

Governance Council

Report to the University Senate- Wednesday, April 13, 2022

Sydney Faught, GOV Chair 2021-2022

-GOV met on 3/16

-we decided on a date for the shared governance forum (took availability of SGTF members, other upcoming meetings—senate, SEC, Spring Faculty address, CAS Faculty Council, & Council of Chairs—into consideration), forum will be held over Zoom on April 11th 3:30pm-5pm

-I emailed Keith Landa, current UFS President, to invite him to attend the forum (he accepted)

-there was unanimous consent from GOV members present to bring forward a Resolution on Defending Academic Freedom, based on the resolution passed by the executive committee of UUP

-Senate Secretary, as Chair of Liaison and Elections Committee drafted correspondence with preliminary slate of at-large and UFS candidates to be distributed to campus

-Senate Forum on Shared Governance took place on 4/11 from 3:30pm-5pm, approximately 50 attendees

I have summarized some of the major themes, comments, and recommendations from the forum below:

- 1) Our current Senate structure with the 3-year leadership track has 3 different roles with very different responsibilities and the roles are taken up in very rapid succession—by the time you get out of each position, you have a better understanding of the role/what's required but you immediately must move on to a different role the following year. This structure makes it very difficult to communicate with faculty because people have to learn these roles with expansive responsibilities in a short period of time.
- 2) Senate has typically been competent at getting the day-to-day business done, but has been less effective at self-reflective analysis. Many departmental senators are appointed by a department chair, rather than elected, and it doesn't seem that there is consistent or regular "reporting back" of Senate matters to departments from their representatives. Senators need to think of themselves more distinctly as "Representatives" and make space to share updates with departments and (in the other direction) need to participate in/provide feedback on Senate activities *on behalf of* their departments. To enable this more representative model, Senate materials/communications need to be provided earlier so faculty have time to actually solicit feedback from their departments when needed before an item is voted on at Senate meetings
- 3) There is a fundamental lack of contingent faculty on governance bodies which is a detriment given the number of classes/students we rely on contingent faculty to teach
- 4) Shared leadership only works if people step up and it has been an extreme challenge to get people to stand up and take responsibility at the leadership level; we need to encourage people to nominate or self-nominate, we have historically had a lack of people willing to take on these jobs

- 5) For us to ask faculty to step up, we need to see the value via 1) course releases and 2) committees need to not be demoralized by doing all of this work and then having their work undermined by being re-hashed/repeated at the Senate level
- 6) Faculty are cynical, because the form in which they are asked to consult does not match their expertise and they feel that they are not consulted on things that they believe they *should* be consulted on.