

2002

## AY 2001/2002 SEC meeting minutes: 01 Oct 10

Faculty Senate

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# USF Faculty Senate Archives

## SEC Minutes

October 10, 2001

### SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

October 10, 2001

### MINUTES

Present: Marion Becker, Jana Futch, Mary Kimble, Sara Mandell, Cheryl McCoy, Gregory Paveza, Sandra Reynolds, John Richmond, Jeff Ryan, Nancy Jane Tyson

President's Office: Judy Genshaft

Provost's Office: Phil Smith, Elizabeth Bird

Guests: Martin-Louis Vega, Merilyn Burke, Andrew Cannons, Harry Vanden

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

### SENATE PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (Gregory Paveza)

President Paveza announced that Provost Stamps was out ill and would not be at today's meeting. President Genshaft plans to be at today's meeting for part of the discussion of the Dr. Al-Arian situation. When she does arrive, President Paveza would like to request suspension of the order of the agenda and move to the general discussion of that particular issue. In addition, he requested the agenda be approved as published. A motion was made and seconded to accept his requests. The motion was unanimously passed.

Board of Trustees Chairman Richard Beard was called away on business and would not be at today's meeting. He will attend either the November or December meeting of the Senate Executive Committee (SEC).

President Paveza stated that he fully intended to come to today's meeting to offer a series of resolutions related to the affairs of the past few weeks. The first resolution he intended to put forth was to offer support for both Dr. Al-Arian and academic

freedom. The second resolution was to offer support for the university administration as it has attempted to deal with conflicting demands to protect academic freedom and to protect its citizens. He started from this position because he believed that it would be the leaderly thing to do. However, he backed away from that position as he came to believe that to come in with a set of resolutions would too narrowly confine and stifle debate. In the end, he believed that whatever resolutions came forward from this body and from the Senate, while they will have to be crafted by individuals, must reflect the collective wisdom of both this body and the Senate, not his personal beliefs and sentiments. Moreover, as he has participated in discussions about the current state of affairs, it has become clear to him that the beliefs and values surrounding the current issues reflect the pluralism of this institution. Thus, he hoped that the SEC can engage in discussion from which will emerge the sense of this body and ultimately of the Senate. At this point, President Paveza offered some personal thoughts which are appended and are included as part of the Minutes.

Senator-at-Large Mandell asked that it be read into the record that she objects to the bringing in of personal opinions in the SEC. She added that what President Paveza stated does not represent the viewpoint of all of the faculty. Although it represents the viewpoint of some of the faculty, it is highly personal, and she thinks it is wrong. She does not feel any of this belongs at the SEC meetings. President Paveza responded that her objections were duly noted for the record.

## DISCUSSION OF THE AL-ARIAN SITUATION

At this time, President Paveza recognized guest attendee Senator Harry Vanden to begin the discussion surrounding Professor Al-Arian. Senator Vanden stated that not only has Professor Al-Arian been victimized by the *O'Reilly Factor*, but the university community as well. He pointed out that this fact is what should be reflected upon and kept in mind as this situation unfolds. Another point made by Senator Vanden is that at a time like this it is important for members of this university to stand together and to stand solid and resist those who would slander this community. Therefore, there are members of the university community who would hope that reconsideration be given to placing Professor Al-Arian on leave. Further, that USF like other institutions in this society would, if necessary, take those measures to ensure his safety and that of the students and staff in the Computer Engineering Department.

President Genshaft attended today's meeting to present a brief rundown of what led her to make the decision she did regarding Professor Al-Arian. When Professor Al-Arian received a death threat through the Department of Computer Science in the College of Engineering, President Genshaft put Professor Al-Arian on leave with pay pending investigation. The investigation is on the death threat and on safety. It is not on Professor Al-Arian's current or previous work. She stressed that the issue is not about free speech, not about academic freedom, but about safety on this campus. There are death threats on other lives on this campus and not just on Professor Al-Arian. She does not think it is safe for him to return to this campus to teach his classes. Although President Genshaft thinks of this campus as safe and secure, security measures have been stepped up. Her decision about the time for Professor Al-Arian to return to campus is going to be based on recommendations

from the Chief of Police, the Dean of Engineering, and the Provost's recommendation as to whether or not there is a safe, secure environment. President Genshaft stated that this is a leave because of security. If Professor Al-Arian steps foot on this or any of our campuses or represents the university as he has, she will take some very strong action because she is very serious. She added that this is a threatening time for everyone and to this campus. President Genshaft reiterated that she does not have any intention whatsoever of doing anything that bars academic freedom or freedom of speech. To her this is purely a 100 percent security issue, and right now Dr. Al-Arian is a security risk on this campus.

College of Engineering Dean Louis-Martin Vega shared some of the events that occurred on the day that a death threat on Professor Al-Arian's life came to the Department of Computer Engineering. He reiterates and supports exactly what President Genshaft said. Dean Vega wants everyone to understand the concern about security on a day-to-day basis. Security is very heightened in the building where he has his office, where people are working, and in the surrounding areas. There are far less faculty and students coming in on the weekends to work.

Although there are other related issues that could be discussed, Dean Vega pointed out that the bottom line is that there truly is a legitimate safety concern right now. Secretary Futch asked Dean Vega if there was any idea how long the investigation would take. He replied that the investigation is in the hands of the security people on campus and there is no indication how long it will go on.

Vice President Becker indicated that she would like to see more leadership and discussion regarding zero tolerance for violence. In addition, she would like the leadership of the university to be talking about how unacceptable it is to have these death threats and how we will not be cowered by them and how we must stop the panic.

President Paveza stated that many of the e-mail messages he has received are conflictive about this issue. That is, people are clearly in support of academic freedom but looking at the danger that the threats have placed others and they feel there is some need to also support the administration's decision to place Professor Al-Arian on leave. Vice President Becker pointed out that freedom also means responsibility. She added that faculty should take seriously the decisions of those people who are the experts on safety and security.

At this point, President Paveza asked if there was any action that the Senate would like to take. Undergraduate Council Chair Sandra Reynolds asked if the Senate had been asked to take a position. President Paveza responded that not officially.

Graduate Council Chair John Richmond expressed concern about those faculty who have expertise in terrorism and security and were not consulted but could make a meaningful contribution from a value system that may or may not be at the table for discussion and policy making at the moment. If the faculty have contributions to make that inform this discussion and that represent a different value set than what is conferred from the policies that are now moving forward, he feels that the Senate has the responsibility to marshal those resources on behalf of the institution. Chair Richmond suggested the creation of an ad hoc committee through which the Senate could offer some advice to policy makers that exploits the considerable resources available. It would simply be in an advisory capacity. In response to Chair Richmond's recommendation, President Paveza read an e-mail from President

Genshaft's office that invited him or a designee to attend the first meeting of the Task Force on Campus Safety and Security on Friday, October 12, 2001, at 10:00 a.m. in the President's Conference Room. President Paveza is unable to attend, but Senator-at-Large Mandell will attend as his designee.

Vice President Becker asked that the SEC have a friendly discussion regarding Chair Richmond's recommendation of an ad hoc committee of the Faculty Senate on safety and security. She felt that it might be appropriate to convey to President Genshaft the Senate's eagerness to have a conversation, to be a part of a dialogue around this situation, and offer to her the opportunity to come back to the Senate with ways that would be compatible to her. President Paveza asked SEC members to step back from the position that has been put forward by some people that there was no consultation or discussion with faculty regarding President Genshaft's decision to place Professor Al-Arian on leave. Chair Richmond then clarified that his concern is the Senate has the responsibility to harvest the expertise from faculty that bears on terrorism and security and to offer that counsel. This is a separate issue than the one percolating about to the degree to which faculty should be routinely counseled about anything that pertains to major policy decisions. Under these special circumstances, he feels that the Senate has an obligation to offer advice to the administration. Chair Richmond feels that the Senate President already has a voice through monthly meetings with the President and the Provost.

Although she was in agreement with the idea of creating an ad hoc committee in the longer term, Past President Nancy Jane Tyson felt that a lot of time and effort should not be put into it until the Senate is sure it will be welcomed and received by the administration. In the short term, she thinks it is absolutely imperative that the SEC immediately put together a statement that defends academic freedom as an absolute value. Senator-at-Large Mandell countered that the members of the Senate have been elected to represent faculty in purely academic matters. The issue of academic freedom and Professor Al-Arian is co-joined with political overtones and political matters, and the Senate has not been elected to represent the faculty in political matters. Therefore, anything the Senate puts together will be taken to imply something concerning Dr. Al-Arian. Secretary Jana Futch stated that there is a way to come across in a statement as being in support of President Genshaft's decision, but the idea of academic freedom must not be thrown by the wayside.

Vice President Becker raised the question of whether it is a fact that this university has inadequate security. If so, how will the university get sufficient security? Is Dr. Al-Arian to be on leave forever, or is it now a responsibility that there is not security enough to take care of him? How is this going to play out so that the university can return to normalcy or Dr. Al-Arian can return to teaching in as quick a time as possible? She pointed out that there has not been much discussion on these issues and they need to be on the table and be addressed. President Paveza agreed that these were legitimate concerns, as well as what might some of the criteria be to indicate that the community is safe for Dr. Al-Arian's return to campus. Senator Vanden asked how Vice President Becker might phrase such a resolution to address the security issues to which she referred. In addition to Vice President Becker's questions regarding security, Senator Vanden stated that he hoped that someone convey at what point a newspaper in the Middle East picks up the fact that Dr. Al-Arian has been taken out of the university, that he has been threatened so much that he cannot function, and make a bad situation ten times worse.

At this time, discussion was held as to the wording for a resolution regarding the safety of the campus and its return to normalcy as soon as possible. Vice President Becker made the following motion to forward to President Genshaft: We are fully in support of President Genshaft's concern for safety and the convening of the Task Force of Campus Safety and Security. We request that all efforts be made to return campus life back to normal as soon as possible and request that information be provided as to the time frame for this to happen. The motion was seconded. As a point of information, Vice Provost Phil Smith stated that in her statement released to the faculty the previous week, President Genshaft indicated that she had asked the task force to complete its work by the end of the semester. Library Council Chair Mary Kimble pointed out that this motion gets away from what the SEC originally started out talking about which was an actual statement from the Senate condemning the death threats and in support of putting Dr. Al-Arian on leave for safety concerns. In addition, that in all of this the Senate must ensure that academic freedom is not impinged upon. After some discussion, Chair Kimble made the following amended motion: We condemn the death threats against Dr. Al-Arian, President Genshaft, and other members of the University of South Florida community. We support placing Dr. Al-Arian on leave for his safety and for the safety of the campus. We are fully in support of President Genshaft's concern for safety and the convening of the Task Force on Campus Safety and Security. However, in all of this, we must be sure that academic freedom is not impinged upon. The motion was seconded as amended and was unanimously passed.

A motion was made and seconded to suspend the time limit and to continue the agenda. The motion was unanimously passed.

## **REPORTS BY OFFICERS AND COUNCIL CHAIRS**

### **1. Committee on Committees (Cheryl McCoy)**

Committee on Committees Chair Cheryl McCoy presented the following list of committee and council nominations which were approved by the Committee on Committees on October 3, 2001:

#### **COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES NOMINATIONS FOR FACULTY SENATE STANDING COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS FALL SEMESTER 2001**

##### Academic Computing

Steven Cooke (ARCH)  
Gil Rodman (CAS)

##### Faculty Evaluation and Standards Committee

Elizabeth Ethridge (SAR)  
Cecile Lengacher (CON)  
Barbara Orban (COPH)



## Graduate Council

Nancy Cole (CVPA)  
Kendra Daly (MARS)  
Sara Mandell (CAS)  
Roy Soto (COM)

## Honors and Awards

Michael Mills (EDU)  
Jeanne Travers (CVPA)

## Instructional Technology

Carole Holsonback (CON)  
Thomas Terrell (CAS)  
A.J. Waltz (COB)

## Library Council

Linda Evans (LKLD)  
S. Joan Gregory (CON)  
Lihua Li (COM)

## Publications Council

Lois Gonzalez (CON)

## Research Council

Ellis Blanton (COB)  
David Crane (ARCH)  
William Miller (ENGR)  
Mary Lou Morton (EDU)

## University Honors Program

Jacqueline Nelson (COB)

President Paveza accepted this list as a motion from the Committee on Committees that these nominees be accepted by the SEC and forwarded to the Faculty Senate. The motion was unanimously passed.

### 2. Honors and Awards Council (Merilyn Burke)

Honors and Awards Council Chair Merilyn Burke attended today's meeting to present recommended revisions to the nomination guidelines for the Honorary Degree, the Theodore and Venette Askounes-Ashford Distinguished Scholar Award, the Distinguished Service Award, and the Jerome Krivanek Distinguished Teacher Award.

For the Honorary Degree, the following proposed revisions were made:

In addition, the nomination should also indicate the formal honorary degree/title sought (e.g., Doctor of Humane Letters). This title may be subject to change. Honorary degree titles ***previously*** awarded at USF ***are include: Doctor of Business Administration, Doctor of Education***, Doctor of Engineering, Doctor of Humane Letters, Doctor of Humanities, ~~Doctor of Law~~, Doctor of Science, ***and Doctor of Visual and Performing Arts.***

Chair Burke pointed out that these changes reflect the doctorates that are awarded by the university. President Paveza stated that since this comes as a report from a council, it was assumed that it has been moved and seconded, and opened the motion for discussion. There being none, he called to question and the motion was unanimously passed.

The following proposed revisions were presented for the Theodore and Venette Askounes-Ashford Distinguished Scholar Award:

Any member of the USF scholarly community may submit a documented nomination for the Distinguished Scholar Award of any person currently in "professorial rank" at USF. "Professorial rank" refers to faculty in ~~a tenure-earning track~~ ***in*** the rank of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor.

Chair Burke explained that the statement "a tenure-earning track" eliminates half of the faculty at the College of Medicine because they are not tenure-earning. Therefore, the Honors and Awards Council requested that this statement be removed so that it opens up the nomination process to include those faculty who are not in a tenure-earning position. Senator-at-Large Mandell recommended that it may be worth consulting the Ashford family regarding the proposed changes in the nomination guidelines. President Paveza decided to postpone making a final decision on the Council's request until this has been done by Chair Burke.

The proposed revision to the Distinguished Service Award nomination guidelines was as follows:

Any member of the University of South Florida community may submit documented nominations of persons holding an appointment in "professorial rank" at USF for the Distinguished Service Award. "Professorial rank" refers to faculty in ~~a tenure-earning track in~~ the rank of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor.

The motion to approve this revision was unanimously passed.

The Jerome Krivanek Distinguished Teacher Award nomination guidelines consisted of the following revision:

Any member of the University of South Florida community



may submit documented nominations of persons holding an appointment in "professorial rank" at USF for the Distinguished Teacher Award. "Professorial rank" refers to faculty in ~~a tenure-earning track in~~ the rank of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor.

The motion to approve this revision was unanimously passed.

Except for the Theodore and Venette Askounes-Ashford Distinguished Scholar Award, the three remaining proposed revisions will be presented for approval at the October 17<sup>th</sup> Faculty Senate meeting.

3. Library Council (Mary Kimble)

The report from the Library Council was postponed until the November meeting.

4. Research Council (Andrew Cannons)

Professor Andrew Cannons attended today's meeting on behalf of Research Council Chair Gary Mitchum to give a brief report. He clarified that although the university was reported on the *O'Reilly Factor* as being linked to the Center for Biological Defense, it was taken totally out of context. Everything taking place at the Center is purely research in an effort to defend the country.

## OLD BUSINESS

Undergraduate Council Housekeeping Issues (Sandra Reynolds)

This issue was postponed until the November meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

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