

**University of Washington**  
**Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning**

June 10, 2021

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Zoom**

**Meeting synopsis:**

1. Call to order
  2. Review of the minutes from May 13, 2021
  3. Chair's Update
  4. Guests: Jason Johnson
  5. FCWA item
  6. Reviewing & Prioritizing proposed 2021-22 FCTL charge letter
  7. Good of the order
  8. Adjourn
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**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:34 a.m.

**2. Review of the minutes from May 13, 2021**

The minutes from May 13, 2021 were approved as written.

**3. Chair's Update**

Chair Halverson thanked the council for their work over the last academic year and recognized the members retiring from the council.

The Reasonable Accommodation subcommittee shared an update on their working definition of "reasonable accommodation" (Exhibit 1). The Class C resolution shared at the previous meeting will be finalized Autumn 2021 in preparation for the SEC meeting of the 21-22 academic year.

**4. Guests: Jason Johnson**

Jason Johnson (Undergraduate Academic Affairs, Senior Associate Dean and Associate Vice Provost) joined the council to discuss the Task Force on Teaching Evaluation (Exhibit 2) charged to review foundations on evaluations of teaching. It was comprised of faculty council members from FCTL, Student Affairs, Race, Equity & Justice, Faculty Affairs, Tri-Campus Policy, and Gender, Equity & Justice.

It was noted the task force should be reconstituted for the 2021 academic year with senate leadership support. Members were interested in understanding the statistical changes in evaluations from departments and colleges during COVID.

**5. FCWA item**

The council reviewed the latest draft of the FCWA letter to the provost on support for highly impacted faculty (Exhibit 2). Members noted questions around equity for research and teaching faculty, publicizing data, and the distribution of support from impact assessments.

The council noted support of the intention of the letter but had several reservations on specific details and requests for clarification.

## **6. Reviewing and Prioritizing proposed 2021-22 FCTL charge letter**

Chair Halverson shared an outline of proposed agenda items for the 21-22 academic year such as standardization of Major GPA calculations, accessibility of course materials for DRS, flexibility of merit, faculty peer review, teaching evaluations, and finalizing reasonable accommodation.

A member noted the NW accreditation commission recommended reviewing the assessment of student learning in undergraduate education (pre-major gen ed).

A guest mentioned using demographics to see the gaps in classes (1<sup>st</sup> gen, income, transfer, etc). They suggested a focus should be looking at certain concerns for faculty to know going into a teaching environment.

Another member mentioned working with FCICT on the Panopto (recording courses) issue. Post-COVID research would have long-term changes to implement.

## **7. Good of the Order**

Nothing was stated.

## **8. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

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*Minutes by Alexandra Portillo, faculty council analyst, xanport@uw.edu*

**Present:** **Faculty Code Section 21-61 A:** Fred Bookstein, Lynn Dietrich, Kimberlee Gillis-Bridges, Thomas Halverson (chair), Kathleen Peterson, Timea Tihanyi, Rania Hussein  
**Faculty Code Section 21-61 B:** Ashlee Abrantes  
**Guests:** Tom Lewis, Mary Pat Wenderoth, Jason Johnson

**Absent:** **Faculty Code Section 21-61 A:** Kristin Gustafson, Ruben Casas  
**Faculty Code Section 21-61 B:** Kat Eli, Deepa Banerjee, Clara Coyote,  
**President's designee:** LeAnne Jones Wiles

### **Exhibits**

Exhibit 1 – Class C Resolution (1)

Exhibit 2 – FCWA draft\_Support for Highly Impacted Faculty

## Draft of Class C Legislation on Operationalizing Reasonable Accommodation

Subcommittee Members: Deepa Banerjee, Kat Eli, Sean Gehrke, Rania Hussein, LeAnne Wiles.

**Background:**

Faculty are being asked to make “reasonable accommodations,” outside of the scope of disability request, for students around a number of things related to teaching and learning (e.g., absence from class for health/religious observance), but there is very little guidance for faculty as to what a “reasonable” accommodation is, and who should have the authority to define what is “reasonable.”

The Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning (FCTL) has been asked to define and operationalize what a “reasonable accommodation” is that meets UW code, and is useful and fair to both faculty and students. Accordingly, During winter quarter 2021 FCTL launched a survey to explore accommodations requested by students, outside of the scope of disability requests, for students around a number of factors related to teaching and learning. The survey was sent through the Senate to all voting faculty in the 3 campuses. 364 faculty completed the survey and the results of the survey are available at

The FCTL used the results of this survey to guide the making of this class C resolution.

**Recommendation**

WHEREAS the academic year of 20-21 during the pandemic **and social unrest in our country** necessitated faculty to provide accommodations to students and practice flexibility with course requirements and deliverables.

WHEREAS faculty seek general guidance on what is considered “reasonable” accommodation and what not, as the university is transitioning back to in-person instruction. Currently there is limited guidance for faculty and instructors as to what **constitutes** a “reasonable” accommodation, and who should have the authority to define what is “reasonable”.

Whereas departments, units, and schools have different policies and practices pertaining to their curriculum needs and expected outcomes, **and should be afforded some degree of flexibility in their determination of what constitutes a “reasonable” accommodation within the context of their teaching/learning environment.**

Therefore, the Senate recommends that departments, units, and schools consider the following:

1. **To maximize consistency and fairness, departments, units, and schools should formally engage in a process to define (operationalize) for faculty what will constitute a “reasonable” accommodation within their context. This definition should set the boundaries as to what the department, unit, and school recognizes are the limits for granting accommodations for students. Faculty can then work within these parameters, and stay reasonably consistent and fair/equitable in their granting of accommodations to all students.**
2. **Departments, units, and schools should share their definition of a “reasonable” accommodation with all faculty and students.**
3. **Departments, units, and schools should review their definition of a “reasonable” accommodation on a regular and consistent basis (yearly, at a minimum), and make corrections or updates when appropriate.**

4. If cases arise where “reasonable” is not clearly or sufficiently defined by a department, unit, and/or school, they are encouraged to support their faculty in making decisions determined to be in the best interest of their students and courses.

Dear Dr. Ana Mari Cauce, President of the University of Washington, and Dr. Mark Richard, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

The COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing racial injustice, and economic crises over the last 16 months have caused significant suffering among our staff and colleagues. It is well-documented that the impact of these crises is disproportionately carried based on demographic status (e.g., caregiver status, race, ethnicity, disability status, gender identity). Unfortunately, individuals from marginalized backgrounds were the most vulnerable prior to these crises, and the unrelenting challenges faced during these crises lead to lower productivity, burnout, and potentially leaving our institution.

As noted in the rationale for the Class C Legislation Concerning Equity for Caregivers at UW: "Our institution actively recruited the best and the brightest. Without strong and immediate action, our institution could see the reversal of hard-fought gains in representation. All faculty at UW, no matter their gender, race, or caregiving status, deserve equitable access to support and accommodation to ensure people can stay in their careers, especially during this crisis. Equity requires us to re-examine how we define contribution and productivity, and how we distribute labor, seen and unseen. With meaningful commitment, UW may yet retain its best and brightest." We stand by these assertions and again ask leadership to take strong and immediate action to help retain and support its most impacted populations.

Supporting our most vulnerable and those staff and faculty who assist these populations is the right thing to do, is in alignment with the mission and vision of the University, and it is also the most economically advantageous next step. Research indicates that burnout or emotional exhaustion is a significant predictor of turnover (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). Estimates suggest that it costs an organization 6-9 months of an employee's salary to replace them (SHRM, 2019), and those costs likely only increase when considering individuals from diverse backgrounds.

We were happy to see the leadership make rapid moves in response to the Class C Legislation. We are eager to see you make an enduring shift that transforms the ways our institution invests in our faculty.

Specifically, we request leadership to:

- Provide substantial permanent funding for grants to be allocated to affected instructors and staff across our three campuses for:
  - one quarter recovery sabbaticals (and commensurate relief relevant to staff positions)
  - teaching buy-out to allow faculty to restart and renew their research programs.
  - and/or support service/research

Providing permanent funding and ensuring that those who are most in need are awarded grants will help retain those who are most impacted by these ongoing crises and address continued social injustice. Current retention practices require people to obtain competitive

**Commented [1]:** How do these examples help staff? Forgive me for not knowing if staff have sabbaticals...

**Commented [2]:** Could add something like "and commensurate relief relevant to staff positions"

**Commented [3]:** I'm not 100% clear on what we are actually asking for here? (additional pay for particularly taxing service loads? What would that be? Perhaps some sort of bonus to staff advisers who are bearing some of the load from students in crisis?)

offers, thereby requiring added labor of applying, burdening other institutions, and positioning our colleagues as already having one foot out the door. These grants are intended to enhance equity and be *proactive* retention efforts to increase commitment and engagement with the University.

- Mandate explicit guidance be shared with employees regarding the operationalization of long term “maximum flexibility” to adjust performance expectations. Publicly shared shifts in performance expectations and having those shifts explicitly operationalized in reviews would ensure that those most impacted are likely to be given the space to recover (e.g., Lepine et al., 2005).
- Publicize data to the UW Community showing statistics for salient outcomes (e.g., pay, promotion, performance evaluations, teaching evaluations, service obligations) for demographic groups who are disproportionately impacted during this crisis (e.g., COVID caregiver status, race/ethnicity, gender, and disability status). Research suggests that including objective factors such as analyzing salient outcomes by demographic group membership can help to correct for decision errors due to implicit bias (Banaji, Bazerman, & Chugh, 2003). In addition, pay disparity based on demographic group membership decreases when organizations are required to disclose outcome disparities (Bennedsen, Simintzi, Tsoutsoura, & Wolfenzon, 2019). These data will provide important information regarding if our equity goals are being translated into meaningful outcomes for affected employees.

We emphasize that this investment in our faculty and staff is necessary across all three campuses. Our campuses provide support differentially to marginalized groups (e.g., with Bothell and Tacoma Black student populations being double and triple the fraction on the Seattle campus); our institutional support should respond to those differences.

We invite and request a candid conversation to discuss the options and the actions the administration is prepared to take to defend the well-being of those most affected within our community. In addition to the discussion, we request a letter of response to summarize the planned actions of the administration that the Faculty Council on Women in Academia (Gender, Equity, and Justice) can include in our annual report.

#### References

Banaji, Mahzarin R., Max H. Bazerman, and Dolly Chugh. "How (Un)ethical are You?" *Harvard Business Review* 81, no. 12 (December 2003).

Bennedsen M., Simintzi E., Tsoutsoura M., Wolfenzon D. (2019). Research: Gender pay gaps shrink when companies are required to disclose them. *Harvard Business Review Digital Articles*

LePine, J. A., Podsakoff, N. P., & LePine, M. A. (2005). A meta-analytic test of the challenge stressor–hindrance stressor framework: An explanation for inconsistent relationships among stressors and performance. *Academy of management journal*, 48(5), 764-775.

Wright, Thomas & Cropanzano, Russell. (1998). Emotional Exhaustion as a Predictor of Job Performance and Voluntary Turnover. *The Journal of applied psychology*. 83. 486-93. 10.1037/0021-9010.83.3.486.

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