

Faculty Senate Notes

November 1, 2024, 3 - 5 PM

Location: Egan Library 211 and via Zoom

Brian Blitz, President	x	Charmaine Lewis, Natural Sciences	x
Glenn Wright, Past President <i>(see Soc. Sci.)</i>		Glenn Wright, Social Sciences	x
Ali Ziegler, President-Elect	x	Jennifer Ward, Library	x
Mike Boyer, Business	x	X'unei Lance Twitchell, Juneau	x
Robin Gilcrist, Career Ed	x	Joel Markis, Sitka	x
Kevin Spink, Education	x	Kasia Polanska, Ketchikan	x
Andrea Dewees, Humanities	x	Carin Silkaitis, Interim Provost	x

A. Parrish, Provost's Office, Recorder

Guests: P. Schirmer

- I. **Call to order** – B. Blitz called the meeting to order shortly after 3:00.
- II. **Roll call** – (3:01)
- III. **Approval of agenda** – (3:03) *G. Wright moved to approve the agenda. J. Spink seconded. The motion passed with no objections.*
- IV. **Approval of [October minutes](#)** – (3:05) *G. Wright moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. K. Polanska seconded. The motion passed with no objections.*
- V. **Announcements/Questions**
 - A. **[UA Employee Experience Feedback website](#)** – (3:07) B. Blitz noted that all employees should have a link to this year's survey in their email, and that there is about a month to complete the form. It was sent by UA Human Resources, and there is last year's data on their website.
 - B. **The sabbatical issue (this is no longer an issue as of 10/31)** – (3:08) A member of the provost search committee has applied for a sabbatical, which includes a review by the interim provost. This poses a potential conflict of interest, so the faculty member was removed from the search committee by the chancellor. It is not yet known if the faculty member will be replaced. J. Markis reported that B. Barth is also no longer on the committee due to a conflict. J. Markis will now co-chair the search with L. Klein. The other two faculty members are J. Amundson and E. Wall. The bursar, R. Jacobus, is the other staff member. Senators discussed the composition and timeframe of the committee. Ketchikan would like to have representation. It was noted that there is no Indigenous member of the committee. B. Blitz will follow up with the chancellor to see if adding more members is possible at this time.

VI. Curriculum Proposals

A. Initial Approvals –

1. **OCAN 100**
2. **NWCA 260 (Humanities GER)**
3. **BIOL 365 (for Integrative Behavioral Health degree)**
4. **Designated Emphasis, BLA**
5. **Indigenous Studies Minor**
6. **Public Administration, MPA**
7. **Integrative Behavioral Health [BA](#) & [BS](#), BHS 385, BHS 494, BHS 499**
(This was approved at the October meeting)

(3:16) P. Schirmer informed the senators that we are not to use the word ‘college’ with regard to Outer Coast as they are not so recognized by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE). P. Schirmer provided background on the priority of the listed proposals and why some of them were resubmitted.

G. Wright moved to approve the eleven listed proposals for first Faculty Senate (FS) review. A. Dewees and M. Boyer seconded. The eleven proposals were approved for first FS review with no objections.

B. Final Approvals –

1. **BHS 101, BHS 140, BHS 201, BHS 480**

(3:20) *G. Wright moved to approve the four listed proposals for final Faculty Senate (FS) review. L. Twitchell seconded. The four proposals were approved for final FS review with no objections.*

VII. Old Business

A. Career Education: Revisions to the Course Substitution Form – (3:22)

Senators discussed both the original form and the draft form prepared by G. Wright at the previous meeting which incorporates two suggested changes. A. Dewees moved to vote on the two suggested changes separately. *L. Twitchell moved to approve changing the signature line in the second box to read “substitute” rather than “original” and G. Wright seconded.* Senators discussed variations on changes to that line and to other parts of the form. After discussion, *the motion was amended so that the header for the narrative at the top of the form be amended to include the word “Substituted” before the word “For” and also to amend the signature line in the second box to change the word “original” to “substituted”.* *The motion passed.*

Senators discussed the third signature box on the original form. *L. Twitchell moved that the third box be removed. J. Markis seconded.* The motion passed.

B. Curriculum Proposal Process for Career Ed (I don’t know if there is anything new) – (3:49) G. Wright and J. Markis reported that progress is being made and there will be a document related to this topic ready for the next meeting.

C. Low Textbook Cost (LTC) course marking (Any comments?) – (3:50) C. Lewis brought questions from the Natural Sciences department, and B. Blitz was able to relay the following information from J. Lamb. Even if a textbook can be used for two or more

courses in a sequence, the full cost must be used for any course that requires the text. Also, there is no difference in the cost related to the number of credits. Faculty are encouraged to let prospective students know if a text can be used for more than one course.

VIII. New Business

- A. Bookstore Transition for UA System – (3:56)** C. Silkaitis noted that the transition to the new vendor is complete, and students are using the new bookstore this spring. Faculty will begin using the online selection portal for the fall semester. At this time faculty are being asked to still provide information about low cost and no cost course sections as part of the Proposed Course Offering (PCO) process for tracking purposes. However, J. Lasinski says we will be able to build that information into the textbook ordering system with the new textbook provider.
- B. Adjunct Hiring Processes – (4:00)** The process for hiring adjuncts was discussed. As long as [the approved process](#) is followed, there should not be any problems.
- C. Faculty Evaluating Deans/Directors – (4:09)** J. Ward described the process so far for developing an annual tool to gather feedback from faculty about their deans and directors. We are on track to solicit the first round of this data in the spring. Whether or not new deans/directors should be included in the initial round was discussed. The provost's office will provide the funding for the Qualtrics survey, which costs \$11 per administrator.

Interim Provost Silkaitis described the current annual process for administrators and staff to be formally evaluated. The information gathered from faculty would be provided to the provost as part of that regular review of the deans/directors. C. Silkaitis noted that all employees have a six-month probation period during which new staff and administrative employees can be released without cause. *J. Ward moved that FS move forward with the dean/director evaluation process and provide the provost with results in spring 2025. A. Dewees seconded. The motion passed.*

J. Ward will provide follow-up information at an FS meeting next semester.

- D. Simple Syllabus status? [Information from CELT](#) – (4:25)** The linked information from R. Broussard and M. Haavig of [CELT](#) was discussed. C. Silkaitis believes Simple Syllabus is being purchased with CELT grant funds. Potential concerns were raised about the cost and the amount of faculty input in the decision-making process. Potential benefits were also discussed, including meeting accreditation and disability standards. K. Spink noted that the School of Education (SOE) has been discussing this and had a recent presentation about it. SOE is planning to pilot the product this spring.

Senators discussed related problems with the BlackBoard learning management system (LMS). Interim Provost Silkaitis noted that our current contract with BlackBoard will expire soon. Faculty are encouraged to switch to BlackBoard Ultra if they have not yet done so. K. Polanska shared that Ultra is much better than regular BlackBoard, yet only a small percentage of faculty have made the switch.

Increasing costs for BlackBoard and for the alternate Canvas LMS used by UAF were discussed. C. Silkaitis will attend a demo of D2L, another LMS recommended by A. Richards. K. Polanska expressed willingness to participate in that demo.

IX. FS President's Report:

A. Last call for Faculty Initiative Fund reviewers for 2024-25 (review in November) – (4:44) B. Blitz reported that three faculty members from UAS have agreed to serve as reviewers. More are welcome if there is interest. Please review the Faculty Alliance priorities linked below.

B. October 5 was Faculty Alliance Retreat (2024-25 Priorities)

X. [Interim Provost's Report](#) – (4:45) C. Silkaitis will find out from J. Lasinski when the current BlackBoard contract expires. They reported that accreditation tasks are on track. The Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review (PRFR) drafts have been received and feedback has been provided back to the authors. The revised drafts will be compiled into a preliminary report. The goal is to get the preliminary report submitted in early December to NWCCU, who will provide feedback. The formal report submission deadline is March 1.

XI. Committee Reports

A. [CELT report](#) and the [UA Software Request Process](#) – (4:47) The written CELT report provides detailed information about the transition to BlackBoard Ultra and also about Simple Syllabus.

Senators discussed the makeup of CELT. R. Gilcrist, K. Polanska, and M. Wegner are on the committee while M. Haavig holds the liaison position. Senators reported difficulty getting responses from the liaison. B. Blitz will follow up with an email.

With regard to the software request process, B. Blitz and G. Wright noted that it has become extremely cumbersome, and many groups are aware of the problem. Faculty Alliance will bring forward the faculty concerns about this problem.

B. Graduate Committee (no report) – (4:51)

C. Research and Creative Activity: [URECA applications](#) due November 4th – (4:51) C. Lewis reported that the applications are currently due on Monday. Very few have been received so far, and the committee is considering extending the deadline.

D. Sustainability Committee Report: The committee discussed various initiatives, including a composting project, the potential for a greenhouse, and the need for better waste management and recycling practices. They also explored ways to encourage students to reduce their use of single-use plastics and considered the idea of a community garden on campus. Lastly, they discussed the need to maintain connections with other campus entities. – (4:52)

XII. Adjournment – (4:53) *G. Wright moved to adjourn the meeting. M. Boyer seconded. The meeting adjourned with unanimous consent shortly after 5:00.*

Next Meetings: December 6, February 7, March 7, April 4, and May 2.