

Minutes  
Bloomington Faculty Council  
November 3, 2020

1. Due the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting occurred remotely, via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 2:32 PM by Provost Lauren Robel. Prior to commencing regular business, the Council received a brief tutorial about how to use of the polling feature on Zoom, which will be used during remote meetings to facilitate voting. The minutes from October 6, 2020 were approved with 100% of voting members in favor.
2. Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs Eliza Pavalko offered a memorial resolution in honor of Maryellen Bieder.
3. Council President John Walbridge apprised members of the disposition of several matters recently brought to the Executive Committee for consideration. A proposed resolution originating in the Benefits Committee that would have encouraged the campus to expand its interpretation of certain provisions of the Paid Family Leave for Academic Appointees policy (ACA-50) was referred back to the Benefits Committee, due to jurisdictional concerns, and concerns regarding practicality under currently circumstances. A list of recommendations having to do with Non-Tenure-Track Faculty was referred to the Faculty Affairs Committee for consideration. Two proposed measures originating in the Educational Policies Committee related to grading policy during the pandemic were advanced for consideration and placed on the agenda. A third proposal, also originating in the Educational Policies Committee, was referred back to that body for further consideration. President Walbridge also notified members that the University Faculty Council is currently occupied with the question of next year's academic calendar. Although the matter remains under discussion, he anticipates the adjustments to next year's calendar will closely resemble those made to this year's academic calendar.
4. Provost Robel began her remarks by congratulating the entire IUB community on having made it through so successfully to the eleventh week of a very challenging semester. She once again thanked a number of colleagues who have played pivotal roles in designing and implementing IU's response to the pandemic. She noted as well that the university's COVID testing labs are now up and running, including the lab located on the IUB campus. These labs will allow IU to conduct what she characterized as "an astonishing number of tests." Although most students will be departing campus soon, mitigation testing will continue. This means faculty and staff can expect to be selected for mitigation testing more often than they have up to this point in the semester. Provost Robel reported that the campus' situation continues to be excellent. We have certainly achieved our goal of making it safer to be part of the IUB community than not. She did note, however, that infection rates throughout much of the state are climbing at an alarming rate. Given the imminent departure of students, the campus' focus will soon shift to departure testing, although mitigation testing will continue throughout the intersession, as noted previously. Arrival testing will resume next semester during the week preceding the resumption of face-to-face instruction. Faculty and staff seeking departure or arrival testing should make use of the Optum site, which offers free,

efficient, on-demand testing. Finally, Provost Robel offered “a huge thank you” to all the groups on campus that worked so hard to register first-time voters. These include the PACE Program, student government groups, and the Black Student Union. She noted that all the campus cultural centers plan to host listening and support sessions in the days following the national election, and she also reported that the campus had activated its emergency operations center, something it often does in advance of events of major national importance. Members inquired about a number of issues including eligibility requirements for the Academic Leadership Program and the campus’ response to new H-1B visa requirements.

5. Discussion then turned to proposed amendments to BL-ACA-D9, the Bylaws of the Bloomington Faculty Council. As former BFC President Alex Tanford explained on behalf of the Constitution and Rules Committee, the proposed amendments would alter the current process for filling vacant seats on the Council in several ways. The most significant of these would be to move from our current third-party nomination process to a self-nomination process. Members of the Constitution and Rules Committee argued that this change will streamline the annual election process. They believe it is also likely to increase the number of candidates willing to stand for election for certain seats on the council. Customarily, revisions to the Bylaws require two readings, so no action was taken on this measure, beyond a brief discussion.
6. The next item on the agenda was B15-2021, a proposed policy amendment to extend the auto-W deadline during the COVID-19 pandemic. J Duncan presented the proposal on behalf of the Educational Policies Committee. Duncan explained that the measure is only intended to apply to undergraduate students and is strongly supported by the EPC. It was also noted that the measure is meant to provide both students and instructors with additional flexibility and relief, given current circumstances. Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Kurt Zorn proposed a slight adjustment to the proposed amendment’s language, altering the proposed requirement that students consult with advisors prior to withdrawing to something that is strongly encouraged. This motion carried with 96% support. The measure was then adopted as amended with 91% support.
7. The final item on the agenda was B16-2021, a proposed policy regarding withdrawal from all subjects during the COVID-19 pandemic. The measure would allow students to withdraw from all subjects simultaneously under circumstances where their overall performance has been negatively impacted by the pandemic. As J Duncan explained, withdrawal from all subjects is, in most cases, a much more consequential action than withdrawal from an individual course. As he also explained, however, it can be the most appropriate one for students who have endured truly catastrophic experiences during a particular term. That is why most units already have procedures in place that facilitate unilateral withdrawal, under certain circumstances. The proposed measure therefore reflects an administrative practice that effectively already exists in many quarters around campus. The measure carried with 100% support.

The meeting adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

Colin R. Johnson, BFC Secretary