

FACULTY SENATE

Minutes
April 28, 2020
(via Zoom)

Participating (Attending):

Signed in as Present: Adam Martin, Amanda McKendree, Anna Geltzer, Annie Coleman, Asis Martinez, Ben Heller, Ben Radcliff, CJ Jones, Cody Brockelmeyer, Daewon Sun, Dan Johnson, Doug Hall, John Deak, John Lubker, John Michel, Katie Bugyis, Lira Yoon, Mary Frandsen, Molly Walsh, Panos Antsaklis, Paolo Carozza, Paul McGinn, Paulinus Odozor, Phillip Sloan, Randy Harrison, Richard Sheehan, Richard Williams, Ron Metoyer, Samir Younés, Shahriar Mobashery, Shaun Lee, Shauna Williams, Tom Nowak, Tom Stober, Xiaoshan Yang

Not Signed in as Present: Anna Simon, Connor Mullen (emailed; excused), David Richter, David Thomas, Eric Sims, Joe Urbany, La Donna Forsgren, Mei-Chi Shaw, Meng Wang, Mita Ramani, Patrick Deneen, Patrick McGuire, Timothy Bays

1. Professor Ben Heller, Senate Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

As a preliminary matter, Professor Thomas Stober made a motion for a standing rule to (a) allow the Secretary to record Senate meetings for the sake of preparing minutes (not for general circulation or posting), and (b) with the privilege recording be able to suspended by majority vote for all or part of future meetings. This motion was seconded and approved without objection.

2. Opening Prayer by Professor Ron Metoyer.
3. Approval of the minutes of March 3, 2020: the draft minutes previously circulated were approved without objection.
4. The Chair's Report (Ben A. Heller)
 - (a) Professor Heller began with the question of whether the Senate was comfortable in making its meetings open to all faculty (as non-voting guests). He also asked about the specific relevant example: should we extend a standing invitation to the new provost-elect to attend future meetings? A discussion ensued, in which some worried that having administrative guests might inhibit free discussion. It was observed that the existing rules cover these matters. Thus, the By-Laws specify that, unless the Senate is in executive session, its meetings are open to all visitors, subject to limitations on their participation (i.e. visitors may speak only at the invitation of the presiding officer, and they cannot, of course, vote); should the Senate wish to proceed without guests, it could do so by the simple expedient of voting to be executive session. It was decided without opposition that Professor Heller would extend the standing invitation to the provost-elect.

- (b) Professor Heller initiated a discussion of three questions relating to the COVID-19 crisis that had been circulated before the meeting:
- (1) What are the short-term faculty concerns that have not received the attention they deserve?
 - (2) What should be the role of the Faculty Senate in a crisis like this one? How can the Senate organize to support faculty more effectively now and in the new Fall semester?
 - (3) What long-term lessons can we derive from the crisis relating to the faculty and its place in governance at ND?

A discussion ensued. Professor Heller noted that he had been invited by the current provost to nominate faculty members for the advisory committees about the crisis, and that in response, after consulting with others, he provided several names (with special attention to diversity across colleges, gender, race, and rank). The provost, Heller noted, had told him in reply that some of those nominated would be asked to be on the committee. Others expressed concerns about various practical matters related to closing and re-opening of the University. The most discussed matters concerned (a) the inadequacies in the University policy toward re-opening labs, and (b) the details about how/whether we would be returning to face-to-face teaching, with particular emphasis on the importance of safety, and the process the University will use in considering requests from the faculty (or staff) for exemptions from face-to-face teaching for health reasons, (c) how the crisis might affect tenure clocks and promotion decisions (and the salary/benefit issues implied), and (d) how graduate students might be affected.

Provost Burish, who was attending the meeting as a visitor, responded to these and related concerns in a general fashion, precise answers not being possible given that planning was just beginning and that many essential decisions that would in turn effect much else had not yet been made. He recognized that the matters at hand were important and that administration is sincerely and diligently working on solutions; he also noted that faculty are involved in the process in a routinized fashion, and that individual input was welcome at all stages/points in the process.

There was general agreement that Senate wished to express its appreciation of the University's commendable treatment of students (especially international students) and staff during the crisis.

5. Memorial Resolutions

The Senate mourns the passing of two emeriti faculty: [Professor Edward R. Trubac](#) and [Rev. Ernest Bartell, CSC](#).

6. Election of Senate Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretaries and Treasurer)

Professor Paul McGinn presented the nominating's committees recommendations for election to the Senate's administrative positions for the incoming Senate. Nominations from the floor were also welcome. The Senate voted without opposition to elect Thomas Stober as Chair, C.J. Jones as Vice-Chair, Randal Harrison and Amanda McKendree as Secretaries, and Shauna Williams as Treasurer,.

7. Subcommittee Reports and Election Results for 2020-2021 Committee Chairs:

Academic Affairs (Thomas Stober)

It was announced that the committee had postponed its analysis of the faculty experience survey, given the current crisis.

The committee reported it was not presently ready to name their chair for the new Senate.

Administrative Affairs (Daniel Johnson)

The committee had nothing to report, but it was nominating its current chair, Daniel Johnson, for the position. This nomination was approved without opposition.

Benefits, Budget and Infrastructure (Paul McGinn)

The committee's chair noted that they had postponed a planned meeting with ND's benefits office until the fall, given the current crisis.

The committee also nominated its current chair, Paul McGinn, to continue in that position. This was approved without opposition.

Student Affairs (Molly Walsh)

The committee noted it had nothing to report at this time, aside from nominating Molly Walsh to continue as chair of the committee. This was approved without opposition.

8. Ongoing Business (Sustainability and Earth Day Activities):

- a. The [2019 Sustainability Annual Report](#) is now online. It is interactive and Senate members can look through it and distribute it freely to their constituencies.
- b. Earth Day will be 50 years old on April 22 - here is a link to the [Take Ten for the Planet](#) initiative.

9. New Business:

Paul McGinn observed that there is an award for exceptional service to the Senate ("in recognition of meritorious service over several years)." He reported that his committee gratefully awarded the honor to Professor Ben Heller, current Chair, in recognition of his of tireless dedication to, and his exemplary accomplishments in service of, the Senate.

Phil Sloan reported that the website for the new "Association of Retired Faculty and Professional Staff" (generously funded through the provost) is up and running: <https://retirees-emeriti.nd.edu>

10. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:58.