

**FACULTY COUNCIL**  
**Tuesday, August 31, 2021**  
**3:30 – 5:15 pm**  
**Executive Boardroom (2390), University Capitol Centre and Zoom**

**MINUTES**

- Councilors Present: D. Andersen, D. Anderson, J. Buckley, M. Cunningham-Ford, A. Curtius, L. Erdahl, L. Glass, K. Hegarty, B. Janssen, L. Joseph, M. Kivlighan, A. Merryman, N. Nisly, M. Pizzimenti, E. Welder.
- Officers Present: M. Lehan Mackin, T. Marshall, A. Rodríguez-Rodríguez, J. Yockey.
- Councilors Excused: C. Bradley, N. Brogden.
- Councilors Absent: None.
- Guests: S. Campo (Graduate College), M. Gardinier (Emeritus Faculty Council), L. Geist (Office of the Provost), D. Kremzar (University Human Resources), W. Loney (Family Issues Charter Committee), B. Lovan (*Daily Iowan*), H. Mineart (Staff Council), K. Perez (*Daily Iowan*), T. Villhauer (Office of the Dean of Students), L. Zaper (Faculty Senate Office).

I. Call to Order – President Marshall called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. The Council welcomed several new Councilors: Dawn Anderson, Anny Curtius, Kay Hegarty, and Emily Welder.

II. Approvals

- A. Meeting Agenda – Professor Janssen moved and Professor Joseph seconded that the agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- B. Faculty Council Minutes (April 13, 2021) – Professor Kivlighan moved and Professor Joseph seconded that the minutes be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- C. Draft Faculty Senate Agenda (September 14, 2021) – Professor Hegarty moved and Professor Janssen seconded that the draft agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- D. Committee Appointments (Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez, Chair, Committee on Committees)
  - Anny Curtius (French & Italian) to fill the unexpired term of Teresa Treat (Psychological & Brain Sciences) on the Faculty Council, 2021-22
  - Andrew Hollingworth (Psychological & Brain Sciences) to fill the unexpired term of Teresa Treat (Psychological & Brain Sciences) on the Faculty Senate, 2021-22
  - John Murry (Marketing) to fill a vacancy on the Faculty Senate, 2021-24
  - Kay Hegarty (Accounting) to replace Gary Russell (Marketing) on the Faculty Council, Fall 2021

Professor Nisly moved and Professor Andersen seconded that the committee appointments be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

### III. New Business

- *Family Issues Charter Committee Recommendation (Diana Kremzar, Manager, UI Family Services, University Human Resources, and Wendy Loney, Co-chair, Family Issues Charter Committee)*

Ms. Loney indicated that she is a staff co-chair of the Family Issues Charter Committee (FICC) along with Constance Wade. Ms. Kremzar explained that her role with FICC is to serve as the liaison between the committee and University Human Resources (UHR). The UHR unit that she directs, Family Services, receives and takes action on recommendations from FICC. Ms. Loney further explained that FICC membership is comprised of faculty, staff, and students. FICC is governed by the university's General Charter and the charge to the committee is to *review and make recommendations about the development and implementation of programs, plans, and policies that promote a positive climate for families of faculty, staff, and students through the life span and to review and make recommendations about the implementation of university child or dependent care programs and plans.*

During the 2020-21 academic year, Ms. Loney continued, FICC developed two recommendations. The first recommendation calls for extending the terms of students who serve on the committee. Currently, student members serve one-year terms, while faculty and staff members serve three-year terms (this is standard for all charter committees). FICC would like to extend the terms of their students to two years, to maintain the committee's continuity while working on student-related family issues. The second recommendation focuses on revision of language within the current parental leave policy. The committee would like to make the policy language both more inclusive and easier to interpret. Ms. Loney indicated that proposed revisions to the policy language would support surrogates and surrogacy; bereavement leave to include death of an infant, miscarriage, and stillbirth; and utilization of the phrase *birth givers* instead of *birth mothers*.

The Family Services office has already begun taking action on FICC's second recommendation, Ms. Kremzar commented. Her office is reviewing the parental leave policy and developing proposed language that is inclusive of more family types, as well as language that is more easily understood. Once drafted, this proposed language will be presented to leadership for review. The office is also creating a webpage to supplement the parental leave policy. This webpage will feature family leave scenarios involving a variety of families and family leave types. Examples would include family leave for surrogacy, giving birth, adoption, foster care, and elder care. The goal of this supplemental webpage is to give faculty and staff guidance on maximizing leave accruals.

Professor Nisly suggested that the phrase *birth parent* be used instead of *birth giver*, for the sake of greater clarity. She noted that the phrase *mother or other birth parent* was used in a recent policy revision within her department. Ms. Loney invited Councilors to reach out to FICC with any suggestions for committee focus. President Marshall thanked the committee for their work.

- *Harm Reduction (Shelly Campo, Associate Dean, Graduate College and Tanya Villhauer, Assistant Dean, Well-Being and Basic Needs, Office of the Dean of Students)*

Assistant Dean Villhauer indicated that she and Associate Dean Campo are the co-chairs of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Committee. She explained that the university has been deeply engaged in reducing high-risk drinking among students since 2009. The fourth and current [Alcohol Harm Reduction Plan](#) can be found online. This plan has five goals with several priorities for each goal. Discussion regarding the fifth plan (2022-25) is already underway. Over the summer, the committee considered where its priorities should lie in the coming academic year, considering the impact of COVID on students. The committee also focuses on shaping the campus messaging around alcohol. The campus environment can normalize, positively or negatively, the campus culture surrounding alcohol, Assistant Dean Villhauer noted, adding that the percentage of students engaging in high-risk drinking has dropped from 70.3% in 2009 to 47.7% in 2019.

Associate Dean Campo commented that, although faculty involvement has been a component of the recent harm reduction plans, it has not received significant attention. In her view, faculty involvement needs to be a bigger piece of the messaging effort moving forward. Perhaps a subcommittee of faculty members could be formed, she suggested, in order to develop a long-term approach for faculty involvement. The subcommittee could be created in the spring semester, as the Alcohol Harm Reduction Committee begins work on its fifth harm reduction plan. President Marshall asked what form faculty involvement and messaging might take. Assistant Dean Villhauer responded that, for example, in casual conversations with students, faculty members could refer to the wide variety of non-alcohol-related activities available in the community on weekends. They could also shift these conversations away from assumptions that all students consume alcohol regularly.

New strategies to reduce high-risk drinking are needed currently, Associate Dean Campo observed, because the rate of reduction flatlined about 4-5 years ago, leaving UI still well above the national average. Professor Joseph expressed some reservations about faculty members trying to influence student behavior, but commented that more general university messaging could emphasize that students can maintain here the values and positive behaviors that they brought from home. Associate Dean Campo noted that references to high-risk drinking would make sense in classes focused on, for example, public health, but that side conversations unrelated to academics may be the most impactful on students. Also, collegiate and departmental events could be alcohol-free; this would send a clear message to students that alcohol is not a necessary component of social interaction. Secretary Lehan Mackin commented that the recent decision to sell alcohol at Kinnick Stadium might send the opposite message to students. Associate Dean Campo responded that the impact of this decision remains to be seen.

Professor Erdahl observed that the committee's attention seemed focused on undergraduate students. Although noting that alcohol consumption might be an issue for some graduate students, as well, she asked if any efforts were being made to have graduate students serve as role models for undergraduate students, especially through the promotion of "dry" events for graduate students and faculty. Associate Dean Campo responded that it has only been in the last few years that survey data on alcohol consumption by graduate and professional students has

become available. The data collected thus far indicate that high-risk drinking is less prevalent among this group, although there are pockets of concern. She added that the committee's next action plan will put increased attention on outreach to graduate and professional students. Vice President Rodríguez-Rodríguez urged that students be consulted as much as possible about how faculty efforts to decrease high-risk drinking could be made more impactful. Assistant Dean Villhauer responded that, indeed, the committee has reached out to many students from populations especially vulnerable to high-risk drinking for insight on why this behavior occurs and how to minimize it. Associate Dean Campo and Assistant Dean Villhauer both observed that high-risk drinking is an issue within the state as a whole, not just among our college students. This environment presents additional challenges to efforts to reduce high-risk drinking among our students.

- *Faculty Council/Administrative Retreat Follow-up Discussion (Teresa Marshall)*

President Marshall thanked everyone for the excellent discussion and engagement at the August 18 retreat, the topic of which was *Academic Freedom: Free Speech and DEI circa 2021*. She commented that we must now think about how to share what was presented at the retreat with senators and with faculty members at large. We must consider how to provide information about the resources available to faculty and how to engage senators in further discussions of academic freedom and freedom of speech issues. Regarding free speech, Professor Glass expressed concern about false equivalences, i.e., considering two opposing opinions equally valid when only one is based on facts. Professor Nisly shared this concern, noting that there cannot be a legitimate debate over established facts. We can no longer seriously argue, for example, that the earth is flat. She also expressed support for Professor Durham's suggestion that faculty members be able to gather and discuss challenges that they have experienced and solutions that they have created in their classrooms related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- *COVID Discussion (Teresa Marshall)*

President Marshall began the discussion by commenting that University Human Resources personnel have confirmed to her that our health insurance covers inpatient treatment for COVID at 100% until December 31. It is possible that this deadline may be extended. Turning to the university's current COVID situation, President Marshall noted that, while mask and vaccine mandates are effective in reducing the spread of COVID, the governor is opposed to such mandates and the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, is following the governor's lead. New UI President Barbara Wilson is in an awkward position, she continued, trying to balance competing interests while still establishing herself at the university and in the state. President Marshall nevertheless expressed some concern about the effectiveness of the university administration's messaging on COVID.

Professor Nisly expressed appreciation for President Wilson's candor when she spoke at the retreat earlier this month and acknowledged that the new university president faces considerable challenges right now as she begins her leadership of the institution. She pointed out, however, that we are at a critical moment in history and we are obligated to do whatever we can to reduce serious illness and death from COVID in our campus community, in spite of possible consequences. Many of our students are not yet at a developmental stage at which they can fully grasp COVID's danger. Professor Nisly added that many faculty members and graduate

students, as her patients, have expressed to her their fear of infection, given the close quarters in which they teach. Professor Glass doubted that the university administration and the Board of Regents could be persuaded to enact mask or vaccine mandates. He suggested instead that the UI shared governance groups make a clear moral statement conveying their opposition to the inaction by administrators and Regents. He further suggested that the shared governance groups reach out to their counterparts at ISU and UNI, which have much lower rates of masking than we do, for the creation of an allied statement.

Professor Pizzimenti wondered if faculty members across campus were modeling the behavior of masking; if so, this can be a powerful statement for our students. Perhaps we can urge all of our faculty colleagues to take this individual action, in order to move the campus toward universal masking. Professor Marshall noted that there are some faculty opposed to masking and to mask mandates. Professor Erdahl urged that faculty members wear masks in all interactions with students, given the high transmission rate of the currently-circulating Delta variant of COVID. She added that part of the concern around COVID is the tremendous stress that large numbers of hospitalized COVID-infected patients place on health care systems. The increase in health care resources directed towards COVID patients leads to a decrease in resources directed towards patients with other health care needs, with potentially life-threatening consequences for those other patients. Given that COVID infection numbers are increasing in Iowa, Professor Erdahl expressed strong support for prevention measures, such as testing as soon as any symptoms appear in an individual, so that close contacts of that individual can be informed.

Professor Buckley emphasized the equity aspects of the COVID pandemic. She explained that graduate students are extremely angry about the current masking situation. In their experience, differences in masking compliance fall along the structural inequities that the academic hierarchy sets up. For our most vulnerable instructors, especially our graduate students, who teach in our most crowded classrooms, deferring to personal responsibility is not an adequate response. These graduate students are not having their needs met in the most basic way, they are frightened, and they are facing outright resistance to masking from students. Professor Buckley urged that all faculty members find ways of supporting our most vulnerable instructors. President Marshall added that she had heard many of these same concerns expressed at the CLAS Faculty Assembly meeting that she had attended recently.

Professor Kivlighan commented that in the College of Education, anecdotal evidence suggests that personal appeals to students by faculty members to wear masks have often been ignored. The vast majority of students in his very large lecture class do not wear masks, for example. He added that faculty members in his college are unclear what to do to support students who tell them that they have had a COVID exposure. Professor Joseph commented that in the College of Nursing, the leadership has communicated the expectation that everyone in the college wear masks. The college has seen high, although not uniform, compliance with this expectation. Masks are also available throughout building. Secretary Lehan Mackin, also from the College of Nursing, added that compliance is much lower, however, among the younger cohorts of undergraduate students.

Professor Glass, who had recently attended a CLAS DEO meeting during which President Wilson spoke, commented that she had acknowledged that personal appeals to students by faculty to wear masks generally have not worked. What has worked, she noted, was telling students that classes would need to go back online if our COVID infection numbers go up. Professor Glass added that mask-wearing has generally been common in his classes, but that he has had some further success by appealing to students' sense of campus community. Referring to Professor Buckley's earlier point about support for graduate students, he noted that the Graduate College is aware of this issue and that CLAS administrators are working on some possible solutions. Of course, none of these extra efforts would be necessary if the university instituted a mask mandate, he concluded. Professor Pizzimenti asked whether masks were still widely available in buildings on the east side of campus. Several councilors indicated that masks were indeed available in east side facilities. Professor Kivlighan observed that students had likely made up their minds about masks before they even returned to campus; in hindsight, he wondered if he should have contacted his students prior to the start of the semester about mask recommendations.

Professor Janssen commented that in the College of Public Health, mask-wearing is widespread. She questioned why the university has not instituted any type of testing program. There does not appear to be a prohibition against a testing program. Testing twice per week for those who cannot prove vaccination would provide us with data on campus COVID cases. Professor Hegarty commented that the percentage of students wearing masks in the Tippie College of Business appears to be very low. She recalled that last year, she had numerous students missing class because of illness. That is not happening this year, so perhaps most students are vaccinated, but we do not know for sure. President Marshall noted that the central administration believes that 75-80% of students are vaccinated.

Past President Yockey commented that in our Board of Regents peer group, the only other institution without a mask requirement is the University of Texas-Austin, but UT does have a universal testing requirement. Before classes began, every student needed to be tested. He added that there is a lot of legal confusion here that has yet to be clarified. With respect to the mask mandate, the Regents spokesperson said that the mask mandate prohibition does not apply to the Regents universities. They cited instead Board of Regents guidance that was issued by President Richards in May that stated that students and faculty would not be required to wear masks. To his knowledge, though, the Regents never formally voted on prohibiting a mask mandate. While there may be political issues involved, there does not appear to be any legal impediments to instituting a mask mandate. The vaccine issue is a little more challenging, Past President Yockey observed, because of the state's vaccine passport ban. But, it seems possible that the university could take other measures, such as charging an additional health fee to students who cannot show proof of vaccination. It is unclear whether the university's legal counsel has explored all options.

Professor Nisly commented that a testing program could be another tool in the university's toolbox. If universal testing revealed a high level of infection, this could be motivation to take additional measures to prevent the spread of COVID. Professor Merryman commented that she felt that health care faculty are living in a different world from non-health care faculty. She appreciated the risks that non-health care faculty are taking to do their jobs. She noted that the

only reason that she has been able to do her job, take care of patients, and stay safe throughout the pandemic is because she works at a health care facility that demands masking from employees and from patients. Hospital employees also have very high vaccination rates. She added that if there is anything that faculty in the health care enterprise can do to support their non-health care colleagues, she would be willing to consider it.

Professor Curtius commented that she has had very high masking compliance in her classes, so clearly there are students who do not want to wear masks. She recalled being surprised to hear at a recent CLAS Faculty Assembly meeting that some students are considering dropping classes or even leaving the university because of the refusal of other students to wear masks. She observed that there seemed to be an “us” vs. “them” dynamic of faculty vs. students over mask-wearing, but that perhaps faculty could work collaboratively with those students willing to wear masks to try to influence the university administration towards a mask mandate. Administrators and Regents might be more open to a mask mandate message coming from students.

In response to the two previous comments, Professor Glass wondered if some of the health science deans could be more vocal in support of the science-based benefits of masking. He emphasized that we need louder voices from scientists on this issue. Professor Glass added that he had reached out to the leadership of the student governance groups for their assistance in promoting masks, but discovered that they were reluctant to take a stand collectively on a mask mandate, apparently because they have constituents who do not support a mandate. Perhaps they also fear losing their easy access to the university president and the Regents if they speak out.

Regarding messaging from health care-related voices, Professor Erdahl noted that there has been some messaging, for example, Executive Dean Winokur’s videos about the vaccine trials. Professor Janssen commented that she would pass along Professor Glass’ messaging suggestion to the dean of the College of Public Health. In response to a question, President Marshall indicated that she had not yet spoken to her counterparts at ISU and UNI about the current COVID situation.

President Marshall drew the group’s attention to a statement approved by the CLAS Faculty Assembly on August 27, 2021, and now circulated to the Council.

Professor Glass moved and Professor Hegarty seconded that the Council endorse the CLAS Faculty Assembly statement.

The statement reads as follows:

*We, the members of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Faculty Assembly, urge courage and action that is aligned with science and responsive to this moment, which is distinct from that of May 2021. We urge the University of Iowa’s leadership to take action to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 on our campus and in our community. Faculty Assembly calls upon the University of Iowa and Board of Regents, State of Iowa, to initiate an immediate mask mandate and flexibility about modality of instruction in all the College’s courses, and implement a vaccine mandate by November 8, 2021, the first day of early registration for spring semester 2022, in order to preserve public health and safety.*

President Marshall announced that voting on the statement would take place online following the meeting. [**UPDATE:** in a Qualtrics vote following the meeting, the motion was approved.]

President Marshall asked if there were other actions that the Council would like for the officers to take. Professor Merryman asked what options we could take to communicate our support of a testing program. Professor Erdahl suggested inviting our campus health officer to speak and to address the possible creation of a testing program. President Marshall indicated that she would contact the campus health officer. Vice President Rodríguez-Rodríguez suggested that the CLAS Faculty Assembly statement also be brought before the Faculty Senate on September 14 for a vote. Professor Hegarty wondered if there was enough time on the Senate agenda to discuss the COVID issue in depth. The Senate officers indicated that they would review the draft agenda and make changes if necessary.

- *President's Report (Teresa Marshall)*

President Marshall gave a brief overview of various Senate-related activities. She noted that the Office of the Vice President for Medical Affairs review report will be presented at the next Senate meeting. Upcoming central administrative reviews have been put on hold temporarily because of the additional burdens that the continuing pandemic has placed on both faculty members and on central administrative offices. The presiding officer of the Faculty Judicial Commission has submitted an annual report that was distributed to Councilors prior to the meeting. The Commission needs three additional members to be at the required capacity. Commission volunteers constitute a pool of potential members for faculty judicial panels. The five-year review of the instructional track has gotten underway with a review committee led by Professors Caroline Sheerin of the College of Law and Anne Stapleton of CLAS. The Faculty Policies and Compensation Committee will soon begin work again, focused on changes proposed by the Provost's Office for policies related to faculty tracks and to the faculty dispute procedures.

President Marshall invited Councilors to a town hall webinar hosted by the UI Center for Human Rights on September 1 at 12 pm. The topic of the webinar is academic freedom in Iowa and the world.

IV. From the Floor – There were no items from the floor.

V. Announcements

- The next Faculty Senate meeting will be Tuesday, September 14, 3:30 – 5:15 pm, Senate Chamber, Old Capitol.
- The next Faculty Council meeting will be Tuesday, October 12, 3:30-5:15 pm, Executive Boardroom (2390), University Capitol Centre.

VI. Adjournment – Professor Hegarty moved and Professor Janssen seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously. President Marshall adjourned the meeting at 5:15 pm.