

## Faculty Senate meeting

25 February 2022

Senators in Attendance: Rex Strange, Kimberly Delaney, Brandon Field, Curt Gilstrap, Stephanie Young, Charles Conaway, Michael Strezewski, Jessica Mason, Marilyn Ostendorf, Sima Fortsch, Mary Doerner, Xavia Harrington, Laura Bernhardt, Matthew Hanka, Jason Fertig, Shannon Pritchard.



Other Attendees: Mohammed Khayum, Shelly Blunt, Shelby Clark, Kristalyn Shefvland, Edie Hardcastle, Amy Chan Hilton, Guoyuan Huang, Jul Davis, Cindy Deloney Marinio, Alisa Holen, Kyle Mara, Stella Ress, Aaron Trump, Cacee Hoyer.

- Held via Zoom meeting, called to order 2:32 pm.
- Approval of old minutes, 11 February 2022:
  - Version 2 of the minutes were distributed earlier. Minutes approved unanimously.
- Chair's Report: Rex
  - COVID-19 Presidential Task Force Meeting
    - Discussed whether to change current practices with regard to masks, plexi glass shielding, and contact tracing. The overwhelming advice was to NOT change practices and policies until the rates of positive tests diminishes.
    - The Steering Committee agreed with this advice and announced their decision earlier this week.
  - 2. Development Council
    - This council is responsible for determining the funding needs of the University to be underwritten by private gifts to the USI Foundation. This council also assists in planning solicitation of funds from private sources.
    - Members of the Development Council are asked to invite individuals to join as a team to consider how private gifts can help programs, departments, and/or colleges. Each team leader is then responsible for sending their team's report to Andrea Gentry and me no later than Friday, April 22, 2022.
- Provost's Report: Dr. Khayum
  - Some individuals will be on campus next Monday and Tuesday as part of one of the project working with a predictive retention model. The consultants will be meeting with different office on Monday to get a feel for what we do in terms of retention. Groups of faculty, advising center staff, enrollment management people, will also be meeting with them.
  - With regard to re-thinking the mask policy: there was something sent to the administrative staff in Liberal Arts, asking for feedback. The task force has consistently followed the CDC guidance, and it sounds like there will be new CDC guidelines that include more metrics, and the Task force will try to follow CDC guidance as closely as possible.

- With regard to the Development Council, there has been a push to maintain academic integrity, and they are looking for large things that could be helpful to academics.
- New Business: Charge 2022\_04 Preferred Names and Pronouns on Banner
  - The class rosters do not have a place for students to declare their preferred name or pronouns. The charge proposes that Banner allow for preferred names and pronouns be included on rosters, Blackboard, and email addresses.
  - There has already been a preferred name policy that has been handed off to Data Governance and with Banner 9, it is possible to include preferred pronouns for students. It is being in the process of being implemented, but several things have caused delays. It is not as simple as just adding a new field to the database, as the charge implied.
  - Motion approved unanimously with two abstentions.
- New Business: Charge 2022\_05 Reinstatement of Faculty Sabbaticals
  - Faculty Sabbaticals had all been cancelled for Covid Austerity measures, and in the past two year the USI Administration's decisions on budgets has brought us to comfortable financial position. The charge requests that sabbaticals be reinstated at pre-Covid levels to continue the levels of scholarship required from an academic institution and that the faculty who had been previously granted sabbaticals that were cancelled should be prioritized.
  - The Provost's Office is in the process of assessing the sabbaticals that have occurred in the past, and mention was made that the University seems to have a difficulty supporting faculty scholarship across the board. It was suggested that activities under different Vice Presidents throughout campus might be treated with the same scrutiny with regard to effectiveness that the Academic Affairs office is treating the topic of faculty sabbatical.
  - It was requested that this charge be reported by the Faculty Senate Chair at the Board of Trustees meeting.
  - The motion was approved unanimously with one abstention.
- New Business: Charge 2022\_06 Resolution on HB 1134
  - The charge requests that the Faculty Senate compose a resolution against Indiana HB 1134, which places on topics that can be taught in K-12 public education.
  - The motion was made to make a statement about HB 1134. The motion passed with one opposed and one abstention.
  - The draft statement was amended to bring the statement in line with the contents of the bill. The final statement:
    - The Faculty Senate of the University of Southern Indiana values freedom of inquiry, exploration, debate, and critical thinking in the classroom. These principles are the bedrocks of education, fostering effective learning environments that encourage open and honest dialogues about issues that affect us both in and outside the classroom. HB1134 encroaches on these principles and threatens the idea of free, equitable, safe, and well-rounded education in our state. Without significant or pedagogical evidence of need,

the bill attempts to impose restrictions upon the discussion of so-called divisive concepts such as sex, race, ethnicity, religion, color, or national origin. This bill would also threaten educators who encourage their students to think critically. We stand in support of our K-12 colleagues in Indiana and around the country who face such limitations and interference with their roles as educators. We affirm the statement by the elected trustees of the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation that acknowledges the strength of existing educational policies, standards, and practices. In addition, we recognize that HB1134's threat to academic freedom will further exacerbate the shortage of qualified educators in Indiana and across the country. The Faculty Senate of the University of Southern Indiana stands in favor of strong, diverse, and well-rounded education and is opposed to HB1134.

- The statement was approved with one in opposition and one abstention.
- It was suggested that the statement should be sent to Senator Rogers. Aaron Trump will send Rex the contact information for the appropriate Indiana Senators.
- Next meeting: 18 March 2022 at 2:30pm. Subsequent meetings: April 1<sup>st</sup> (no kidding) and April 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Adjourned at 4:26 pm.

Minutes recorded by Faculty Senate secretary Brandon Field.

# CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

## Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

**Name:** Kyle Mara and Kim Delaney (Optional)

**Date of Submission:** 2/15/2022

**Name of Faculty Senate Representative:**

1. Kim Delaney
2. Rex Strange
3. Xavia Harrington-Chate

**Complete the following items and submit this form to either your Faculty Senate Representative or to the Faculty Senate Chair for consideration by the Faculty Senate.**

**1. Charge Title:**

Inclusion of Preferred Name and Pronouns on USI Class Lists

**2. Background:**

Provide an explanation of the background and context for the proposed charge. What problem, issue, or experience prompts the proposal of the charge?

USI strives to be an inclusive learning environment for all of our students. Furthermore, true actions of inclusiveness are increasingly important to both our Faculty and student population. Currently, Faculty have no easy access to identify a student's preferred name, and no access at all to a student's preferred pronouns. While an instructor can poll a class at the beginning of each semester to identify preferred names/pronouns, this could very easily cause a situation of discomfort, especially for students in the transition process. We want our classrooms to be an inclusive and comfortable learning environment for our students. It should never be incumbent on them to approach professors to inform us of their proper name/pronouns.

Students are currently able to declare a preferred name in our system. However, that preferred name doesn't appear on the class roster or Blackboard. An instructor would have to look up every student individually in Banner to find if that student has declared a preferred name, and that is not even easy to find. Furthermore, there is no mechanism for students to convey preferred pronouns to the University at all.

The University's new implementation of Banner 9 provides a great opportunity to include changes regarding preferred name and pronouns as a move toward equity and inclusion in all of our classrooms.

**3. Action Requested and Desired Result:**

Specifically state what action you would like the Senate to take and the desired outcome that you would like to see.

The Senate should work with the Provost's Office and the Registrar to provide an option for students to declare both their preferred name and preferred pronouns in the USI systems. Those names/pronouns should be included on class lists, reflected on Blackboard, and incorporated in the student's email address as is appropriate.

**4. Potential Resources:**

Provide any information that can help Faculty Senate fully address the charge. Attach additional documents if necessary.

Ohio University's Name/Pronoun Policies: <https://www.ohio.edu/policy/12-021>

Columbia University's Name/Pronoun Policies and FAQs: <https://universitylife.columbia.edu/pronouns>

**Items 5-7 are to be completed by Senate Chair or Secretary:**

**5. Senate Comments:**

**6. Action Taken by the Faculty Senate:**

**7. Action Taken by the Administration:**

# CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

## Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

**Name:** R. Brent Summers (Optional)

**Date of Submission:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Faculty Senate Representative:**

1. Dr. Strange
2. Dr. Harrington-Chate
3. Dr. Delaney

**Complete the following items and submit this form to either your Faculty Senate Representative or to the Faculty Senate Chair for consideration by the Faculty Senate.**

**1. Charge Title:**

Resumption of normal sabbatical appointments

**2. Background:**

Provide an explanation of the background and context for the proposed charge. What problem, issue, or experience prompts the proposal of the charge?

Due to "austerity measures", two years ago faculty that had already received approval for sabbaticals had those approvals revoked due to the COVID-19 crisis. The sabbaticals were canceled, not just delayed or postponed, as many expected they might be. The next year (2020-2021) no sabbaticals were awarded due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis and budget austerity practices. In the current academic year (2021-2022) a severely reduced number of sabbaticals were approved. Many faculty that had earned approval for sabbaticals prior to the pandemic were yet again denied reinstatement due to ongoing budget issues.

This year the USI administration has very successfully argued for budget increases in state appropriations, leading to the return of our budget allocation to pre-pandemic levels. Provost Khayum recently reported to Faculty Senate that "we are in a much better place than we were two years ago." In response to this excellent improvement in our circumstances, it is now time for USI to identify austerity measures that can be rolled back in an effort to keep our University moving forward. President Rochon often discusses the importance of making the USI community "whole". This is such an important concept; each individual in our community lost something during the pandemic - some we can get back, and some we can't. USI should reinstate sabbaticals in an effort toward making our faculty whole.

Faculty sabbaticals are an integral part of the faculty career path. In order to maintain a rigorous and dynamic academic standard, the university must help faculty achieve continued scholarship throughout their career. USI currently has a shockingly low proportion of Full Professors. Sabbaticals help faculty pursue the necessary expertise and stature in their respective fields of study that is

commensurate with application to Full Professor. Furthermore, sabbaticals increase faculty research output - an important metric and highlight for the university - and reinvigorate teaching methods. The lack of sabbaticals slows our research and stagnates the "hands on learning environment" that we are so proud to provide our students. Reinstatement of sabbaticals is an immediate effort in post-pandemic recovery and a long-term investment in the academic and scholastic health of USI. The longer sabbaticals are reduced or denied, the longer our faculty are hamstrung to advance their scholarship which serves our students and USI community in countless ways.

Sabbaticals offer the opportunity to allow faculty to initiate new projects, or the time to complete projects currently in the works. This greatly increases our production of peer-reviewed publications, books, juried art shows, and external grant applications. Furthermore, sabbaticals very often offer an opportunity to promote the University nationally and internationally through collaborations that simply can't be completed in Evansville, Indiana. One of the cancelled sabbaticals would have seen a faculty member extending our relationship with the Belize Marine Teaching and Research Center (TREC). USI's relationship with TERC offers both international recognition and a wonderful recruiting tool since we offer opportunities for students to visit Belize through classes and research. Sabbaticals allow us to travel, cement research collaborations, and extend USI's reach and recognition around the world.

Sabbaticals provide numerous benefits to the university at extremely low cost. A faculty member would usually teach 12 hours each semester. In their sabbatical semester, those hours would likely be compensated for by adjuncts or overload teaching on the part of colleagues. 12 hours of overload pay for an associate professor is often around \$1035/hr and adjunct pay is often around \$826/hr. This means the average sabbatical would cost the university less than \$12,000 in one semester. In truth this is an overestimation as often students enroll in courses in other departments or other courses currently offered and thus the cost is even significantly less than this.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, it was important for each institution to handle budgetary limitations uniquely. However, it is worth noting that our peer institutions were able to find cost-saving measures that did not include such a deep cut to faculty. Many peer institutions in our region conferred sabbaticals during the same time USI ceased them (according to Board of Regents/Trustees public minutes and private communications). These institutions, including Murray State University, Eastern Kentucky University, Western Kentucky University, Southern Illinois University - Carbondale, Vincennes University, and Indiana State University, all under-went similar budgetary constraints to USI, but were still able to allow sabbaticals. It is time for USI to follow suit.

**3. Action Requested and Desired Result:**

Specifically state what action you would like the Senate to take and the desired outcome that you would like to see.

Faculty Senate should pass a resolution in support of reinstating faculty sabbaticals to the pre-Covid 19 levels. The senate should recommend that this action be done immediately, as there is plenty of time for departments and colleges to plan around the faculty absences that this might create in the

next academic year. This reinstatement should begin with those faculty that had previously been approved for sabbaticals prior to budget austerity measures.

**4. Potential Resources:**

Provide any information that can help Faculty Senate fully address the charge. Attach additional documents if necessary.

Murray State Board of Regents Minutes - 2/26/2021 -

<https://www.murraystate.edu/about/administration/BoardOfRegents/media/minutes/02.26.21-QuarterlyBORMinutes.final.long.pdf>

ISU Board of Trustees Minutes - 5/7/2021 -

<https://www.indstate.edu/sites/default/files/media/trustees/pdfs/bot-agenda-may-7-2021.pdf>

SIUC Board of Trustees Minutes - 2/11/201 -

<https://www.indstate.edu/sites/default/files/media/trustees/pdfs/bot-agenda-may-7-2021.pdf>

**Items 5-7 are to be completed by Senate Chair or Secretary:**

**5. Senate Comments:**

**6. Action Taken by the Faculty Senate:**

**7. Action Taken by the Administration:**



# CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

## Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

Name: Edith Hardcastle (Optional)

Date of Submission: 02/24/2022

Name of Faculty Senate Representative:

1. Rex Strange
2. Kim Delaney
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Complete the following items and submit this form to either your Faculty Senate Representative or to the Faculty Senate Chair for consideration by the Faculty Senate.

**1. Charge Title:**

Resolution in support of K-12 Educators throughout the state of Indiana who may be affected by HB1134.

**2. Background:**

Provide an explanation of the background and context for the proposed charge. What problem, issue, or experience prompts the proposal of the charge?

There is currently an unprecedented effort to pass legislation that attempts to censor K-12 educators that would negatively impact the public education system in Indiana. Indiana House Bill 1134 just passed out of Senate Committee and will be taken up by the full Senate next week. The bill attempts to ban teaching certain divisive concepts that, even after amended, promoted a climate of surveillance and punishment intended to induce fear in educators. In light of a critical teacher shortage in the state, this bill will further decrease the pipeline of teachers in our programs at USI. In addition, this bill specifically targets public schools while exempting private institutions that receive public dollars. We should recognize that all public institutions of learning will be at risk of censorship if this bill passes.

**3. Action Requested and Desired Result:**

Specifically state what action you would like the Senate to take and the desired outcome that you would like to see.

Pass a resolution standing with our colleagues against the passage of House Bill 1134.

**4. Potential Resources:**

Provide any information that can help Faculty Senate fully address the charge. Attach additional documents if necessary.

I am attaching a model resolution that was modified from a document from Ball State.

**Items 5-7 are to be completed by Senate Chair or Secretary:**

**5. Senate Comments:**

**6. Action Taken by the Faculty Senate:**

**7. Action Taken by the Administration:**