

FACULTY SENATE
Tuesday, October 24, 2023
3:30 – 5:15 pm
Senate Chamber, Old Capitol

MINUTES

- Senators Present: A. Achenbach, D. Anderson, D. Axelrod, B. Ayati, J. Bunch, E. Carlisle, M. Carvour, C. Chan, M. Coleman, R. Cox, R. Curto, R. Curtu, L. Durairaj, A. Estapa, A. Farag, J. Fiegel, C. Fox, S. Ganesan, A. Goedken, B. Greteman, N. Greyser, P. Groves, C. Grueter, A. Jabbari, A. Kalnins, J. Kline, J. Koch, D. Langbehn, A. Lesch, V. Lira, T. Mangum, H. Mehdi, J. Nepola, B. Nottingham-Spencer, M. Pizzimenti, T. Rietz, J. Sa-Aadu, D. Shane, Y. Shi, A. Shibli-Rahhal, F. Solt, E. Thomas, C. Turvey, T. Wadas, M. Wald, E. Welder, K. Whitaker, F. Williams, K. Worthington.
- Officers Present: E. Gillan, A. Rodríguez-Rodríguez, C. Sheerin.
- Officer Excused: M. Charlton.
- Senators Excused: S. Abuhammoud, L. Adams, M. Berg, P. Ferguson, A. Guernsey, J. Gutierrez, N. Handoo, C. Just, M. McQuistan, K. Parker, C. Pinnaro, D. Santillan, M. Santillan, M. Schroeder.
- Senators Absent: M. Abou Alaiwa, B. An, C. Benson, E. Destruel, H. Dybevik, P. Gilbert, M. Landsman, B. Li, S. Martini, C. McMillan, P. Nau, A. Vikram, S. Young, L. Zingman.
- Guests: B. Goetz (Athletics); B. Schreier (Scanlan Center for School Mental Health); B. Threlkeld-Wiegand (Employee Assistance Program); A. Williams (Center for Teaching); L. Zaper (Faculty Senate Office).
- I. Call to Order – President Gillan called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.
- II. Approvals
- A. Meeting Agenda – Professor Worthington moved and Professor Nepola seconded that the agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- B. Faculty Senate Minutes (September 12, 2023) – Professor Nepola moved and Professor Langbehn seconded that the minutes be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

- C. Committee Appointments (Caroline Sheerin, Chair, Committee on Committees) – Professor Langbehn moved and Professor Koch seconded that the committee appointment be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- Allison Levine (Rehabilitation & Counselor Education) to fill the unexpired term of Sarah Averill (Radiology) on the Charter Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, 2023-25

III. New Business

- *Beth Goetz, Interim Athletic Director*

Ms. Goetz began her remarks by noting that she has been at UI for a little over one year. She expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to be part of such a wonderful campus and community. Our student athletes are working hard, she continued, in their academics. Last spring was the ninth straight semester in which the average student athlete grade point average was over 3.0. The fall sports of football, field hockey, cross country, and soccer are well into their seasons, while the winter sports of basketball, swimming, gymnastics, and wrestling will get their seasons underway soon. Ms. Goetz reminded the group that a special event was held in Kinnick Stadium recently – an exhibition game for the women’s basketball team. She emphasized the importance of this well-attended (55,000 fans) event not only for the university, but for women’s sports in general. She added that the members of the women’s basketball team, coached by Lisa Bluder, have been outstanding ambassadors for the university and the state. The university recently celebrated 50 years of women’s collegiate sports; UI has been a national leader in this arena, especially due to the efforts of [Dr. Christine Grant](#), the university’s first director of women’s intercollegiate athletics.

The landscape of collegiate athletics has been changing quickly over the last several years, Ms. Goetz observed. The Big Ten has expanded to include new institutions, first on the east coast and now on the west coast, for a current total of 18. Some fans may well mourn the loss of the regional character of the Big Ten and of other conferences. However, collegiate athletics has evolved, partly because of changes in the national broadcast and media environment. Previously, it was not unusual for UI teams to travel to the west coast during their non-conference seasons. With the latest Big Ten expansion, UI teams will likely travel only once to the west coast during their seasons, and only for conference games. Ms. Goetz expressed the view that the conference expansion will position the Big Ten to continue to lead both academically and competitively in college sports.

A series of lawsuits and potential new federal legislation are impacting the experiences of student athletes, with most of these efforts focused on student athlete voice, health and safety, and revenue sharing. Ms. Goetz commented that, over time, institutions will likely end up sharing more resources with student athletes, particularly in certain sports. Universities will need to ensure that the core transformational student athlete experience is not negatively impacted by these developments. Name, image, and likeness (NIL) is another new concept in the collegiate athletics realm. Student athletes now have the ability to market themselves and generate revenue based on their personal brands. Other students across campus have always had this opportunity, based on their expertise (in music, art, etc.). Until recently, NCAA rules prohibited similar opportunities for student athletes. Currently, each state can legislate around

NIL, causing vast differences in laws across the country, along with the potential for abuse. NCAA rules do prohibit institutions from having direct involvement in student athletes' NIL financial agreements. At UI, a collective, [The Swarm](#), facilitates NIL opportunities for our student athletes in the for-profit and non-profit arenas.

Ms. Goetz concluded her remarks by noting that approval has just been given for ground to be broken on a new gymnastics facility, to be supported through philanthropy and athletics revenues. A new wrestling facility, for both men and women, recently opened. And, a feasibility study has been performed on Carver Hawkeye Arena to determine what improvements need to be made to this 40-year-old facility to maintain its functionality for decades to come.

Professor Nepola commented on the recent phenomenon of student athletes, particularly those envisioning a professional sports career for themselves, bringing lawsuits against their institutions so that they can receive medical care for sports injuries outside of their institutions' chosen providers. Ms. Goetz indicated that UI Athletics is indeed aware of and following this issue. Professor Thomas asked about the state of student athletes' mental health and the extent of mental health services provided to them. Ms. Goetz responded that, according to physicians working with the teams, about 30% of our 650 student athletes have diagnosed mental health conditions. Student athletes have access to several fulltime physicians. Athletics coaches and staff have also been trained to provide support. Noting that women's wrestling is a relatively new sport on college campuses, President Gillan asked how large the league is and how far women wrestlers need to travel in order to compete. Ms. Goetz indicated that UI is not in a conference for women's wrestling yet. Invitationals are the primary site for competitions. Most of the competition is regional.

- *Barry Schreier, Director, Higher Education Program, Scanlan Center for School Mental Health*

Dr. Schreier explained that he was formerly the director of the UI University Counseling Service, but is now affiliated with the Scanlan Center for School Mental Health, where he directs the Center's Higher Education Program. He is also a member of the faculty in the College of Education. The Scanlan Center for School Mental Health was created several years ago to help address mental health issues in the K-12 statewide school system. President Wilson then suggested that the Center also develop a focus on higher education, specifically on faculty and staff at UI. The Higher Education Program is now involved with community colleges throughout the state, as well.

Citing national data from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Dr. Schreier noted that 69% of faculty and staff reported feeling extremely or very stressed at work, while 35% have considered leaving higher education in the last two years. Meanwhile, data from the UI liveWELL survey indicated that 22% of faculty and staff experience health risks due to unmanaged stress, 25% experience difficulty concentrating due to health concerns, 29% experience difficulty concentrating due to financial stress, 31% experience difficulty concentrating due to caregiving responsibilities, and 56% experience difficulty concentrating due to having too much to do and not enough time. Other research has found that more than half of faculty and staff nationwide don't feel that they could recognize student distress, more than 60% don't feel they know what

to do even if they recognize student distress, at least half don't feel prepared to recommend mental health support services, and more than 87% believe it to be part of their role to connect students with mental health support services.

Faculty and staff are increasingly finding themselves in the situation of “caring for self while caring for others,” Dr. Schreier observed. To assist faculty and staff in this endeavor, the Scanlan Center for School Mental Health Higher Education Program has initiated a series of programs and training sessions on diverse topics such as *Working with Students in Distress*, *Mindfulness and Meditation for Your Office*, and *Caring for Self While Caring for Others: You're Hardy and You Know It*. Dr. Schreier added that over 4,000 participants have attended almost 100 presentations since March 2022. An eight-hour master class on working with students in distress filled almost immediately when offered; participants highly praised the program in their evaluations. The Center has begun offering similar programs to faculty and staff at Iowa community colleges, which lack the university's resources in this area. Dr. Schreier advocated for faculty and staff to take the Kognito Training, a free, voluntary, self-paced online program for UI faculty and staff that focuses on dealing with students in distress. As awareness about the program grows, increasing numbers of faculty and staff are taking this highly-rated training. To explore campus mental health issues more deeply with a wide range of colleagues, Dr. Schreier and Dr. Anastasia Williams from the Center for Teaching are in the second year of co-directing an Obermann Workgroup on [*Reconceptualizing the Mental Health Crisis in Higher Education: A Mindful Journey*](#).

Information about mental health resources at the university is available on one central website, Dr. Schreier reminded the group, mentalhealth.uiowa.edu. To date, the website has had about 160,000 visitors. He noted that each week, *Iowa Now* features a mental health-related story written by a member of the campus community. Another initiative in which the Scanlan Center is involved is bringing nationally certified training in the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) program to campus. On the statewide level, the Scanlan Center has started a higher education mental health collaborative. As a result of this collaborative, a higher education mental health and wellbeing track has been added to the Iowa Best Summit, which previously focused only on K-12 education. The higher education presentations at this year's summit were well-attended. Lastly, Dr. Schreier noted that the Scanlan Center has launched a statewide faculty and staff mental health/student distress survey project, beginning with three campuses in this initial round. A report is forthcoming and will allow for a comprehensive look at the landscape around higher education mental health specifically in Iowa.

Dr. Schreier then described the newly-established Mental Health Champion Award. The purpose of this award is to recognize individuals across campus whose efforts to promote mental health in their units might not otherwise be widely known. Dr. Schreier added that the award is *designed to cultivate an environment that values and recognizes mental health*, as well as to *assist the UI in meeting its strategic goal of being a health-promoting campus*. Thirty-one nominations were submitted and six awards were given in this first round. Dr. Schreier asked for Faculty Senate to co-sponsor the award in future years; he intended to make the same request of Staff Council. In addition to co-sponsorship, Dr. Schreier sought a Senate

representative to serve as a reviewer, assistance in marketing the award, and financial support for the award prizes.

Professor Koch asked what was most surprising about these first nominees for the award. Dr. Schreier responded that the enormous impact of very small actions was striking. President Gillan asked if there were opportunities for individual donors to contribute financial support to the award. Dr. Schreier indicated that there were no opportunities thus far, but it was an idea worth exploring. Professor Fox asked if the planned IMU renovations would impact the Scanlan Center. Dr. Schreier responded that the renovations are intended for student-facing mental health services. Vice President Sheerin observed that providing individual counseling services for all students in need was likely extremely difficult. She asked what role the services that Dr. Schreier described could play in this situation. Dr. Schreier commented that these services are more focused on prevention, as well as on creating a culture of wellbeing. Professor Nepola asked whether the annual personal health assessment could serve as a vehicle for the initial provision of mental health service information to faculty and staff, if the employee indicates an interest. Dr. Schreier appreciated the question, but noted that the next speaker would be better positioned to address it.

- *Bronwyn Threlkeld-Wiegand, Director, UI Employee Assistance Program*

Ms. Threlkeld-Wiegand indicated that she has worked at the university in a variety of positions since 2003 and now serves as the director of the [UI Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP). She explained that EAP shares a common goal with two other components of University Human Resources: liveWELL and Family Services. That goal is to *provide employees and their families with the most effective tools, resources and support needed for achieving personal health and overall well-being with privacy and confidentiality*. The specific activities of the EAP are *counseling and referral services; management and supervisory consultation; behavioral health and drug free workplace consultation; critical incident response and campus support; and population health, prevention and educational services (sleep, compassion fatigue, suicide prevention, etc.)*.

Addressing some of the most commonly asked questions about the EAP, Ms. Threlkeld-Wiegand emphasized that EAP services are both confidential and free. EAP does not use the electronic medical record system EPIC and does not submit insurance claims. Six one-hour sessions per year, per member are allowed (employees' family members are each considered a member). Appointments are available in the same week and emergency appointments are often available the same day. Clients are seen by the same clinician each time, unless they request a change. Referrals can be made for long-term care anywhere in Iowa. EAP appointments can be in-person (in multiple locations), via Zoom, or by phone. They can occur during work hours, during lunch, or after work (but not on weekends). Displaying utilization data for FY2018-2023, Ms. Threlkeld-Wiegand observed that the number of visitors increased from 1770 in FY18 to 2787 in FY23. While a Zoom option remains available, clients are increasingly asking for in-person sessions. Satisfaction with the services delivered has remained consistently high. Over the past five years, the presenting issues have also remained consistent, with depression/anxiety, job stress, and marital/relationship issues as the top three. Other reasons for visits consist of sleep resources, anger management, substance abuse, etc.

Turning to a description of several mental health-related services and programs now available, Ms. Threlkeld-Wiegand indicated that access to Doctor on Demand telehealth appointments for mental health issues began on July 1 under university health insurance plans. Appointments appear to be available within 3-5 days. Therapists are licensed in multiple states, thus allowing out-of-state family members and employees to have access. EAP has a new program available on the continuum of suicide prevention, *Question, Persuade, Refer* (QPR). This training educates participants on recognition of warning signs of suicide. [liveWELL](#) continues to offer the annual personal health assessment (PHA), although participation has decreased now that the financial incentive has been discontinued. However, benefits of the PHA include individualized feedback on well-being and the recreation services membership incentive. The university also uses data from the PHA to improve its wellness services. Referring to the question asked earlier, Ms. Threlkeld-Wiegand explained that adding an item to the survey, which was created by an outside vendor, is a year-long process. liveWELL also provides access to health coaching, which includes individual visits with a coach and referral to programs focused on chronic conditions. Another available program is [Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction](#).

Among the programs [Family Services](#) offers is the [J. J. Neiman-Brown Academic Caretaking Fund](#), which provides funds for caretaking costs when faculty members or postdoctoral researchers travel for academic or development opportunities. Family Services also provides information on the topics of child care, elder care and financial coaching. EAP and Family Services have collaborated to support the [FY23 Emergency Hardship Fund](#) for 50% or greater regular faculty and staff. Applicants must meet income and other requirements. University Human Resources provides the funding for this program.

President Gillan asked how many counselors work in the EAP. Ms. Threlkeld-Wiegand responded that there are currently five, although only two are fulltime. Professor Rietz asked if job stress issues reported by clients are tracked to determine if there are institutional factors involved, leading to certain patterns of stress that can be conveyed to administrators. Ms. Threlkeld-Wiegand responded that, because of the confidential nature of the EAP, reporting to administrators is not allowed. Following up on this issue, Professor Farag asked if the EAP ever takes action if, through repeated client complaints, a toxic workplace emerges. Ms. Threlkeld-Wiegand explained that the role of the EAP is to help clients manage their individual situations, not to intervene in toxic workplaces.

- *Senator Breakout Sessions on Mental Health/Burnout/Morale Solutions*

President Gillan invited Senators to engage in conversations amongst themselves regarding steps their units could take to positively impact colleagues' sense of belonging on campus. The following suggestions were offered:

- “treat yourself Wednesdays” – gathering weekly in a central unit location to enjoy a snack together; gatherings with food were mentioned by several Senators
- “this is us” – on a monthly basis, several faculty and staff members share stories of their career trajectories, allowing graduate students to see how career paths are often not linear

- departmental or unit retreats, especially the portions of those events not focused on work
- recognition of grants obtained or other accomplishments
- monthly birthday celebrations for unit members
- departmental soup luncheons to recognize and express appreciation for members of other units (custodial staff, maintenance, IT)
- *President's Report (Ed Gillan)*

President Gillan reminded the group that the Iowa Board of Regents is conducting a review of diversity, equity, and inclusion programming at the three Regents institutions. A draft report from the review committee will be presented at the November Regents meeting. The UI Faculty Senate and Staff Council officers, along with those from Iowa State University and the University of Northern Iowa, met with the Regents review committee on September 27. All four UI shared governance groups held a joint meeting on October 10. The president of each group spoke on a topic of concern to that constituency: mental health (Undergraduate Student Government), basic needs (Graduate and Professional Student Government), philanthropy and community engagement (Staff Council), and academic freedom (Faculty Senate).

A central administrative review, led by Faculty Senate, is well underway of the Office of the Vice President for Research. Former Faculty Senate president Teresa Marshall chairs the review committee. Faculty members across campus have received an invitation to participate in a survey seeking feedback about the Office, while review committee members are busy interviewing staff and administrators affiliated with the Office. Later this year, a review of the Office of the President will be launched. In policy matters, the Instructional Track Faculty policy revisions approved at the September Senate meeting are now moving through administrative approvals and collegiate leadership review. A faculty/administrative work group continues preliminary revisions to the [faculty dispute procedures](#). The Senate's Faculty Policies and Compensation Committee has begun discussing these proposed revisions, with feedback going to the work group for consideration.

President Gillan reminded the group that the faculty dispute procedures comprise the due process available to faculty members when disputes cannot be resolved at the departmental or collegiate levels. In this process, a faculty peer review panel is formed to hear the dispute. It is the task of the Investigating Officer to manage the case (assemble documents, communicate with both parties, advise the peer review panel, etc.). The Investigating Officer is appointed by the university president. Long-serving Investigating Officer Randall Ney has recently left the university, so President Wilson has nominated Kristine Zayko, an attorney with the Chicago-based firm Husch Blackwell, to fill this role on an as-needed basis. Given the low number of cases that advance to a faculty review panel, it has not been deemed necessary to hire a permanent UI staff member for this work. Mr. Ney's primary job at the university, in fact, had been that of an immigration attorney.

Senate approval of the nominee for Investigating Officer is required, so President Wilson has forwarded to the Senate a nomination letter and biographical information for Ms. Zayko, who has extensive experience in higher education legal affairs. President Gillan, Vice President

Sheerin, and Faculty Judicial Commission Presiding Officer Professor Alison Guernsey recently took part in a virtual interview with the nominee. All three support her appointment. If appointed, Ms. Zayko would serve for a two-year term, with the arrangement to be evaluated at the end of her term. President Gillan indicated that Senators would receive electronic copies of the nomination letter and biographical information. They would then be asked to vote electronically whether to approve the appointment.

Vice President Sheerin voiced her support of the nominee, who showed a deep knowledge of academia, particularly the Big Ten. She emphasized that the Investigating Officer is not a decision-maker, but instead manages the case process. President Gillan added that even though the Investigating Officer is paid by the university, the position is considered impartial. Professor Nepola asked if the nominee is admitted to the bar in Iowa. President Gillan responded that this is not necessary for the Investigating Officer position, which manages internal processes for the university. He noted that a faculty member who is unhappy with the result of the internal process can still initiate an external legal process with outside attorneys. Professor Langbehn asked if the university had worked with the nominee's law firm before. President Gillan was unsure.

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

V. Announcements

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

VI. Adjournment – Professor Nepola moved and Professor Langbehn seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously. President Gillan adjourned the meeting at 5:10 pm.