Franklin College Faculty Senate

Minutes of the meeting on Mar. 20, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. in room 213 of the Miller Learning Center, Mary Bedell presiding.

Members Present: John Achee, Maor Bar-Peled, Mary Bedell, Thomas Biggs, Brian Binder, Josh Bynum, Tom Cerbu, Katie Chapman, Elizabeth Davis, Suzanne Ellenberger, Jorge Escalante, Lisa Fusillo, Chad Howe, Richard Hubbard, Maria Hybinette, Takahiro Ito, Kristin Kundert, Jain Kwon, Ming-Jun Lai, Gary Lautenschlager, Megan Lutz, Silvia Moreno, Rielle Navitski, Chris Pizzino, Lakshmish Ramaswamy, Jennifer Rice, Mike Roden, Rohan Sikri, Leslie Gordon Simons, Jiyeon So, Steve Soper, Qun Zhao.

Proxies: Scott Nesbit (for Kevin Jones), Saar Hersonsky (for Dan Nakano), Laura German (for Don Nelson), Hong Qiu (Lianchun Wang).

Members not present: Brian Condie, Betina Kaplan, Reid Messich, Nanette Spina, Phillip Stancil, Sunkoo Yuh.

Guests: Linda Davis (Clarke County School Board, Bethlehem Cemetery Society), Prof. Chana Kai Lee (History), Prof. Laurie Reitsema (Anthrolopogy), Lee Shearer (*Athens Banner-Herald*), Fred Smith, Sr. (Athens Area Black History Bowl), Prof. Julie Velásquez Runk (Anthropology).

Approval of the minutes of the Feb. 20, 2018 meeting: Approved without corrections.

President Mary Bedell's Remarks

President Bedell briefly commented upon the letter she received, shortly after the Feb. 20 Faculty Senate meeting, from Michael Raeber, General Counsel in UGA's Office of Legal Affairs. First, having read Mr. Raeber's letter and consulted the Georgia Open Meetings Act, President Bedell proposed that the Faculty Senate keep all remaining meetings during this academic year open to the public. Second, President Bedell reiterated the Faculty Senate's desire for a forum for open discussion of faculty governance and other issues, as expressed in the following summary of the Faculty Senate's first closed meeting on Jan. 23, 2018: "Many Senators expressed a strong desire to have more open and informal discussion," and "a strong interest in the Senate addressing a wider range of issues affecting faculty and students in the Franklin College." President Bedell suggested that the Faculty Senate may wish to investigate ways to conduct official business and have open discussions in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, following a careful review of said Act and a thorough discussion of what the Faculty Senate hopes to achieve. President Bedell then opened the topic for questions. Asked how the Faculty Senate's closed meetings came to Mr. Raeber's attention, President Bedell replied that she did not know.

Dean Alan Dorsey's Remarks

Dean Dorsey reminded members of the Senate that this academic year's final Faculty Senate meeting in April will be followed by Dean Dorsey's State of the [Franklin] College address.

Dean Dorsey then provided some information regarding enrollment and admissions. The calendar year 2017 marks the third consecutive year that undergraduate enrollment at the Franklin College is up. Preliminary enrollment figures for the Spring 2018 semester also show an increase (of 3%) over the previous year, in keeping with a general trend at the University of Georgia. Regarding admissions of new students, Dean Dorsey reported that there were approximately 26,500 applicants; 12,700 offered admission; and an expected entering class of about 5,700 students. The admitted students boast a high average GPA, a high average number of Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate courses, and a high average ACT score.

Dean Dorsey also drew the Senators' attention to the interesting guest speakers attending two recent meetings of department heads. In January, Janyce Dawkins of the Equal Opportunity Office spoke about Title IX compliance policies and procedures; and in early March, Patrick Winter from the Office of Instruction spoke about the process of making admissions decisions.

Finally, Dean Dorsey informed the Senate about two fact-finding initiatives. Senior Associate Dean Kecia Thomas has reached out to faculty to see who might be interested in serving on various committees (including Faculty Senate committees); to date she has received approximately 200 responses. Later this spring, Beth Woods will be conducting an IT service review (together with the Carl Vinson Institute); among the subsets of faculty she will be reviewing and contacting is the Faculty Senate.

Dean Dorsey then opened the floor for questions. Asked about how Faculty Senators might represent whole departments in the IT review, Dean Dorsey explained that other stakeholder groups including department heads will also be contacted.

Committee Reports

Academic Standards Committee. Nothing to report: two petitions pending.

Curriculum Committee. Approved: 16 new courses, 12 course changes, and 5 Bulletin changes (various departments).

Executive Committee: Nothing to report.

Committee on Faculty Affairs. Nothing to report.

Committee on Planning & Evaluation. Nothing to report.

New Business

Continued discussion of the University response to the community regarding the Baldwin Hall expansion. Prof. Laurie Reitsema used a series of slides to review the Baldwin Hall expansion issue from the discovery of the gravesite in 2015 down to the present, then provided a second chronological review of the University's response to the concerns of the African American community of Athens. She also noted the recommendations made during this period by UGA faculty and other experts, and pointed out that the article published last summer in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* ("Buried History") held up UGA as an example of how *not* to handle such issues. Finally, she listed a series of ways in which the University might work together with the African American community from this point forward. After hearing a pair of questions from Faculty Senators regarding the prospects of DNA testing of the Baldwin Hall

remains, Prof. Reitsema and Senate President Bedell ceded the floor to two guests from the African American community of Athens, Fred Smith, Sr. and Linda Davis, to hear their perspectives on the issue. Mr. Smith stated that at the heart of the University's failure to communicate well with the African American community was a problem of disrespect, including a failure to offer public recognition (e.g., in the form of an official apology) that it was wrong to destroy a cemetery to expand a building. Mr. Smith also stated that it remained unclear what the University's commitment to the creation of a "story map" on the cemetery and seed grants for further research really entailed. Ms. Davis expressed her hope that UGA and the wider community will find a way to move forward, but she also confessed that she found it disheartening that there is still no record of the contribution made by African Americans to the building of Athens. She is concerned by the appearance of systemic disrespect by the University towards the African American community, and strongly proposes that the University show its commitment to doing further research on the history of African Americans on campus and in town. Senators expressed their appreciation for the two guests' contributions, and committed themselves to further discussion at the final Faculty Senate meeting of the year in April. To help prepare for this third discussion of the issue in April, a motion was made to create an ad hoc committee of Senators, tasked with producing a statement on the University's response to the Baldwin Hall expansion for consideration by the entire Senate.

Discussion of non-tenure track faculty. Megan Lutz, a lecturer in the Statistics Department, brought to the Senate's attention the fact that non-tenure track faculty – including adjunct teachers, lecturers, as well as clinical faculty and librarians (all told making up ca. 42% of the instructional staff at UGA) – are excluded from a number of teaching opportunities and awards, including the chance to serve as supervisors of CURO student projects, the ability to teach First Year Odyssey (FYO) courses, and many if not most teaching awards. Dr. Lutz expressed the non-tenure track faculty's desire for clearer promotion and hiring guidelines, and more equitable representation at Franklin College. Associate Dean Kecia Thomas noted that non-tenure track faculty are eligible for some teaching awards, and that the Office of Faculty Affairs has two task forces on academic professionals and lecturers. A Senator asked whether Dr. Lutz has looked at this issue in light of what our peer and aspirational institutions do in this regard.

Discussion of deletion of courses not offered in five years. Prof. Rielle Navitski of the Theatre and Film Studies Department expressed her concern with the University's sudden and rushed determination to delete all courses that have not been taught in the past five years. Although faculty were invited to make the case for retention of certain of these courses to their department heads, they were not given much time to fulfill this request. Furthermore, it is already apparent that mistakes have been made (i.e., some courses that should not be at risk appear on the list of courses to be deleted). In addition, the new policy is likely to create practical problems. Prof. Navitski provided the example of new faculty hires in areas that have not been covered for years, who arrive on campus only to find that the courses they have been hired to teach have been deleted from the course listings. Discussion followed, during which other Senators and Dean Dorsey expressed their shared interest in reducing the number of course listings – above all, to help students and advisors make clear sense of their realistic course selection options – without creating unnecessary problems of the type laid out by Prof. Navitski. Prof. Navitski and other Senators also expressed their larger concern that this type of rushed,

unilateral decision, made without soliciting any faculty input, is representative of a more general deficit of faculty governance at UGA. Prof. Navitski expressed all of the concerns related to this new policy in a statement, previously voted upon and approved by the Academic Standards Committee, respectfully requesting that the policy be reversed, and that academic units conduct their own expedited review of courses not offered in the past five years, take the initiative to eliminate courses if there is no reasonable expectation that they will be offered in future semesters, and share the results of their review and actions with the Office of Instruction. A vote was called to approve this statement; the result of the vote was 21 'yes' and 2 'no' with no abstentions.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven Soper
Franklin College Senate Secretary and Senator for History