evenings, and may at some point in their program be taking the very same exam that they are proctoring.

Fully one-third of the students in one class that I teach have approved accommodations that include 10 distinctly different types of accommodations. These go far beyond additional time, distraction free environment, and recording lectures. These include things like providing the student information on how long (e.g. two paragraphs) an exam answer must be to get full credit, frequent class breaks, as well as allowing increased absences. Of course it is also the faculty's responsibility to provide the student all the content they missed due these accommodations. Our faculty are skilled at working with individuals with all types of abilities, but it seems as though the staff at OARS is increasing the number and type of approved accommodations with little thought as to the appropriateness or reasonableness of the accommodation. I am well-aware of ADA (and IDEA), and spent many years in my career advocating for individuals to receive the services they are due by law. But in K-12, there are special educators and consultants to assist teachers. There is none of that in higher education. I do not feel supported by the OARS office in any way. As a matter of fact, when I've had a concern, I've been treated as if I am the problem, or that I am not willing to accommodate, which is false. If faculty are not given appropriate support, they are much less likely to be able to implement any accommodations appropriately, if at all. Then students lose.

Does the university have plans to increase funding for OARS and provide appropriate training in working with faculty? As a professional who works with these types of issues everyday, I believe that UCA is doing a poor job of supporting students with disabilities and an even worse job meeting the needs of faculty who are teaching these students. There are colleges in Arkansas that are set up with excellent centers for those who learn differently. UCA does not have to reach that level, but it does need to do more to support both faculty and students in this area.

Thank you for hearing my concern.