



CU Denver Faculty Assembly -- Meeting Minutes

May 7, 2024

Zoom and In-Person

Attendees: Sasha Breger Bush, Vivian Shyu, Dennis DeBay, Colleen Donnelly, Joanne Addison, Florian Pfender, Anthony Villano, Bailey Wallace, Bud Talbot, Joan Bihun, Cristina Gillanders, Manish Shirgaokar, Marta Maron, Matt Shea, Maryam Darbeheshti, Tom Beck, Sarah Fields, Wendy Bolyard, Erin Hackel, Ester de Jong, Fernando Mancilla-David, Jeffrey Schrader, Rachel Stein, Ilkyeun Ra, Rashmi Gangamma, Sarah Hagelin, Thorsten Spehn, Jamie Hodgkins, Linda Fried, Larry Erbert, Karen Sobel, Kelly See, Shuyang Peng, Jim Lopresti, AVC Turan Kayaoglu, Meron Ayele

Chair's Update (Sasha Breger Bush):

- Approve minutes (April 2nd, 2024)
- Motion was made to Approve, motion was seconded; Poll posted
 - Results for April 2nd, 2024, Minutes: approved by a majority
- AHEC Master Plan- comments due on 5/15
- Graduate Education Update: AVC Mike Kocet is gathering data to discuss with representatives and primary units in order to gain a better understanding of ongoing work and necessary future work. The focus includes developing graduate bylaws. Draft work is scheduled for this summer. These drafts will be circulated among stakeholders and the EPPC for review and feedback. Additionally, considerations are being made regarding the entire graduate student lifecycle, with a focus on better supporting students from application through graduation and into career development.
- Guide for faculty on [Scholarship and Safety](#): Chris Pucket has developed a guide for faculty navigating controversial issues related to scholarship and safety, especially those encountered on social media platforms.
- Faculty Council Update: The resolution concerning Chancellor searches and the Board of Regents' resolution on statements regarding political and social issues have been successfully passed. However, concerns have been raised within the Faculty Council regarding the conduct of the Chancellor search process at UCCS. It is argued that the appointment violated shared governance policies and procedures, as well as the Sunshine Law. Additionally, the Board of Regents passed a resolution last month prohibiting administrative units from making statements on political issues without prior approval. For instance, departments or schools cannot issue statements unless approved by the administration. However, it's noted that faculty members are permitted to express their opinions, representing themselves as individuals. An ongoing discussion revolves around whether department websites are considered administrative channels or faculty channels, and if statements made on these platforms require approval. This matter is expected to be addressed and integrated into policy in the near future.
- [SB 23-11](#): Senate Bill 23-11 safeguards public sector employees who engage in discussions or express views regarding public employee representation or workplace issues from facing retaliation by their employers. This legislation offers protection to employees who voice concerns about their own workplace, shielding them from potential repercussions.

- AY 24/25 UC Denver Budget: Copy provided to the assembly.
- Faculty to Staff Conversions: Faculty members undergoing contract conversions to staff roles are advised to thoroughly review their contracts. Some aspects may have recently been overlooked due to the influx of new personnel.
- FCQ Update: Discussion has been struck from the agenda as all concerns have been positively addressed this morning during a meeting with the Provost and AVC for Faculty Affairs. FA will be issuing the charge for this task. It's important to note that there will be no administrative or student representation on this working group at this time. Funding will be provided by the Provost, ensuring the working group's autonomy. The WG's primary focus will be on developing FCQs and creating a broader plan for implementing FCQs. It's important that the WG include representation from various schools/colleges and both TT and IRC lines. Additionally, there should be at least one lecturer to ensure diverse perspectives are considered. Those interested in serving are encouraged to step forward. The WG will articulate a set of goals and priorities to guide its formation. This endeavor will extend throughout the next academic year; however, the summer will be dedicated to conducting a literature review and consulting with experts in the field. It's important to note that the WG members do not want to be subjected to further data mining. The goal is for the summer WG to deliver a report by the end of the next academic year. Ideally, the same members from the summer WG will remain in place throughout the entire duration of this project.

Secretary's Update (Dennis DeBay):

- FA Awards: Jeffrey Schrader announced as FA 2023-2024 Award recipient in recognition of his outstanding contributions to Faculty Assembly.
- FA Elections: Motion was made to vote for FA Vice Chair and Secretary, motion was seconded; Polls posted
 - Results for FA Vice Chair: Dennis DeBay, approved by a majority
 - Results for FA Secretary: Jamie Hodgkins, approved by a majority

Provost Update (AVCFA Turan Kayaoglu):

- AVC Kayaoglu thanked FA Officers for their morning meeting regarding FCQs and acknowledged its importance in addressing biases and fostering improvement. Appreciation was also extended to FA Chair for sharing insights on scholarship and safety during these challenging times, emphasizing the University's commitment to academic freedom and human rights. It was noted that some colleagues have strong connections to Israel and Palestine, and efforts will be made to support them accordingly.
- Updates were provided on the following:
 - Provost Academic Transformation Working Groups are progressing as planned. Engagement on these WGs began last Fall and further invites for engagement will be extended.
 - SESS: Significant progress on financial aid, with approximately 12,000 files processed. The Financial Aid department is now fully staffed with 16 personnel. Award letters are scheduled to be sent out on May 13th. SESS search is being coordinated through the Chancellor's Office.
 - Student Mental Health: Plans are underway to bring in expertise from Boulder to address these concerns.
 - Faculty Awards: 13 campus-wide awardees were celebrated.

- Retired Faculty Recognition Luncheon: Retired faculty members were recognized for their valuable contributions.
- Shared Governance Report: This was requested by FA in December 2022 and has been completed. Over 250 faculty participated in the process, which included one-hour interviews with over ten groups. Plans are in place to collaborate with Deans, FA, and shared governance stakeholders this Fall, with an email communication being sent out detailing the next steps.
- 360 Review of Deans: Finalization of goals for these reviews is ongoing with a target completion date set for the end of the Fall semester.

Library Presentation: Licensing Principles and Priorities Resolution (Katy Divittorio):

- Katy Divittorio delivered a presentation outlining the ramifications of diminished access to information and resources resulting from inequitable vendor and publisher pricing and practices.
- The Auraria Library sought backing from Faculty Assembly and broader community engagement, urging faculty from various schools and colleges to advocate for crucial reforms in the scholarly publishing sector. Faculty endorsement enhances their negotiating leverage in contract renegotiations with vendors and publishers. Notable institutions already championing this cause include CU Boulder, CSU, Colorado School of Mines, and the University of Wyoming. Katy introduced a resolution and sought the endorsement of the Faculty Assembly.
- Motion was made to endorse the Library’s Licensing Principles and Priorities Resolution that was presented, motion was seconded; Poll posted
 - Results: approved by the majority

Auraria Campus Protests:

- Several faculty members outside of FA attended this portion of the meeting to discuss the ongoing campus protests and the “Communication from the FA EXCOM” which was distributed on May 1st. FA Chair provided a clear format for productive communication, allowing each person 2 minutes before moving on to the next person.
- Multiple faculty expressed their viewpoints on the campus protests and the “Communication from FA EXCOM.” Some felt that the communication was too vague, lacked the intellectual and physical support they were hoping for. They also said they were disappointed in the tone of the letter as it lacked clear support for the protestors’ cause. Concerns were raised about the treatment of students and the handling of the protests by authorities. One faculty member witnessed police repression on April 26th and stated he was horrified by what he saw. He witnessed a peacefully assembled protest and emphasized the importance of supporting student’s right to protest, ensuring their safety and freedom of speech. Many professors objected to the student arrests, believing they shouldn't have to contend with legal proceedings or repercussions from the law. EDC Chair spoke on his committee’s behalf stating that the idea of prosecuting students was totally uncalled for and unwarranted up to this point. He stated that what has occurred thus far is classic civil disobedience.
- Faculty also relayed concerns from their Jewish counterparts, students and staff noting the lack of support and a culture of fear and lack of safety.
- Several FA EXCOM members defended the communication they put out by emphasizing that there wasn't enough time for a resolution. However, what they had agreed on was the importance of academic freedom. One member shared that at the initial SGA meeting, a significant number of

students expressed concerns about fear, vandalism, and violence directed at them. Additionally, some faculty members refrained from attending due to safety concerns. The FA EXCOM communication was aimed to avoid aggravating the situation further or causing people to retreat.

- Another FA EXCOM member raised two key concerns. First, for the excessive number of campus-wide alerts during the protests, which instilled unnecessary fear. Faculty want to identify who is responsible for managing these alerts. Second, the need to address the role of the Auraria Police Department in handling student matters and stressed the importance of working with the internal CU Denver structure, without involvement of external authorities like the mayor and outside police forces.
- There were also discussions about the complexity of the situation and the need for clearer communication and understanding between all parties involved. Additionally, some faculty called for a revised FA EXCOM Communication that better reflected their views condemning the police and lifting the camping ban.
- Overall, the discussion reflected a range of perspectives and concerns regarding the campus protests.

Closed Session

End Meeting