University Faculty Council  
Annual Report 2011-2012  
April 27, 2012

Membership

*Arts & Sciences*: Catherine Bagwell, Jennifer Cable (chair), Sheila Carapico, Joanna Drell, Jan French, Jennifer Erkulwater (secretary), Dorothy Holland, Woody Holton, Julie Laskaris, Erling Sjovold

*Business*: Paul Clikeman, Shakun Mago, KimMarie McGoldrick

*Jepson*: Gary McDowell

*Law*: Chris Cotropia, Kristen Osenga

*Professional & Continuing Studies*: Patricia Strait

Subcommittee membership for 2011-12

*Distinguished Educator Committee*: Catherine Bagwell  
*Retirement Policy and HR Benefits Committee*: Joanna Drell, Dorothy Holland  
*Provost Advisory Committee*: Jennifer Cable, Chris Cotropia, Gary McDowell, KimMarie McGoldrick, Patricia Strait  
*Faculty Governance*: Sheila Carapico, Julie Laskaris, Erling Sjovold  
*Child Care*: Chris Cotropia  
*Faculty Information List-Serv review*: Paul Clikeman, Jan French, Kristen Osenga

Distinguished Educator Committee membership for 2011-12

Catherine Bagwell (A&S, UFC representative)  
Tom Wren (Jepson and previous winner)  
Amy Howard (CCE and Academic Affairs Council)  
Shari Motro (Law, at large representative)  
Andy Litteral (Business, at large representative)  
Cathy Fisher (Professional & Continuing Studies, at large representative)  
Erin Maxwell (class of 2014 senate, student government representative)  
Adrian Bitton (class of 2009, alumna representative)

Topics addressed by University Faculty Council (UFC) throughout the 2011-12 academic year:

1. **Provost Evaluation**: UFC revisited the Provost evaluation, administered in April of 2011 by the Center for Creative Leadership, throughout the academic year. Over the summer, the chair of UFC met with the Provost to discuss the raw data gleaned from the survey. This data was (within the
boundaries of confidentiality) reported to UFC at the 10/6/11 meeting. Questions remained about how the survey, 360 by Design, was benchmarked against higher education participants. UFC made repeated requests for data from the Center for Creative Leadership (the Provost was very cooperative in soliciting this data). The net result was that UFC was able to compare confidential data from the Provost’s evaluation with customized norms from evaluations of approximately 5,000 leaders in higher education. A document chronicling the Provost evaluation and subsequent follow-up will be available on Blackboard by 5/30/12.

2. **Shared UR values discussion:** Valerie Wallen, Director of Organizational Learning and Development, spoke with UFC about faculty involvement in a community discussion concerning shared UR values specifically related to the workplace. UFC heard her presentation at the 9/2/11 meeting. UFC expressed the need to both clarify the distinction between discussing values and imposing values, and to determine how the resulting value statements might have an impact on academic freedom. UFC, after additional discussion at the 10/6/11 meeting, sent the following to Ms. Wallen, copying the Provost:

   UFC understands that faculty participation in the survey is entirely voluntary, however we recommend the following action be taken so to avoid unintended pressure on tenure-track faculty to participate in the survey:
   That, when reaching out to UR faculty about participating in the shared conversations about UR values, inquiry be sent to all faculty in all divisions simultaneously, University-wide, rather than dividing outreach into groups according to schools, departments or divisions.
   UFC supports the belief that, only in this way, will all faculty have the opportunity to opt-in or opt-out without pressure; if divided into smaller groups, such as schools or departments, it is likely that pressure could, unintentionally, be applied to faculty who would prefer to refrain from participation.

3. Dorothy Holland and Joanna Drell, UFC representatives on the Retirement Policy and HR Benefits Committee, reported to UFC following their attendance at the HR October meeting. Specifically, their report concerned benefit enhancements, primarily offering suggestions as to how faculty could best navigate the benefit plans.

4. **Art installation policy:** Associate Provost Joan Neff brought this policy before UFC at the 10/6/11 meeting. The policy outlines the process for the installation of art across our campus. This presentation was informational only; no action was required.

5. The **Code of Organizational Ethics and Integrity** policy, in draft form, was brought before UFC by University General Counsel Shannon Sinclair and Associate Provost Joan Neff. Quoting from the memo to UFC offering context
for the Code, Ms. Sinclair wrote: While the University of Richmond has had a long standing commitment to regulatory compliance, our efforts have been decentralized and have not been part of a coordinated compliance program. Faced with significant growth in the number and the complexity of laws and regulations governing higher education, the University, like other colleges and universities, decided to establish a formal compliance program to coordinate and monitor regulatory compliance across the University. UFC reviewed the draft of the policy at the 12/1/11 meeting, readily acknowledging the need for a formal compliance program for institutions of higher learning. The policy draft was then taken to faculty meetings across the schools as informational prior to being finalized. The Board of Trustees approved this policy at their February meeting.

6. **Discussion of overlap of courses and areas of expertise across the schools:** It was noted that some coordination in hiring across the schools would prevent unneeded redundancy. UFC members discussed various ways of providing coordination, including facilitating communication between deans and adding a more complete description of research interests and expertise to faculty course webpages. Follow-up after the meeting with Associate Provost Joan Neff indicated that, even though we expect some overlap as we expand our disciplinary boundaries, we are in the process of creating a University-wide database which will identify faculty areas of expertise across the schools.

7. **Investigation into ways to verify students’ claims of sickness and health problems:** This topic was raised during the 12/1/11 meeting. Follow-up with Deans Landphair and Boehman indicated that faculty could best manage this problem with a clearly outlined attendance policy in their syllabi. The UR Health Center does not issue written excuses (UFC understands that this practice is not unusual, having reviewed the results of a brief study of student absence policies at several institutions of higher learning, undertaken by the Westhampton Dean’s Office). Deans Landphair and Boehman agreed that faculty should feel free to verify health claims with the Westhampton and Richmond Dean’s offices.

8. **University of Richmond Faculty External Consulting Policy:** Provost Allred presented a draft of this policy at the UFC 1/13/12 meeting. UFC reviewed the policy and recommended changes which were then sent to the Provost. The resulting draft was circulated once more before UFC, then was introduced by Provost Allred to all faculty through meetings with the individual schools, incorporating suggested changes following each meeting (this revised draft was submitted to UFC in late February). At the 3/1/12 UFC meeting, committee members discussed the most recent draft of the proposal in preparation of the final version, presented to University faculty at the 3/15/12 meeting.
9. **Update on the campus master plan:** At the UFC 2/3/12 meeting, Vice President for Business and Finance Hossein Sadid, and interim Associate Vice President for Facilities Andrew McBride shared updates on the campus master plan. Themes include accessibility, student life, sustainability and a culture of excellence.

10. **Changes in Retirement plan:** Associate Vice President for Human Resources Carl Sorenson and Laura Dietrick, Director of Compensation and Benefits, presented changes to the Retirement Plan at the 3/1/12 UFC meeting. Dietrick and Sorensen explained that, during the previous year, the Board of Trustees approved the formation of an investment committee to recommend changes to the University’s 403(b) Retirement Plan. The committee, following consultation with the advisory firm Sageview, decided to reduce the number of fund plans by eliminating redundant plans and those with fees, thus making plan choices easier to understand. The transfer will occur on 6/1/12.

11. **Benchmarking Faculty Salaries:** UFC members received an update on the benchmarking of faculty salaries from Provost Allred at the 3/1/12 meeting. The Provost explained the reasons behind the benchmarking: namely, to ensure in the long-term that UR does not lose faculty because salaries are not competitive and to advance the goal of closing gaps in salary. Faculty whose salaries will be affected will receive letters to that effect in May. Faculty who will not receive an adjustment will not receive a letter.

12. **Additional discussion items:** Throughout the course of the 11-12 academic year, UFC engaged in general conversation about a number of topics raised by committee members. Though none of these discussions led to specific actions, the following items or concerns were brought forward: transparency in faculty salary decisions (particularly in A&S), faculty governance, and Phi Beta Kappa policies (in particular, the application of “bonus” points for A+ grades as well as the concerns that our students who are not majoring in the traditional disciplines may be excluded from Phi Beta Kappa consideration).

13. **UFC leadership for 2012-13:** At the 4/6/12 UFC meeting, Patricia Strait was elected to serve as UFC chair for academic year 2012-13 and Joanna Drell was elected to serve as UFC secretary.

I would like to thank the members of University Faculty Council for their outstanding service during this academic year. In particular, I would like to recognize Jennifer Erkulwater for her exceptional and deeply appreciated efforts as UFC secretary.

Respectfully submitted by

Jennifer Cable
Chair, University Faculty Council, 2011-12