

Minutes
Bloomington Faculty Council
March 16, 2021

1. Due the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting occurred remotely, via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 2:34 PM by Council President John Walbridge, presiding temporarily in place of Provost Lauren Robel. The minutes from March 2, 2021 were approved acclamation.
2. Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs Eliza Pavalko offered a memorial resolution in honor of Mitchell S. Novit.
3. President Walbridge began his comments by noting that the Executive Committee will be working over the coming weeks to collect year-end reports from each of the BFC committees. He observed that these reports create a useful record of committees' activities and help preserve momentum from one academic year to the next. A question was raised regarding what the format for BFC meetings will be next year. President Walbridge said he assumed that the Council would return to in-person meetings next year, given the recent announcement that the campus intends to resume mostly normal operations beginning in the fall.
4. The next agenda item was the Presiding Officer's report, but Provost Robel was late in arriving due to other obligations, so her report was temporarily delayed. Instead, the Council received an update regarding the CREM Committee's ongoing efforts to collect input regarding whether the Bloomington campus should develop its own policy regarding financial exigency. The update was offered by Barb Cherry and Paul Coats, Co-Chairs of the CREM Committee. Cherry began by reminding members of the Council that the matter at hand arose in response to recent changes to ACA-41, a UFC policy, not because of any pandemic-related circumstances. Alex Tanford, who was involved in the process of revising ACA-41, provided background information regarding those changes, which primarily aimed to guarantee faculty representatives from each campus a place at the table, even though, in reality, any major decisions regarding the management of crisis related to financial exigency would ultimately be made by the Trustees working in tandem with the University President. Effectively, the question at hand is how IUB would execute its responsibilities as a campus under the newly revised terms of ACA-41. During the question-and-answer period, one member inquired whether there should be any involvement of students. Another member asked a similar question regarding staff. Yet another member suggested approaching the question of who should be involved in terms of which community or communities would likely be impacted. Member Pisano stressed the importance of communication and transparency, in any case. President Walbridge inquired how the policies under immediate discussion related to other existing CREM policies. He also stressed the desirability of getting such matters sorted out in advance of an actual crisis, citing recent events at the University of Evansville as a potentially instructive case.

5. Provost Robel joined the meeting and resumed her role as the Council's presiding officer at 3:08 PM. She deferred the presiding officer's report in order to allow the agenda to proceed, but she did take a moment to caution members against making excessive use of the chat feature on Zoom, noting that it could not easily be integrated into the official record of the Council's proceedings.
6. The agenda next turned to a second reading of the proposed Resolution Regarding Academic Freedom Support for Non-Tenure Track Faculty. The measure was once again presented by Israel Herrera and Steve Sanders, Co-chairs of the Faculty Affairs Committee. Sanders outlined once again the pros and cons of five-year rolling contracts and reminded members that policy allowing for five-year rolling contracts had been approved at the previous meeting. He also noted that the resolution currently under being considered did not arrive at the Council floor with the unanimous support of all members of the Faculty Affairs Committee. Provost Robel thanked Sanders for his presentation but noted that the relative pros and cons of five-year rolling contracts was no longer the issue. The question at hand is whether five-year rolling contracts best protect the academic freedom of NTT faculty since that is the primary conceit of the resolution under consideration. Ted Miller then explained that what the proposed resolution does, in its most basic terms, is recommend that NTT faculty be given appointments that most resemble tenured (or at least tenure-track) appointments. Sanders noted that Miller's characterization of the proposed resolution's intended purpose differed markedly from his own recollection of how the resolution was discussed in the context of the Faculty Affairs Committee. Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs Eliza Pavalko then weighed into the discussion, noting that, in her estimation, five-year rolling contracts do not offer the best protection of the NTT faculty members' academic freedom. She noted that there is a difference between a reappointment decision and a dismissal, and also observed that rolling contracts actually require that reappointment decisions be made on an annual basis, whereas fixed contracts only allow for the question of reappointment to arise at the end of that contract. Provost Robel concurred with this characterization. John Carini then presented a statement on behalf of the Executive Committee of the local chapter of the AAUP. The statement expressed support for the following principles: that longer term contracts are better than shorter ones; that offering an option to choose between rolling contracts and fixed ones is better than not offering such an option; and that offering longer-term contracts and the ability to choose between rolling and fixed contracts is better still. Sanders then asked Robel and Pavalko how often NTT faculty report challenges to their academic freedom. Vice Provost Pavalko said she was unaware of any such reports during her time as VPFAA and noted that all faculty have the option to appeal to the Faculty Board of Review. Pavalko expressed concern that normalizing extended rolling contracts could incentivize more conservative decision making among deans where reappointment decisions are concerned. Colin Johnson noted he shared this concern, particularly given the fact that units are not allowed to carry budget deficits under the terms of RCM. Miller then observed that the faculty of the campus has changed in recent decades and insisted that something needed to be done to provide NTT faculty with greater protections. The discussion period concluded with Robel expressing her opposition to the proposed resolution on the grounds that she does believe it is the best way to protect academic freedom. Herrera then called for roll call vote. The

question was “Do you support the proposed resolution?” The results of the roll call vote were as follows:

Name	Yes	No
Allen, Karen		
Ansaldo, Jim		x
Aranyi, Rachel	x	
Banai, Hussein		
Banks, Karen		
Brauer, Jonathan		x
Bullock, Daniel		
Calloway-Thomas, Carolyn	x	
Carini, John	x	
Cherry, Barbara		x
Coates, Dakota		x
Coats, Paul	x	
Cohen, Rachael		x
Daleke, David		x
Davis, Allen	x	
Degner, Dee		
Deliyannis, Constantine		x
Duncan, J	x	
Elsner, Ann	x	
Eskew, Kelly		x
Fichman, Pnina	x	
Fleming, Jackie		x
Frazier, Lessie	x	
Gales, Linda		
Gill, Brian	x	
Gold, Jason		
Guerra-Reyes, Lucia	x	
Gupta, Nandini		
Henshel, Diane	x	
Herrera, Israel	x	
Hodgson, Justin		x
Jennings, Larissa	x	
Johnson, Colin		x
Johnson, Kari		
Kloosterman, Peter	x	
Kravitz, Ben	x	
Krishnan, Shanker		
Kunzman, Robert		

Lester, Jessica	x	
Letsinger, Sally	x	
Levinson, Bradley		x
Libson, Scott		x
Lion, Margaret	x	
Loring, Annette		
Machado, Pedro		
McRobbie, Michael		
Milam, Heather		x
Miller, Theodore	x	
Nicholson-Crotty, Jill	x	
Northcutt, Miriam		
Olcott, Courtney		
Patil, Sameer	x	
Pavalko, Eliza		x
Peters, Chuck		x
Pisano, Linda		x
Raymond, Angie		x
Reck, Cathrine	x	
Richerme, Lauren	x	
Robel, Lauren		x
Sanders, Steve		x
Shea, Elizabeth	x	
Simpson, Marietta		x
Syed, Ruhan		
Thomassen, Lisa	x	
Tirey, Samantha		
Walbridge, John	x	
Willis, Erik		
Wyrzynski, Stephen		x
Zaleski, Jeffrey		
Zorn, Kurt		x

The proposed resolution was adopted by a vote of 27 members in favor and 23 opposed.

7. The next item on the agenda was a proposed extension of a special exception for test-optional applications for specific applicant populations. The measure was presented by J Duncan and David Rutkowski, Co-Chairs of the Educational Policies Committee, and Sacha Thieme, Assistant Vice Provost and Executive Director of Admissions. The proposed measure would simply extend an expansion of the pool of applicants entitled to avail themselves of the test-optional application process that was approved last year at the

outset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lisa Thomassen noted that the EPC very much supported such an extension. A brief, uncontentious discussion then ensued regarding the success of the test-optional admission program generally. The measure itself passed with the support of 96% of voting members.

8. The next item on the agenda was a proposed set of amendments to BL-ACA-H10, Indiana University Bloomington's Policy on Accommodations for Religious Observances. The proposed amendments were presented by Israel Herrera and Steve Sanders, Co-chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee. Sanders noted that the proposed amendments were initiated at the request of the VPFAA. They involve the alteration of some terminology and amend the requirement that students make requests for accommodations during the first two weeks of the semester. This was a first reading of the proposed measure, so no action was taken.
9. The next item on the agenda was a set of proposed amendments to BL-ACA-D9, the Bylaws of the Bloomington Faculty Council of Indiana University. The proposed amendments were presented by Rachael Cohen, Parliamentarian and Chair of the Constitution and Rules Committee. The proposed amendments would explicitly empower the BFC Executive Committee to create special committees and task forces on an ad hoc basis. They also describe procedures by which such committees and task forces may be staffed. This was a first reading of the proposed measure, so no action was taken.
10. Having disposed of all other agenda items, discussion then returned to the previously delayed Presiding Officer's report. Provost Robel noted, happily, that campus recreational facilities will begin reopening to faculty and staff soon. She also noted that the Restart Committee is still discussing whether vaccinations should be required in the fall. This prompted a discussion about whether instructors would have the option to teach remotely if they have continuing concerns. Provost Robel explained the campus leaders will continue to assess the situation but encouraged everyone to plan for a return to in-person in fall. She also noted, however, that those with concerns always have the option of pursuing some sort of accommodation by way of the ADA accommodations process. By way of conclusion there was a brief discussion about the logistics surrounding spring commencement and recent actions of the legislature related to weapon possession of college campuses.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Colin R. Johnson, BFC Secretary