

**FACULTY SENATE Minutes**  
**December 14, 2022**

**Present:** Henri Akono, Elizabeth Armstrong, Susan Bennett-Armistead, Catharine Biddle, Carla Billitteri, Emmanuel Boss, Stephanie Burnett, Sabrina DeTurk, Paula Drewniany, Phil Dunn, Nuri Emanetoglu, Allison Gardner, Michael Grillo, Nancy Hall, Matt Hawkyard, Cynthia Isenhour, Jesse Kaye-Schiess, Anil Raj Kizha, Amanda Klemmer, Eric Landis, Sarah Lindahl, Sara Lello, Danielle Levesque, Margo Lukens, Dmitri Markovitch, Eric Martin, Derek Michaud, William Nichols, Elizabeth Payne, Brain Pitman, Bob Rice, Deborah Rogers, MJ Sedlock, Kathryn Slott, Rosemary Smith, Sean Smith, Tim Waring, Todd Zoroya, Joan Ferrini-Mundy, Kelly Sparks, Jen Bonnet, Anosha Raziq, Ellen Weinauer, H. Lori Schnieders, Hannah Canter, Joel Bond, Ryan Wetherbee, Sam Carely, Meredith Whitford, Tim Bowden, Norm O'Reilly, Michelle McAnuff-Gumbs

**Absent:** Debbie Bouchard, Ian Bricknell, Alice Bruce, Kristina Cammen, Ana Chatenever, Mauricio Da Cunha, Mark Haggerty, Liliana Herakova, Stephen Jurich, Andre Khalil, Steven Kimball, Jessica Lewis, Ivan Manev, Shannon McCoy, Renae Moran, Harlan Onsrud, Amber Roth, Michael Scott, David Townsend, Matthew Wallhead, Peter Van Walsum, Manuel Woersdoerfer

**I. Welcome, Announcements, Approval of Minutes**

November 09, 2022 minutes need to be edited to add Norm O'Reilly to in attendance, Catharine Biddle's name was also misspelled. Graduate student referred to as an undergraduate.

Minutes: **APPROVED**

**II. Announcements and Updates from Administration**

President Ferrini Mundy opened the announcements from the administration by announcing that the system-wide strategic planning work is moving to a new phase. The writing of the systemic plan for the system will shift to a new writing committee, taking into account all input brought in. Senate members can refer to the databook and website for more information and the President appreciates the faculty input.

The Chancellor is making campus visits, their second round of the semester and is appreciative of members of the Maine Day task force. The group submitted a report this morning, December 14 which the Chancellor has not yet been able to view.

The Provost introduced the new athletic director, Jude Killy, from Miami University, where he served as senior associate AD for 14 years. The search committee did a great job in finding Killy and the care to integrate athletics and academics was wonderful. The press has been much interested in the athletic director hire, which is a high visibility critical position. There will be a welcome and visit with a press conference soon.

Enrollment management has been a focus over the last few years, with the current enrollment up 5,000 students, three times larger than ever before. The priority remains on yield and following up with prospective students.

A question was asked by Dee Nichols about the current search for an enrollment manager. It was asked of the senate that their colleagues be notified of the position as possible candidates and that Emily Haddad is helping with the search process. There have been around 15 applications so far and the committee is not using a search firm. The committee is charged with outreach, which a firm would typically do. By January 3rd, the committee will be moving to review the applications for 10 days, do a shortlist and complete the process as soon as possible. If anyone knows of someone who might be interested, they can reach out directly to the committee. This position is critical to the budget and the growth of the University of Maine.

### **III. Resolution in Support of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Initiative**

Hereby, University of Maine Faculty Senate recognizes contributions of knowledge and information sharing to student experiences, growth, and opportunities at the University. The Senate therefore supports and has interest in engagement with the UMaine administration on proposed efforts to coordinate annual symposia, conferences, and related activities at UMS campuses in spring semesters to provide mechanisms to showcase the diverse student research, scholarship, and create activities within the UMS with internal and external audiences.

One question from Sabrina Deturk, there is a typo, should be creative activities, says create activities in the last line of the resolution.

Resolution: **APPROVED**

Follow up research and scholarship committee, look at recording

### **IV. Discussion: Sodexo Transition**

#### ***Comments from Kelly Sparks***

Earlier in the week, a meeting was held to discuss the dining program at the University of Maine. The question of whether it was a financial decision was raised and the answer was no, not necessarily. The dining program at the University of Maine has been good, with very talented catering and dining staff. However, they have been understaffed and have been keeping everything together with tape and string while delivering quality food and programs. They have

not been able to invest in them or move to the next level of dining program. This partnership with Sodexo brings industry expertise and resources, access to systems, robots, and ideas and concepts around nutrition and food delivery, at an equal or slightly lower cost than if they were to do it internally. It also brings capital to the table that the University of Maine doesn't have, allowing them to update facilities and refresh. The partnership is still in the early stages of forming and the contract will be individualized for the Orono campus. The objective is to work with Sodexo and start priority setting to find what the future program looks like. Input from students will be taken into account, with additional rounds of student engagement in the spring. The focus will also be on student life, student athletes, and working with teams to make the transition possible. The transition will start in January and be fully implemented by the end of the spring semester. A 30-60-90 day and then annual plan will be created and reviewed in early March, with regular meetings to hold Sodexo accountable that will move into a monthly cadence.

### ***Comments from Student Government***

Allysa Ciasullo, the student body president, has talked with Sodexo leadership and feels a Sodexo deal will be beneficial to UMaine. There will be no reduction in employee wages, with raises in some cases. The employee benefits packages will be comparable. There are plans for the employees to be able to get employee parking passes that are already in the works. Reopening Wells and the Oake's Room are top priorities for students as well as Sodexo and Sodexo has the recruitment tools to do so.. Sodexo has already held five or six listening sessions that are student driven to bring in the right solutions for the campus. They plan to continue these as well as an either bi-annual or annual meeting with administrators. They have expressed interest in focus groups with feedback as well as text feedback with real time answers. At Ms. Ciasullo's old university, they utilized Sodexo dining and they did hold these feedback sessions. They have an app that allows people to see their menu with customizable settings like to be able to see what foods you can eat with the allergies you might have. Going along with allergies. Sodexo, offers simple servings, usually as their main offering, which is free from the nine major allergens. Sodexo is also interested in more made to order food, which would also help out people who have allergies. Sodexo plans to stick with the same meal plans for the time being and change them with feedback and the university as needed. As for prices, the university will work with Sodexo on this, Sodexo has committed to donating leftover food to the Black Bear exchange in an even greater capacity than currently and even providing additional support to the Black Bear exchange. They also plan to donate meal swipes to those in need through their program. They have a sustainability coordinator whose job it is to bring farms together in Maine. This means more locally sourced food. They work closely with many, many local places such as Maine Grains to name just one. Many schools across the Northeast utilize Sodexo and UMaine Orono is the only school in the UMaine system that does not and for those reasons, Ms. Ciasullo personally supports this.

### ***Faculty questions and discussion***

Several faculty questions are concerned about maintaining commitment to local food and for some definition of what local food is. Ms. Sparks answers that both Sodexo and UMaine are very committed to local foods.

There is a question about how the Black bear pub is currently being used, Ms. Sparks answers that it is used by student life one night a week on Thursday, they are considering how to move towards reopening as well as other venues.

Margo Lukens adds that in the meetings of the President's DEI Council, one of the recommendations that they brought out in December 2020 was about dining and about culturally appropriate food choices with a wider variety of food choices for people practicing various dietary restrictions for religion or for whatever cultural reasons. They also noted that at the University of Maryland, they have a dining hall, named in honor of native people and that seems like an opportunity here at UMaine.

Brian Pitman says he has heard concerns about labor practices and asks whether the workers for Sodexo will be unionized or no. Stresses the importance that UMaine care for employees as they transition from UMaine to Sodexo. The answer from Ms. Sparks is yes and no, she says a number of different bargaining units will be impacted with some employees remaining in the union and others will transition to Sodexo employees. She is currently working with bargaining units to fully transition.

Stephanie Burnett asks if they plan to continue composting and programs like that. Ms. Sparks answers yes, that sustainability is important to both parties and they are very committed to maintaining that program.

Amanda Klemmer asks about the comparison between benefits packages being offered to new Sodexo employees that used to be UMaine employees. Ms. Sparks answers starting with ancillary benefits like parking, access to use of recreation facilities, access to childcare, all will be accessible to Sodexo employees as they will be treated like UMaine employees and will be set up with a Maine card. Its important that Sodexo employees feel like a part of the UMaine community are treated as a part of the community. As it relates to the transition of benefits, that is in bargaining right now in each of the unions. The goal is to keep them as close to where they are today and to be equitable across all of those groups as the transition is made.

MJ Sedlock has a question about part time employment, whether part time workers will get a good deal like the full time workers. Concern that new hires won't get full time and won't be treated as part of the community, creating a problem. Ms. Sparks answers that it is incumbent on admin but that for all conversations the HR director has been on site and listening to employees. She can't promise there won't be problems but Sodexo says they are committed to employees like UMaine is.

Sabrina Deturk has a question regarding employees making the transition from UMaine to Sodexo and it may be difficult to go to new Sodexo managers about this. There should be an avenue for them to hold people accountable. Ms. Sparks answers that they are providing multiple venues for employees to share concern. They are holding open office hours as well as inviting union reps to come in and be on site. President Ferrini-Mundy adds she held a office hour time for dining employees that had a good turnout with groups and individuals with long lists of questions which were passed to Ms. Sparks. They will always try to keep avenues for communication open.

There is an online question about the tuition waiver being available for Sodexo employees. Ms. Sparks answers that will change as things move forward but that a response will be sent out.

MJ Sedlock, Henri Akono and Elizabeth (Payne/Armstrong not sure) are on the transition planning committee and will participate in discussions in March. If anyone has thoughts after the meeting and have questions, you can bring those to them or Kelly Sparks directly.

Dee Nichols thanks the student government representative for helping bring together the report on

Sodexo and presenting it to the faculty senate.

## **V. Library Committee Update - Budget/Cuts**

Discussions open with the impact potential in reduction in databases and journals. The library will let them know what will be cut before it is cut to let people prepare, they will get that information this week or next week to get an idea of what will be cut. In the past, interlibrary loans have been a good option for faculty to get access to materials unavailable on campus.

Bob Rice adds that the list of cuts will go out this week and will go to the AAs associated with the deans of the colleges. That will be passed on to the departments and faculty in the college so they know in concept what would be cut.

Daisy Singh adds they have faced significant cuts in staffing and budget. The head of collections is looking into potential discounts from vendors to reduce the impact. The list of cuts will not be available this week, but it is likely that there will be a gap in resources at the end of the year. The IEEE renewal date is in spring, giving more time to address the situation. However, if the budget doesn't support it, the library won't be able to provide the necessary resources. The reason for the cuts is due to the limited staff and increasing workload, as well as external factors such as politics and the budget situation. The cuts are not only limited to databases, but also journal packages which could have a significant impact. Communication about the cuts will be provided by the end of the month for most, and later for IEEE. Despite the challenges, libraries have done well in providing resources with limited resources. Kelly Sparks has had discussions, but the library hasn't received an inflation rate increase. The landscape of what libraries can provide will change with the transition to OA and transformative agreements, affecting subscription plans. Some teachers are interested in immediate information for syllabi, and the library encourages everyone to use the databases so they can review the statistical information to see usage patterns.

There is a question online about the criteria used to determine what will be cut, and the statistics and platform used to analyze costs and determine the most cost-effective options. The discussion addresses the possibility of subscribing to individual journals instead of package deals that contain resources that aren't being used. Databases are being used for system-wide access.

Nuri Emanetoglu brings up that the senate has always been very supportive of libraries and that without a good library they are not a R1 university. He feels everyone needs access to those resources

Amanda says in executive meetings they discussed metrics that can be used and measured to determine what is getting cut such as using annual reports to see where people are publishing posts and downloading articles from. Essentially finding ways to show that faculty are using these

resources although statistics may not show it.

Dee Nichols asks when the list of cuts is provided, if there's an opportunity for each college to give feedback, to say we use this database a lot or the opportunity to question why it'd be cut and advocate for it to not be cut. Answered that if there is no funding they can only do so much, there are immediate cuts because of the calendar year renewal and if the money is not there, they're not sure. Dee responds saying the faculty senate's library committee have strong opinions and could offer motions to continue certain essential journals as it is really mission critical time for making decisions.

Mj comments that it was discussed in an executive committee meeting that it is very easy to download a PDF and then add a PDF on Brightspace but they could not tell you how to link to something in a database in the library system on Brightspace. And so making those instructions on how to do that available in more locations or sending an email blast once a semester that has the instructions about how to do that to make it a little bit easier for faculty to know how to do these things in the way that are the most productive so that it isn't each individual faculty members job to go find that information.

Question online on how these cuts will affect Machias due to them being tied to UMaine Orono's databases very intricately. Answer is since UMaine is basically one, any cuts will affect the entire system also.

Bob Rice comments that they recognize at the committee that these answers aren't satisfying, and they recognize how critical the mission of the library is. Rest assured, they will be on this until they get solid information and there will be appropriate workarounds when needed.

## **VI. Questions of the Administration**

*All Faculty Senators are invited to address a question to any member of the Administration during this time. Respectful questions on any topic of campus business are welcome.*

### **a. Updates on Mid-Year Budget Revision Progress**

No final decision has been made regarding budget cuts on campus. The administration has reached out to each academic unit and asked them to come back with a reduction and impact statement. However, they haven't received the statement from the library yet. The timing is tricky for the library since the end of the year decision is approaching. So far, no positions have been cut anywhere on campus and the vacancy lines haven't been filled with open positions. No terminations have taken place with the mid-year budget, and currently open positions won't be filled. On the administration side, faculty was recruited during the academic year while the administration was recruited mid-year. Four months into the academic year, it was understood that revenues were not meeting the target, making it difficult to start making budget changes mid-year. To mitigate the situation, the administration has pulled back on vacant positions in every area. This process is difficult because the direct operating expenses are used differently in

each unit, especially for the library which is used for collections, resources, facilities, and materials. The deans and administrative leaders have stepped up and dug into their budgets to minimize the impact of these reductions. A summary is expected in the next week or two, but there are no numbers to share yet. The final report will be presented to the Board of Trustees in early January. The fiscal year 23 is ending this month and they will rapidly move into fiscal year 24. This year is tight due to lower than expected enrollment and a large graduating class. The university will have to be creative in the coming years as they approach the budget differently. It will be a multi-year process to come up with sustainable, long-term plans that meet the enrollment trajectory and state appropriations. It's important to maintain the quality of the institution and serve students while thinking differently about the budget.

MJ has a comment about the NECHE report and that there is a line that says the system is in good financial standings to weather enrollment challenges and that it feels contradictory to the conversation that is taking place.

President Ferrini-Mundy responds, saying the NECHE report began a year ago and that most recent data is still unfolding. The system has been and continues to be in good financial shape. It's all about ratios of various kinds of quantities to other quantities including reserves, UMaine has been in good shape and continues to be. Enrollment is a single dip and every other campus has been on a downward slope for seven years. It's taken into account how it looks over time, and when UMaine has an enrollment drop and needs to go to reserves, that sends up alarms across the whole system. Discussions around this are robust. They will work with what they have for 23, Ms. Sparks adds there are healthy reserves that will be used. The reserves are decentralized, and being able to use all of those buckets strategically is a part of the solution.

There is a question where there has been any thought on going back to well prepared budget model from pre covid with involved incentives that would facilitate bringing in more revenue by allocating money.

President Ferrini-Mundy says it'd be fine to look at it, there is not a presentation of alternatives, it was really saying here's one model, if there's another look or modified rcm models or incentivizing revenue that doesn't go to full rcm, it's about working within a model UMaine knows well and fixing the big problems. UMaine has done things the same way for a long time. There are structural deficits that are hard to figure out but they figure them out every year and they will figure out this year. The goal is to fix long standing areas where the budget will have to be changed. To do all that and go to a rcm would be too much. Ms. Sparks adds they will be adding more metrics and what's been allocated in terms of base budget is the right amount. Ferrini-Mundy continues talking about the budget primer, a document that explains how UMaine does their budgeting and is worth a look for those interested.

MJ asks about fiscal year 24 planning. In the executive committee meeting, they wondered about the term mission critical and how that was criteria for cutting and hiring. What really does mission critical mean?

President Ferrini-Mundy answers saying it's nice to have a checklist but it doesn't work that way. To her, mission critical starts and ends with students. The work is about students and their safety and that is mission critical to President Ferrini-Mundy. They have to look at every budget question as is it a safety concern that needs to be addressed to be responsible for students. Getting into academic programs, they have tools already like the annual AAPR, annual academic program

report. That comes to provost and deans every fall with data on individual program, retention info, numbers of faculty, majors. That report is carefully reviewed at the college level and is reported to the board annually. That is a tool to use in the metrics conversation and that factors into the mission critical definition. She gives an example of an existing process, the cluster hire process, where the provost offered this opportunity to the academic units, and people wrote proposals for what they would like to prioritize as an interdisciplinary group of hires over time. That means that there were proposals written, an argument made, a rationale presented, some data offered, and then the selection process that narrowed all of those ideas down. When looking at a process that has given a bit of a picture, that can factor into mission critical. Paying people who've already done the work is mission critical. People who have external funding and grants that require them to do certain work that requires certain kinds of expenditures and is paid for externally is also considered mission critical. Again, there isn't any kind of a checklist, but just consider all of those factors. There is going to be the need to reset in some areas and rethink how to do that in FY24.

Dee Nichols asks about another question brought up at the executive committee meeting about possible state funding and legislative advocacy at the state level.

President Ferrini-Mundy describes how UMaine works with the legislature starting with Ryan Low, the vice chancellor for finance and admin, who is the key and lead person with the legislature. He has a background in state government, he knows about the state of UMaine's finances, investments, and projections. He is a real expert in the system and understands UMaine. With the state there's two big parts, work with the executive branch and the governor and her departments which all have interest in UMaine. Relationships with those departments are broad and deep. Building those relationships and demonstrating worth to the state for those departments. There is a meeting with the governor every 6 weeks to convey the good work of UMaine. Again, Ryan Low is the one interacting with the governor around budget. The goal with the legislature is to create a sense of how UMaine brings value to the state.

Amanda Klemmer has a comment about regional campuses having direct legislatures that are fighting for them and Orono doesn't have that. Idea to advertise to the whole state how important UMaine is and how much research impacts the state. To have a way to showcase the work done across the state and invite legislature to see that.

President Ferrini-Mundy responds that it is a great idea. There already are things like that like the day in Augusta, a legislative bus tour for 3 days of new legislators that will be stopping at UMaine this time in January. There are also zoom meetings that were organized with outside partners as it looks way better when partners are the ones telling these stories of UMaine's value and not UMaine themselves.

## **VII. Adjourn**

MJ updates on things coming in the spring as well as look to Kelly Spark to give numbers once back in the spring. There was talk having the chancellor come talk once a month, that is another discussion that time can be found for in the spring. MJ heard about concerns about printing services, a rep has agreed to come talk with the faculty senate about that. Robert Placido is leaving as the vice chancellor of academic affairs, Jeff St John will become the interim and he's asked to come speak with the senate as well. MJ thanks all faculty senators for a great semester and that she looks forward to continuing their work in the spring. **Meeting adjourned 4:32 PM**