

Minutes Senate Steering Committee

Meeting August 20, 2024

3:30 p.m.
107 Samford Hall

Present: Lori Eckhardt (Chair), Jaena Alabi (Secretary), Virginia Davis(Chair-Elect), Rachel Prado (Secretary-Elect), Lisa Kensler (Immediate Past Chair), Vini Nathan (Provost), Andrew Pendola (Rules Appointee), J. Brian Anderson (Presidential Appointee), Tom Leathem (Presidential Appointee)

Absent: L. Octavia Tripp (Rules Appointee)

Special Guests: Joeleen Cooper-Bhatia, Associate Director of Student Counseling & Psychological Services; Barclay Bentley, Director of Office of Accessibility; Norman Godwin, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs; Laura Kloborg, Senate Administrative Support; Allison Batts, Senate Parliamentarian

Mission: The Steering Committee acts on behalf of the AU Senate on matters requiring attention between meetings of that body and assists the chair of the Senate in setting the agenda for Senate meetings. In addition, it is concerned with the academic affairs of the University, with particular attention given to the need for developing and recommending policies under which these affairs are conducted. It works closely with other Senate committees to aid them in their assignments.

Minutes

Meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Lori Eckhardt, Chair.

New appointees, Andrew Pendola and Tom Leathem, were welcomed. All committee members introduced themselves, and guests were welcomed as well.

Minutes from the June 4, 2024 Steering Committee Meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

Announcements

Virginia Davis has been named a Fellow of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. Congratulations, Virginia!

Committee Assignments: Jaena Alabi shared the names of several faculty members who have been approved by the Rules Committee to serve on the - Committee Assignments

Information Items

Joeleen Cooper-Bhatia, Associate Director of Student Counseling & Psychological Services gave a presentation on student well-being and mental health trends and services. Cooper-Bhatia shared information about national trends related to college students and mental health/well-being, and then shared information about the resources and services available through Student Counseling & Psychological Services (SCPS). Cooper-Bhatia also addressed common misperceptions and myths about the office's services. She shared information about the SCPS staff, as well as data about students' reasons for use of SCPS's services. Faculty can play a role in helping to dispel myths about SCPS.

Barclay Bentley, Director of the Office of Accessibility, shared his presentation on what his office does and how it can support the faculty. The Office of Accessibility (OA) covers a lot of areas for students who need accommodations, including academics but also parking, dining, etc. Bentley walked through the process his

office uses to determine appropriate accommodations. Some of the services offered through OA include a testing center, assistive technology support and training, and adaptive athletics. He shared data and noted that the numbers of requests for accommodations is trending up. OA can support faculty in several ways, including helping to clarify accommodation descriptions.

Approval of August 27, 2024 Senate Agenda

Draft agenda was approved.

Unfinished or New Business

There was some discussion about the need to remind Senators about voting – who votes, how do they vote, and how long do they have to vote.

The format of the October Faculty Meeting was also discussed briefly.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm by Lori Eckhardt, Chair.