

**Minutes**  
**UCA Faculty Senate**  
**September 12, 2023**  
**Wingo 315, 12:45 p.m.**

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

**Introduction Items:**

I. Call to order: FS President Scribner at 1245

II. Comments: President Davis

I hope the semester is off to a good start, the summer had several constituent concerns/questions so Provost Poulter and I would like to address those with you now.

1. Funding for research and travel

Poulter: Yes, it is valued. There has been some funding for the University from finance and accounting to supplement budgets, but it ended in the fall of 2018. We have restored some of that and travel funding was disbursed on Friday to the colleges. We will know more about what to expect going forward after our revised budget in October. Some contexts: our employee count is down 7% and our student credit hour production is down 24% all over the last 6-7 years. The travel money is there is support research and clinical activities, not travel expenses for clinical site visits or departmental needs.

2. Salaries

Davis: Salaries have been a priority since I've (President Davis) been here, and we talk about it weekly. We talk about hitting our marks and producing pools of dollars to allow for faculty/staff salaries. The goal is to keep us competitive. We do watch the marketplace; it helps us know where to spend.

Poulter: We understand for instance, that working nurses make a significantly higher amount of money than the nurses who educate them. We will continue to work on passing on small adjustment where we can. The LEARNS act proposal to increase University Nursing Faculty salaries did not fare very well. This kind of thing cannot be legislated. It is really this same situation in many areas/disciplines.

Poulter: Adjunct pay - we pay more than anyone in the state except Fayetteville. What if we raise it \$50 or \$75 etc. What would that look like? It looks like \$3 million a year. This is not a budgeted item; we are looking into it. Also, we are considering adding adjunct to the COLAs.

Davis: Last year we stated that we would prioritize our full-time employees. If faculty wants to prioritize adjunct, we can make that value judgement. Retention is a #1 priority.

### 3. Pro-rated pay for summer school

Poulter: This is an option as always. It is offered when a course would otherwise be cancelled. The faculty has a choice to take that class or not. It is also a department by department decision—so, for instance, a faculty member could have one course highly-enrolled and another less so, but can work with their chair to make both happen with averages. Stephanie Watson will present at academic council on Friday to help department chairs and deans run scenarios and enrollment numbers so as best to balance course offerings and enrollment.

### 4. External Grant Access

Poulter: We have several grant writers who are very active. As they get more certification, they get recruited from other places. In terms of managing award funding, we are finding the very best way to do this. There was 21% more funding this last year.

Poulter: Being able to purchase with grant dollars is related to close dates. The issues are a combination of this including new people in the department. This is a national issue, not just a UCA issue.

### 5. University Finances

Davis: When outside contracts are in place, they are public record. Anyone can see them. There is a dollar threshold that requires the board to see/approve the spend. This is not about secrecy in the lower dollar contracts, it is about efficiency and appropriate use of the board of trustees. Our board must approve any contracts \$500,000 or more. At the UOA system it is \$10 million, in the ASU system it is \$5 million. We are very conservative.

### 6. Equity

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.

## 7. University Mission Concerns

Davis: There seems to be some concern that we are so financially focused. Our finances need to stay sound. We get little from the state in terms of dollars, as most of our funding comes from tuition and dues. Therefore, our budgeting is based on enrollment; money is directly related to student credit hours.

Davis: There is also some concern about our lack of diversity in terms of the faculty/staff we have in place. We all want to hire more diverse faculty.

Davis: We make value judgements about where to hire, when we can hire, and what majors to support. We cannot starve our growing programs to death. We use metrics to be fair at the University, College, and Department levels. We were -1.8 (enrollment ssch) last year, our positive outcomes are still in the negative; we are holding our floor and we adjust to this data point. We budgeted on a -3.97 this year – and we will determine where we are again after summer. This is a conservative method, and it has been successful.

Poulter: It is hard to look at the university this way. When I first took this position, I found it so distasteful to look at students in terms of dollars, but it is necessary to understand the context.

## 8. Core Reviews

Poulter: We are undertaking an external core review – it is a program review essentially. This is a voluntary assessment, not a plan to change our core.

## 9. Blackboard Shells

Scribner: We did not receive notification from CETAL that the blackboard modules were opening. I will meet with Dr. Hawkins to discuss this.

## 10. Insurance

Davis: We changed to Blue Cross/Blue Shield and were assured that what was covered before will be covered still. This has not been consistently the case and when addressed Blue Cross/Blue Shield

said it was simply a coding. It is our understanding that these issues have all been resolved. If it is still happening or there are unresolved issues for anyone, they need to let us know. Contact my office directly, please. We do manage our own health plan and have found that to be beneficial.

#### 11. Looking Beyond Measures and Seeing the Contributions of our Colleagues

Davis: We need to be more aware that we have productivity (graduates) report due to the state. It is a pressure point. We are doing well with these numbers. We are relatively healthy, but we must watch the number of majors and the number of minors. Student credit hour data is very important. While UCA does look at more than just these numbers; the state does not.

Poulter: There is a productivity of the faculty formula, and it includes some specifics such as number of first-generation college students, color, etc. Every degree is evaluated. It is all very complicated.

#### 12. COVID

Davis: We support individual decisions where possible. We have shared data with local colleges and hospitals in the past, but this no longer occurs. We all follow the Arkansas Department of Health and the CDC directives. Both offices are collecting COVID data just as they do with the flu. The months of July, August, and September have looked like this now for four years, it will continue. Our health center is very good, and we support them in every way we can. Our community relationships are also strong.

#### 13. Grub Hub

Poulter: Grub Hub in the student center is an Aramark initiative.

#### 14. Incomplete Grading Policy

Poulter: When an incomplete grade is required, there is a drop-down box on the form to tell you what to do if more time is needed.

#### 15. Scholarships Requiring Textbooks

Poulter: Some students reported to their faculty that a textbook is necessary for them to keep their scholarship. This was thoroughly investigated and determined to be a misunderstanding. The directive provided was about where the textbooks could be purchased using scholarship dollars, not that textbooks are required in order to keep the scholarship.

#### 16. Building Cleanliness and Accessibility

Davis: If there are cleanliness issues, please let the President's office know. It has been very difficult to keep housekeeping staff employed. We do have a contract with an outside organization to help during this difficult time of staffing. We also use them for special event support (accreditation surveys, etc.).

#### 17. Short Denny Parking Lot

Davis: There will be a variety of parking space options there (White, Yellow, Purple, and meter). This will also serve as great parking for events at the Snow Fine Arts Center and other campus events, perhaps in the student center. The building was not rebuilt because we are simply not in the need of more residential space at this time. We likely will be in the future, and I suspect this is exactly where a building will be erected. In the meantime, the building that was there was way too expensive to repair and making the best use of the space right now is to utilize parking.

#### 18. Accessibility

Davis: There is a report that the sidewalks outside of where the apartments were torn down are non-usable. I will investigate this today (in person); I have not been by there.

#### 19. Provost Search

Davis: We can never truly replace Dr. Poulter as Provost. We will, however; conduct a search for someone to be the provost. A committee will be formed very soon, and we will bring in 3-5 candidates for formal interview. We look forward to this process, it is always fun. We will start in just a few weeks.

#### Q&A

Shires – I'd like to ask about the productivity ratio, the concept. Act 747 put that into place to ding funding for universities who take longer than four years to get students through, is that correct?

A – Davis: it's still an enrollment formula and the ability to "hit the marks" (goals) on time does offer more credit to the university for that degree.

Shires – So should we discourage multiple minors as they may cause a student to need to finish in more than four years?

A – Davis: Some of our operations are inefficient; we must accept it. We know where those inefficiencies are, and we point them out. We do what is best for each student even when it costs us. We must pay attention to it, but we seek balance.

Poulter: If we determine the inefficiencies are overwhelming, we may have a structure problem – it's a quality check.

Dunlap – If a student goes past 120 hours but completes in four years, are we "punished"?

A – Poulter: No, STEM and other program are weighted differently to support the hours they require.

Okoli – The UCA Commitment is wonderful, what is our commitment to faculty who oversee/develop service learning?

A – Davis: On the 19<sup>th</sup> of September there will be a forum to explain it all. Basically, there will be work study options (these are like the student workers) and a service component (this can be done anywhere. Although at UCA or in Faulkner County would be great).

Poulter: I would love to come and talk about this sometime. We are doing some service learning already and we need to evaluate how we can do it more systematically.

Mongno – Will we offer service learning during the summer for students?

A – Poulter: Dr. Lesley Graybeal (program coordinator for service learning at UCA) is on the working group. I would email Dr. Graybeal directly with your questions.

Smith – Adjunct pay; their contributions are high. Is there a way to make legible the impact the adjunct faculty have? Can we measure how we value them in terms of impact on students as opposed to salaries?

A – Poulter: We do a lot of things that other Universities do not:

- We provide a voice on the senate

- We have an adjunct academy

- We provide offices, parking, etc.

- We are committed to try to find ways to show their value

- The greatest value comes from the department itself and how they welcome and know the adjuncts, we can look at student evals, but still the greatest value is department acknowledgement

### III. Comments: Provost Poulter

See above as Provost Poulter and President Davis split the constituent concerns for feedback.

### IV. Comments: President Scribner

Welcome back, I do hope your summer was good. Today's weather was a welcome reprieve. Welcome to our new senators: Zach Smith from CAHSS who is here, and Sam Colbert who represents our part-time faculty but could not be with us today.

Title VI - When constituents bring you concerns, remember there are some things we cannot address, they are simply not our role as senators. We should never receive a complaint with personal information (especially if the personal information does not belong to the person presenting the complaint). Any issues that arise can be forwarded to Adam Rose. They are not ours with which to deal.

Community – We are still trying to rebuild our networks after COVID. The faculty center will be something we can use for this. We have a space in McCastlain with multiple rooms we can use. We need an ad hoc working group for planning. We have a nice to work with. We must get faculty here. Our faculty is full of loud voices, disengaged voices, and those in between. The faculty center will be a great space to bring people together. I also see it as a wonderful place to bring our visiting/guest speakers to introduce them to us, the faculty who so proudly represent UCA. We are starting a culture with our new faculty committee.

Budget – I met with Chad Hearne at the foundation about our money. He has recommended we move excess funds to endowment and a \$2000/year scholarship available.

Q&A – no questions

#### V. Subcommittee Reports

##### a. FS Committee on Committees – VP Shires

- a. Thank you to all the members of the committee. Included in your handouts today are two reports. The original one that was sent last week via email and an updated one that is marked (UD) for clarity. The UD list encompasses the original list. An \* indicates the name to be an original nominee, names without an \* are new additions.
- b. I do need to ask about the MLK breakfast committee; who do I contact about this?  
Greg Pelts [gpelts@uca.edu](mailto:gpelts@uca.edu) 501-852-2999
- c. In some cases, we don't know who is replacing who so we don't know the length of the assigned terms. In other cases, we need to ensure the terms stagger so member do not all turn over at the same time. We are sorting that out.
  - Motion to approve original COC list released last week with the agenda (Shires)
  - Motion to suspend the rules (Scriber – motion, Rose – second, favor – 16, oppose – 1, abstain – 0)
  - Motion to consider and approve the updated list
  - Discussion – can we have time to review this or is there a dire need? A – the committees need to get started on their work.  
(Shires, favor – 17, oppose – 0, abstain – 0)

##### b. Academic Affairs – Senator Hostetter

- a. We met last week to consider the provost's charge of changing teaching categories of the tenure track faculty to teaching and mentoring. We discovered that some departments already count mentoring in different categories (some in teaching, some in service). We are going to gather more information from colleges and departments with a google poll to the chairs asking about existing practice. We will analyze this data and meet again next week.

- c. Faculty Affairs – Senator Thomas
  - a. We will be scheduling our first meeting today. Suggestions for a charge are being accepted.
- d. Diversity, Belonging, Inclusion, and Equity – Senator Mongno
  - a. Charge – Survey faculty on matters of morale, diversity, inclusion, belonging and equity and to see what is happening with DBIE in other institutions in the state.

**Invited Guests:**

VI. Dr. Joan Simon, Psychology (DBIE Week Update)

I have a suggestion for your DBIE committee, could you also survey the DBIE representatives in each department? Their responses may or may not be different from that of the chairs.

I'm here to promote University DBIE week. Thank you to President Davis and Provost Poulter for their continued support. This is our second annual DBIE fair and it will be held October 2 – 6 with a fair in front of the student center on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and special speakers throughout the week. Please promote this in your classes and your departments. This is for everyone at UCA. There are faculty specific events as well. We are also seeking sponsors to buy tables at the fair. Of course, departments and UCA clubs can have tables for free. Tables are also free to any outside agency who offer a sponsorship of the event. Contact Elizabeth Gayfield for questions or sponsorships: [egayfield@uca.edu](mailto:egayfield@uca.edu)

VII. Dr. Jacob Held, Philosophy/Assistant Provost of Academic Assessment and General Education (Student Evaluation Update)

With the retirement of Dr. Jonathan Glenn, I have been handed the responsibility of managing the student evaluations for all classes. There remains the issues of low enrolled classes being subject to no evaluative reports because when the enrollment is under 5 (the threshold), the reports are not released. We recognize that student feedback is needed for both course improvement and faculty evaluations/tenure review. We have some options:

1. Remove the threshold and allow all courses to release a report. It will be necessary to add a disclaimer letting students know that if they are evaluating a course with low enrollment it may be possible for the instructor to determine who provided what feedback.
2. Stop sending surveys to low enrolled courses.

Please know that nothing will be done without running this by the SGA. In addition, if we make a change and it doesn't work out, we can always go back to what we were doing before.

Discussion –

Chen – Can we create a third option, removing the threshold AND remove the highest and lowest scoring in each course?

A – The data cannot be cleaned before it is released. We would not want that responsibility.



Thomas – Would it be possible to combine all of the low enrollment courses into one report, thus combining the comments and making discernments about commenters more challenging?

A – No, the students would have to get two surveys, one for the first “job or product” and the second for the second “job or product”. We would then have to ensure only the second “job or product” was released as a grouping and not the initial individual course responses for those under the threshold. It’s simply too laborious.

Q – What percent of faculty are affected?

A – I’m unsure of an exact number but I can tell you this is not a new problem. Dr. Gatto has several. These faculty never receive feedback.

Dunlap – Can we put the disclaimer on the low enrollment classes only? I’m worried if it is on all courses that the overall evaluating will decrease.

A – No, it’s all or nothing.

Hill – This impression of questionable anonymity is a problem. We do not want the students to think they are being bribed for positive evaluations when we offer bonus points or other benefits to the course.

**Action Items:**

VIII. Constituent Concerns

Shires – Faculty have asked about other universities extending out of state tuition waivers. Do we compete with that? Respond to that?

Poulter – No, we have in-state tuition for all contiguous states.

**Reminders:**

- The next regular meeting is on September 20, 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.**

(Okoli - motion, Thomas - second, Unanimous vote of approval)