



University of Massachusetts
Boston
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Boston, MA 02125-3393

University Governance
Faculty Council

https://www.umb.edu/faculty_staff/faculty_council

November 11th, 2023

Minutes for Monday, November 11, 2023 1:00-3:00

Members present: Nurul Aman (CLA), Gonzalo Bacigalupe (CEHD), Todd Drogy (Honors), Kui Du (CM), Paul Dyson (CLA), Joel Fish (CSM), Sommer Forrester (CLA), Eugene Gallagher (SFE), Priscilla Gazarian (CNHS), Phil Gona (CNHS), Mohsin Habib (CM), Shaman Hatley (CLA), Lisa Marie Heelan-Fancher (CNHS), Tyler Hull (CM) Richard Hunter (CLA), Larry Kaye (CLA), Janna Kellinger (CEHD), Robert Kim (CM), Harry Konstantinidis (CLA), Nelson Lande (CLA), Lusa Lo (CEHD), Alex Mueller (CLA), Amit Patel (MGS), Neil Reilly (CSM), Jeffrey Stokes (CNHS), Amy Todd (CLA), Gretchen Umholtz (CLA), Tony Van DerMeer (CLA), Zong-Guo Xia (SFE), Wenfan Yan (CEHD)

Members absent: Lynne Benson (CLA), Edward Ginsberg (CSM), Sana Haroon (CLA), Abdelkrim Mouhib (CLA), Timothy Oleksiak (CLA), Jason Rodriquez (CLA), Niya Sa (CSM)

Representatives present: Caroline Coscia (FSU), Jonathan Vega-Martinez (GEO), Delaney Bowen (GSG), Chirag Nemani (GSG), Kaushar Barejiya (USG)

I. Approval of the Agenda

Motion Approved

II. Motion to approve the 10/02/2023 minutes

Motion Approved

III. Motions from the General Education Committee (Neal Bruss, Associate Professor of English & the Chair of the General Education Committee)

Motion 1: That History 331, Colliding Cultures: America in the 1920's, be approved as satisfying the Humanities Distribution requirement.

WISER Course Description: This course examines the decade of the 1920s in America, a period of enormous complexity. It includes such topics as the vibrancy of the arts and popular culture, the rise of mass media (radio and film), consequences of Prohibition, the new youth culture, conservative religious and social backlash, anti-immigration legislation, and the economic booms and busts that lead to the Great Depression. We focus on the great migration of southern Black people to northern cities giving rise to the Harlem Renaissance, and on the deep cultural clashes in religion, ethnic identity, and political ideologies that animated the Scopes trial.

General Education Capabilities: Verbal Reasoning (Critical Thinking) and Effective Communication.

Motion 2: That Philosophy 150, Critical Thinking, be approved as satisfying the Humanities Distribution requirement.

WISER Course Description: This course is an introduction to argumentation and reasoning. It focuses on the kinds of arguments and reasoning one is likely to encounter in public and social debate, scientific and legal settings, as well as in the media. The primary objective of this course is to improve student ability to critically evaluate the arguments of others as well as to construct persuasive arguments of their own. Furthermore, students should leave the course with critical thinking tools that can be applied in nearly every area of study. To this end, the course will explore different forms of arguments, e.g., deductive and inductive arguments, the role of language in arguments and reasoning, numerical and probabilistic reasoning, cognitive and perceptual biases, the scientific method, and social aspects of critical thinking.

General Education Capabilities: Verbal Reasoning (Critical Thinking) and Effective Communication.

Motion 3: That History 331, History 331 Liberty, Equality, Fraternity? A History of Modern France, be approved be approved as satisfying the International Diversity requirement.

WISER Course Description: Far from being a straightforward national history of modern France, this course uses many lenses of Diversity, especially class and religion, to question the validity of the nation's motto (Liberty, Equality, Fraternity) for the people who live in France, as well as to understand the complexities of national identity. France has been especially impactful in shaping ideas about citizenship and national belonging, largely due to its revolutionary history and reputation as a center of intellectual, enlightened thought. Does the nation live up to its promise? We will look at major historical moments, like the Enlightenment, French Revolution, Paris Commune, Dreyfus Affair, World Wars, and decolonization to try to answer that question, noting how the promise of equality for all people within the country has often depended on categories of identity, including class, race, gender, sexuality, and religion.

Motion 4: That History 378, Colliding Cultures: America in the 1920's, be approved as satisfying the U. S. Diversity requirement.

WISER Course Description: This course examines the decade of the 1920s in America, a period of enormous complexity. It includes such topics as the vibrancy of the arts and popular culture, the rise of mass media (radio and film), consequences of Prohibition, the new youth culture, conservative religious and social backlash, anti-immigration legislation, and the economic booms and busts that lead to the Great Depression. We focus on the great migration of southern Black people to northern cities giving rise to the Harlem Renaissance, and on the deep cultural clashes in religion, ethnic identity, and political ideologies that animated the Scopes trial.

Motions Approved

IV. Motions from the Graduate Studies Committee (Andre Maharaj, Director of the Graduate Certificate Program in Applied Behavior Analysis for Special Populations & the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee)

Motion #1 (All materials available for review on Curriculog) **From: CM**

Request to change the title of BUSADM 721 from Quantitative Financial Analysis II to Quantitative Financial Analysis, change the description, and drop the pre-requisite of BUSADM 720.

Old description: The emphasis in this course is to capture the dynamics of the economic system at an aggregate level. It covers mathematical tools and econometrics techniques required to analyze and forecast the dynamics of important economy-wide measurements such as long-run growth, inflation, unemployment, balance of trade and exchange rates. The underlying emphasis is also to understand how these macro level variables affect business decision-making and relate to financial markets.

New description: The objective of this course is to provide foundations of Financial Economics at the micro and macro levels. It covers constrained optimization techniques, expected utility theory, firm decisions, and investment under uncertainty, which are used to derive individual behaviors in capital markets. It introduces economic growth and general equilibrium which help students understand how the macroeconomic dynamic is driven by aggregated individual behaviors. It also covers agency frictions, such as limited commitment and moral hazard, and their implications for the financial sector.

Rationale: BUSADM 721 will include the relevant topics that were previously offered in both BUSADM 720 (Quantitative Financial Analysis I) and 721; topics no longer considered relevant to the program will be dropped. BUSADM 720 will be terminated and the title of BUSADM 721 will become just Quantitative Financial Analysis. BUSADM 720 will no longer be a pre-requisite for BUSADM 721.

Motion #2 (All materials available for review on Curriculog) **From: CM**

Request for a new course BUSADM 724 Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning in Finance.

Course description: The course is designed to introduce students to natural language processing and machine learning methods used in finance research. It covers the most common methods and the current finance literature that uses these methods.

Rationale: This course has been offered twice as a Special Topics course. It introduces new methods in natural language processing and machine learning that have gained unprecedented popularity in the industry as well as finance research. This course aims to prepare Ph.D. students by enabling them to understand and apply state-of-the-art methods in dealing with big data.

Motion #3 (All materials available for review in Curriculog) **From: CLA**

Request for changes to the American Studies MA - to reduce the number of core courses from six to one; decrease required number of American Studies courses from 8 to 5, including the 2-course capstone sequence (this increases electives students may take in other programs from 3 to 5). This increases the overall number of electives from three to seven, and a course is added to the final project. The total number of credits (30) remains the same.

Rationale: The proposed changes provide students increased freedom in selecting courses within and outside the American Studies curriculum, while continuing to emphasize the intellectual priorities of the field and the department. They respond to concerns about the shape of the program in relation to the intellectual shifts within the field of American Studies. For example, when this program was founded, there was a stronger emphasis upon history (students have been required to take 6 credits in historical subjects). While this still exists, the move to foregrounding cultural studies from a broader perspective (informed by, for example, queer and feminist theory, critical race studies, etc.) has made the over-emphasis upon historical course requirements within the program somewhat out of sync with the field. With the additional pressure to serve students well with a reduced pool of faculty, the proposed changes also reduce the number of graduate seminars offered each semester within the department.

Motion #4 (All materials available for review in Curriculog) **From: MCNHS**

Request to change the format of the Nursing MS program from face to face to hybrid.

Rationale: With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic the MS nursing program moved from face to face to hybrid. All MS nursing courses were offered online with the exception of NU 615 Advanced Health Assessment Practicum with an onsite required lab. The program has maintained the hybrid format and is now making the request to have this format officially approved. The hybrid format has been a positive change to the program due to multiple demands on the professional working nurse. Courses have already been constructed for the online format so approval of this would be seamless for the MS nursing program.

Motion #5 (All materials available for review in Curriculog) **From: CEHD**

Request to have each of the core courses in the Urban Education, Leadership, and Policy Studies EdD & PhD have the pre-requisite that students be matriculated students in the program. These are two separate but identical proposals on Curriculog, one for the EdD and one for the PhD.

Rationale: The EDLDRS PhD and EdD utilize a cohort model focused on relationship-building and collaborative approaches. Restricting core classes to cohort members ensures they have access to these classes and maintains the efficacy of the cohort model. Non-matriculating students and master's students taking the core PhD/EdD courses disrupts the cohort model and students' course sequence if later accepted into the program.

Motion #6 (All materials available for review in Curriculog) **From: CEHD**

Request for changes to the Urban Education, Leadership, and Policy Studies EdD: to reduce the number of credits for the EdD from 65 to 60 by removing 1 elective 3-credit course from the program and reducing the number of EdD dissertation credits from 8 to 6. The program would also like to eliminate EDLDRS 715 Integrative Seminar II (1 credit) and add this credit to EDLDRS 892 Dissertation Seminar II (changing this course from 2 credits to 3) and eliminate EDLDRS 714 Integrative Seminar I (1 credit) and add this credit to EDLDRS 893 Dissertation Seminar III (changing this course from 2 credits to 3).

The content and skills taught in EDLDRS 715 and 714 will be integrated into EDLDRS 720 Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum in Urban Contexts and EDLDRS 730 Historical Roots of Contemporary Urban Schooling. Because EDLDRS 720 is the primary core course that assists students with their comprehensive assessment, information from EDLDRS 714 and 715 (comprehensive assessment intro course) will be worked into EDLDRS 720. EDLDRS 714: Integrative Seminar I – As the first seminar, this course encourages students to begin to reflect on the relationships between their doctoral work and their professional work. It is designed to help students integrate their new theoretical knowledge into their field by considering what their doctoral studies mean to them in their professional lives. EDLDRS 715: Integrative Seminar II - As students begin to prepare for the Comprehensive Assessment, this course helps students to identify an issue of concern that emerges from the urban educational context. Within issues of focus, students identify one problem where they would like to make a contribution through their doctoral work. They utilize assigned readings from courses as well as literature acquired through independent research to demonstrate the importance of investigating their chosen topic. They identify and demonstrate the ways in which at least two theories may be used as lenses for analyzing their chosen topic.

Rationale: These changes will reduce the cost to students and assist with time to completion as well as distinguishing the EdD from the PhD program and bringing it more into line with other EdD programs. Changing the dissertation seminar credits from 2 to 3 will promote equity within faculty teaching credits and make the program of study more aligned with other programs in the department.

Motion #7 (All materials available for review in Curriculog) **From: CEHD**

Request for changes to the Urban Education, Leadership, and Policy Studies PhD: to reduce the number of credits for the PhD from 65 to 63 by reducing the number of PhD dissertation credits from 8 to 6. The program would also like to eliminate EDLDRS 715 Integrative Seminar II (1 credit) and add this credit to EDLDRS 892 Dissertation Seminar (changing this course from 2 credits to 3) and eliminate EDLDRS 714 Integrative Seminar I (1 credit) and add this credit to EDLDRS 893

Dissertation Seminar III (changing this course from 2 credits to 3). The content and skills taught in EDLDRS 715 and 714 will be integrated into EDLDRS 720 Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum in Urban Contexts and EDLDRS 730 Historical Roots of Contemporary Urban Schooling. Because EDLDRS 720 is the primary core course that assists students with their comprehensive assessment, information from EDLDRS 714 and 715 (comprehensive assessment intro course) will be worked into EDLDRS 720. EDLDRS 714: Integrative Seminar I – As the first seminar, this course encourages students to begin to reflect on the relationships between their doctoral work and their professional work. It is designed to help students integrate their new theoretical knowledge into their field by considering what their doctoral studies mean to them in their professional lives. EDLDRS 715: Integrative Seminar II - As students begin to prepare for the Comprehensive Assessment, this course helps students to identify an issue of concern that emerges from the urban educational context. Within issues of focus, students identify one problem where they would like to make a contribution through their doctoral work. They utilize assigned readings from courses as well as literature acquired through independent research to demonstrate the importance of investigating their chosen topic. They identify and demonstrate the ways in which at least two theories may be used as lenses for analyzing their chosen topic.

Rationale: Most EdD/PhD programs require fewer credit hours to degree completion than our current requirements. Changing the dissertation seminar credits from 2 to 3 will promote equity within faculty teaching credits and make the plan of study more aligned with other programs in the department.

Motion #8 (All materials available for review in Curriculog) **From: CEHD**

Request for a new course ECHD 655 Focus on Preschool Curriculum which will be cross listed with another new course, ECHD 455. There are additional coursework expectations for those taking the course at the graduate level. This course is an elective that can be used in the master's or bachelor's degree programs in early childhood education. The course offers a deep exploration of preschool curriculum and high-quality teaching practices in preschool classrooms.

Description: This online course is designed to prepare students to effectively implement child-centered curriculum in early childhood preschool classrooms. Students will acquire the knowledge, skills, and experiences to implement curriculum and assess children's development using guiding principles and evidence-based instructional practices. Students will develop a child-centered pedagogy to support whole child development by simultaneously addressing social-emotional and academic skills and valuing cultural, linguistic, and developmental diversity. Students will learn to utilize high-quality, developmentally appropriate teaching strategies and will deepen their understanding of curriculum components, quality elements, and scope and sequence of the curriculum through standards-based lesson design and individual coaching sessions.

Rationale: Boston Public School's Universal Pre-K Program is expanding, and this course is required for early educators working in BPS UPK programs. The state, and the early childhood education field more broadly, is adopting more rigorous standards for early childhood curriculum and evidence-based practices that focus on equity and racially and linguistic diversity in early childhood classrooms, schools, and programs. This course fills a gap in the department's early childhood course offerings.

Discussion:

(Regarding Motion #4)

Q: Are the students paying different costs for online versus in-person programs?

A: Special Programs have their own pricing for each program, tuition and fees are reflected on the program's web site.

Q: How are these special (non-standard) programs established?

A: There are programs that have been grandparented in by a long-standing arrangement, and there are also those that have been negotiated and arranged more recently. In total, there are not many special programs established at UMB.

Q: Are there still lingering effects from the CAPS program?

A: Most of what is around today is no longer influenced by the old CAPS model.

Motions Approved

V. Questions & Answers and Open Discussion on the New Computer Lifecycle Policy (Lusa Lo, Professor of Special Education & the Chair of the Academic Technology Committee)

At the Academic Technology Committee (ATC) September meeting, Raymond Lefebvre, Vice Chancellor for Technology & Chief Information Officer, informed our committee members that the Computer Replacement Program no longer exists. The new Computer Lifecycle Policy (attached) has been implemented since July 1, 2023. Based on this policy, faculty no longer automatically receive a new computer every four years. Instead, faculty can request a computer only when their existing one doesn't meet the minimum viable computer specifications (see Computer Lifecycle Policy 2.2). "If [a] computer is damaged beyond repair, and the technicians in our IT Desktop Support team can't fix it, they will recommend [the faculty] request a Computer Replacement" (University of Massachusetts Boston, 2023). If a faculty's request for a computer is approved, they will choose a replacement from the IT's standing inventory of "repurposed", "new old stock", and "new" computers.

When informally surveyed 18 faculty in one department, only three were aware of the new policy. These three faculty knew only because they already had their office computers for four years and thought it was time for them to receive a replacement but were told otherwise. Furthermore, this policy was approved without consulting with the ATC despite this committee being charged with reviewing and recommending policies and procedures regarding academic technology. Many questions and concerns have been raised regarding this new policy including: What is considered as a viable computer? The decision on whether a computer should be replaced solely relies on the desktop team. How knowledgeable is this team? What process do they go through to make such a decision? When computers are out of warranty and parts need to be replaced, who will pay for the parts? After part replacement, if the computer doesn't function as smoothly as it used to but still works, is it a good reason to request a new computer? How current are the computers in the IT's standing inventory? How is this policy responding to the constant changes in technology? ...

Ray Lefebvre VC for Info Technology and CIO

Computer Lifecycle Management Policy and IT Governance was recently established at UMass Boston after a holistic assessment of IT Service delivery. The assessment found that there were four critical areas in need of improvement: culture, governance, spend, and service delivery. IT was previously running in a decentralized manner without formal governance, unchecked IT spending, and unorganized service. After the assessment completed in early 2022, IT has formed an IT Executive Council to organize and make smarter decisions for the IT Department as a whole. This council has met eleven times since its creation in late 2022, and this council has been a major contributor to developing a new computer life-cycle policy. The goal of this policy is to streamline the computer replacement process, optimize the delivery of the program, improve inventory, and manage costs to continue to eliminate excess spending. Overall, this process is a step towards cleaning up previous systems that were not benefiting UMB IT.

Discussion:

Q: Do you have any timeframe in which this policy will be standardized?

A: It's going to take at least a few years

Q: Was there a reason that 4 years were used in previous years for replacing computers?

A: 4-5 years was an industry standard of the past. The software was getting more powerful and the hardware couldn't keep up. That's not the case anymore. Computers no longer last just four years anymore; instead, they retain longer lifecycles and do not need to be replaced as often anymore. You replace it when it no longer meets your needs.

Q: For faculty who choose to use their own laptops, would IT be able to help them with security, updates, and issues?

A: We don't support faculty who use their own technology to do university business. You should be using university technology.

Q: What is the current policy for issuing computers for NTTs?

A: They are not issued technology currently.

Q: When parts need to be replaced, who pays for it?

A: IT will take care of it all. End-to-end lifecycle management.

Q: How is it being handled when faculty cannot come to campus and it needs to be repaired?

A: I'm going to have to get back to this one.

Q: What is the process when someone has to replace or repair a computer and needs one in the meantime?

A: The current new policy will guarantee a replacement for a faculty member when they are having a computer fixed or we can even possibly replace it right away. There will be no downtime in replacing or fixing a computer.

VI. A Brief Discussion and a Straw Poll on Three Specific Questions on the Amendment of the By-laws of the UMass Boston Faculty Council (Neal Bruss & Joel Fish, Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Revision of the Bylaws for the UMass Boston Faculty Council)

(1) Faculty Council supports the language in the Bylaws Revision Draft (dated June 7, 2023) in Section 9.B.3 which states “Ad Hoc Committees are dissolved either by (a) a Council Vote, or (b) Automatically on the first August 31 that occurs after the date of submission of their final report, unless the Council votes to renew the Committee.”

In Favor.

(2) Faculty Council supports the language in the Bylaws Revision Draft (dated June 7, 2023) in Section 2.N which states “Seats on the Council designated to represent a specific College may only be elected by eligible faculty of said College; all other seats shall be elected by eligible faculty at-large.” This language allows, for example, tenure-track faculty to vote for non-tenure-track faculty running for at-large seats, and vice versa.

Opposed.

(3) Faculty Council supports amending the Bylaws so that the slate of nominees for committees is presented and voted on in the spring term, but the nominees are officially seated on September 1 of the next academic year.

In Favor.

VII. Motion on the Implementation of a Proper Math Placement Policy (Joel Fish, Associate Professor of Mathematics & Member of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Council)

Faculty Council recommends that Provost Berger commit to implementing a math placement policy for incoming students which meets the standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education in the 2019 Common Assessment Policy (document AAC 19-23; approved by the BHE on March 12, 2019). In order to comply with the standards set by the Board of Higher Education, the campus math placement policy should disallow the placement of students via any placement test which is not proctored or which otherwise is not commensurate with the test security and validity standards associated to the ACCUPLACER exam.

Rationale:

A detailed account of the Math Department's efforts to increase validity and security of the math placement exam has been provided in the report titled "Known Obstacles to Student Success in Math at UMass Boston" (attached). This report was distributed to Faculty Council in advance of the October 2023 meeting, and an updated version can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/5ybrsyu8>. In brief, the current math placement system used at UMass Boston allows students to take the placement exam at home, as many times as they like, with no proctor, and with no safeguards for integrity or security of the assessment. For example, the current system makes no effort to verify the identity of the student, and it makes no effort to prevent students from using books, notes, web searches, or even friends and family to increase their score beyond their actual knowledge level. Widespread evidence collected from our campus and beyond indicates that the current placement

system is not accurately placing students into their first math course, and instead it is setting up a large number of students for terminal failure. Given the high cost of tuition -- which is collected regardless of student outcomes -- it is an injustice to our students and the communities we serve to knowingly set them up for failure. Indeed, our current placement policy is undeniably incompatible with an institutional commitment to student success.

Note that as a campus policy issue, there has been widespread desire to increase placement test security and validity. Indeed, support for such a policy has long been expressed by the Math Department, the CSM Senate, all CSM Department Chairs, countless CSM faculty, the previous Provost, the Board of Higher Education, and our accrediting institution: New England Commission of Higher Education. Documentation for this support has been provided in the aforementioned "Known Obstacles..." report. As detailed therein, UMass Boston is currently in violation of Board of Higher Education policy, and it is in violation of NECHE Standard 5.5 (which states in part that "The institution utilizes appropriate methods of evaluation to assess student readiness for collegiate study...") and NECHE Standard 4.44 (which states that "The institution works to prevent cheating and plagiarism as well as to deal forthrightly with any instances in which they occur. It works systematically to ensure an environment supportive of academic integrity."). Should Provost Berger choose to follow the recommendation of this Motion, it would put UMass Boston on a path to compliance with these government policies and accreditation standards, and it would significantly increase student success.

Motion Approved

VIII. VIII. Updates on the Motions/Resolutions of the Faculty Council

1. Criminal and Disciplinary History Disclosures (October 3, 2022)

The Provost is meeting with this committee this coming week.

2. Continuing Development of Africana Studies (November 7, 2022)

The search is continuing, they will be making selections for finalists shortly.

3. Academic Reorganization (December 5, 2022)

The Re-Org is continuing to make process and contract bargaining is underway. They're looking at developing constitutional by-laws.

4. Salary Top-Up Program for Prestigious Fellowships (December 5, 2022)

No update

5. Mental Health, Gun Violence, Police Brutality, and Systemic Racism (March 6, 2023)

No update

6. Departments/Units Control, Edit, and Maintain Their Webpages (September 11, 2023)

No update

IX. Reports – Maximum of 10 minutes

- Chancellor – Marcelo Suárez-Orozco
 - *Report Attached*
- Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs – Joseph Berger
 - *Report Attached*
- Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance – Kathleen Kirleis
 - *Report Attached*
- Representative from the Faculty Staff Union – Caroline Coscia
 - *Report Attached*
- Representatives from the Graduate Employee Organization – Jonathan Vega-Martinez
 - *Report Attached*
- Representative from the Graduate Student Government – Delaney Bowen & Chirag Nemani
 - *Report Attached*
 - Recently attended an event at Lesley University. First Generation Grad Student event upcoming.
- Representative from the Undergraduate Student Government – Kaushar Barejiya & Kaley Whipkey
 - *Report Attached*
 - Promoting health services, please see the newsletter!

X. Motion to Adjourn

Adjourned

UPDATES

Black Lives Matter Day

I would first like to take a moment to recognize our fourth annual observance of Black Lives Matter Day here at UMass Boston today. In recognizing Black Lives Matter Day once again, UMass Boston acknowledges those who have been unjustly harmed or killed because of police brutality, acts of anti-Black racism, and systemic oppression. We also express our appreciation for the profound ways our Black students, staff, and faculty have contributed to the excellence of this University since its founding. I am honored to provide the opening remarks at today's Black Lives Matter program on "Black Excellence in STEM" that will examine equity of opportunity for Black students and professionals in STEM fields and highlight the groundbreaking achievements of Black scientists throughout history. My deep thanks and appreciation to Drs. Joseph Cooper and Monique Cooper and the planning committee for their efforts in coordinating today's fourth annual BLM Day.

Enrollment Update

On the enrollment front, we are currently tracking several admissions intakes including Spring 2024 and Fall 2024. Below is a high-level recap of a few of our admission funnels:

Spring 2024:

New Graduate Masters: Applications are up 36% (1,783 for Spring 2024 compared to 1,311 for Spring 2023). This increase is largely driven by international applicants, although in-state is up a few applications as well. Admits are down 15% but just recently a large number of files were sent to a couple of our larger programs for review.

New Transfer Undergraduate: Applications are up 3% (1,218 for Spring 2024 compared to 1,181 for Spring 2023). Completed applications are down 1%. The undergraduate admissions team is encouraging students to complete their files so they can be reviewed sooner than later. Many of our transfer students who apply for the spring semester are typically waiting for their fall semester grades to be posted (in December) before they can submit a college transcript.

Fall 2024:

New First Year Undergraduate: November 1st was the Early Action I Deadline for first year applicants. The interest we garnered leading up to the deadline was strong and we are currently up 11% in applications: 7,170 for Fall 2024 compared to 6,464 for Fall 2023.

Climate Beacon Conference

I was honored to join Senator Ed Markey and several climate change experts last month on a panel at this year's Climate Beacon conference, which was held at the New England Aquarium. The session offered an excellent opportunity to highlight what UMass Boston is doing in terms of translational research that can inform real-world solutions to the climate crisis – including, for example, our Stone

Living Lab to develop nature-inclusive offshore wind farms and living seawalls to preserve Boston's coastal environments. I also noted that our partnerships with Climate Ready Boston have produced one of the most progressive city-led climate change mitigation programs in the nation.

Governor Healey and Attorney General Visit UMass Boston and Lead Discussion on Access to Higher Education

Just two weeks ago, I was pleased to provide the welcoming remarks at a conference hosted on our campus by the MA Department of Higher Education and Commissioner Noe Ortega. I was honored to welcome to Columbia Point the Honorable Catherine Lhamon, Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, as well as the following leaders from the Commonwealth: Governor Maura Healey, Attorney General Andrea Campbell, Secretary Patrick Tutwiler, and Commissioner Ortega. The conference's theme was "Access and Admissions: Advancing Representation in Higher Education," focusing on increasing the numbers of diverse students in response to the Supreme Court's June 2023 decision to effectively end affirmative action in college admissions. The 300+ attendees included K-12 educators and counselors from across the Commonwealth, community college and college admissions personnel, and other university leaders. On this topic – access to higher education – and several others of great relevance for our university, I look forward to continuing the dialogues with Governor Healey, Attorney General Campbell, Secretary Tutwiler, Mayor Michelle Wu, and Boston Public Schools Superintendent Mary Skipper. As Boston's only public research university and the most diverse university in New England, we have a responsibility to advocate on behalf of all students within the City of Boston and across the Commonwealth.

Building Partnerships with Universities and Businesses in Northern Ireland

Also in October, I was honored to join a group of CEOs and business leaders in the Boston area as part of a business delegation to Belfast, Northern Ireland. Led by the Honorable Joseph Kennedy III, U.S. Special Envoy to Northern Ireland for Economic Affairs, the delegation met with Northern Ireland Executive Ministers and key economic leaders, senior leaders at Queen's University (Belfast) and Ulster University (the largest university in Northern Ireland), as well as corporate executives in Northern Ireland, with presentations and discussions focused on the following topics: innovation; research and development; hospitality training; trade/tourism; software and FinTech; net zero technologies; advanced manufacturing; and life and health sciences. The trip also included meetings with executives at FD Technologies, a leading global market and business consulting firm based in the city of Newry (Northern Ireland). It was an honor to represent the University of Massachusetts system on this business trip and advocate for UMass Boston and our students while networking with leading Boston CEOs.

UMass Boston Athletics Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

I was pleased to attend and formally welcome all alumni, friends, and supporters at the 2023 UMass Boston Athletics Hall of Fame induction ceremony and dinner, which took place last month on our campus. Our newest inductees included five scholar-athletes in several sports, as well as two teams: the 1975 Warrior football squad and the 2010 Beacon volleyball team. During the event, Vice Chancellor Jacqui Schuman highlighted many outstanding Beacon Athletics achievements from the 2022-23 academic year, including postseason appearances for nearly every team, multiple conference

championships, coaching milestones, and all-academic honors for 75 scholar-athletes. It was a brilliant evening and a wonderful tribute to the success of UMass Boston Athletics over the years. My thanks to Dr. Schuman and her team, and to all our coaches and student-athletes. Go Beacons!

SDQD (New Quad) Update

As I am sure you have all noticed as you have walked through the center of our campus, great progress continues on our new quad. I am pleased to report that the project now stands at 92% toward completion. Trees and shrubs continue to be planted. The last portion of the plaza is soon to be completed and opened to the campus community. Substantial completion of the entire project is planned for later this semester.

Chancellor's Inaugural Lecture Series: From Climate Crisis to Climate Resilience

Finally, I invite all of you to attend a very special lecture on Thursday afternoon – this is the first in our inaugural *Chancellor's Lecture Series: From Climate Crisis to Climate Resilience*. Delivering the first lecture, on Thursday, November 9th at 2:45 pm in the Campus Center Ballroom, will be the world-renowned Dr. Ram Ramanathan, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Climate Sustainability at UC San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography and Climate Solutions Scholar at Cornell University. The title of Dr. Ramanathan's lecture is "Bending the Curve and Bouncing Back to Climate Resilience." Climate change is upon us already. Left unchecked, it will become the existential challenge of our times. The planet is likely to cross the dangerous threshold of 1.5C warming in less than a decade – when climate change will move into our living rooms like COVID. Going from climate crisis to climate resiliency in ten years will require an approach that will include both intergovernmental collaborations (to bend the emissions curve) and transdisciplinary collaborations (starting at the local city level) to enable citizens and ecosystems to become climate resilient. In this lecture, Professor Ramanathan will share a framework for such an approach to this existential challenge. Dr. Ramanathan received an honorary degree from UMass Boston in May 2023 – I hope you will join me in welcoming him back to Columbia Point on Thursday afternoon. Other distinguished speakers who are part of Thursday's program include Melissa Hoffer, the Commonwealth's first-ever climate chief, and UMass Boston alumna Gina McCarthy, former national climate advisor to President Biden. For a complete program and list of all presenters, please go here: [Chancellor's Lecture Series - UMass Boston \(umb.edu\)](https://www.umb.edu/chancellor-lecture-series).

Provost's Update to Faculty Council November 6, 2023

Holistic Student Success

Early Alerts. We completed the Early Alert feedback for students on October 27th. Early Alerts are an important means for providing information to advisors about students who may need focused and timely outreach and support. Furthermore, students report appreciating the feedback and support they receive and those students who receive early alerts tend to improve academic performance by the end of the semester. For example, last spring, 778 students who received a yellow or red alert ended the semester with a B- or higher in that course; conversely, there were 5,345 D, F, W grades where no early alert had been given.

This Fall, 264 instructors utilized the Early Alert system and 8,248 students are benefitting from these efforts. There were 14,195 Alerts submitted and of those 9,901 were "Satisfactory", 2,126 were "Cautions", and 2,168 indicated that the students were in danger of failing the course. Advisors are now using the Early Alerts submitted, where appropriate, to reach out and connect students to tutoring, academic, and other support services, and to encourage students to talk to their instructors during office hours.

Improving performance in introductory-level math and quantitative reasoning courses. As I have indicated previously, improving student learning in introductory-level math courses is essential for all of our students and their success. We have a campus-wide responsibility to ensure that students are acquiring the basic math knowledge they need to succeed. Thus, we are prioritizing investing effort and resources in this area and key priorities include:

- Developing a plan for better, more purposeful, and responsible use of ALEKS as a diagnostic tool. This includes proctored testing;
- Revising curricular offerings that include a more student-centered, active learning approach;
- Instituting a plan for the utilization of TAs to support introductory-level math and quantitative reasoning courses;
- Enhancing the engagement of undergraduate peer assistants in tutoring and other activities geared toward student success;
- Coordinating regular meetings involving department leadership to chart the delivery of instruction and support across all sections in key math courses and success of students;
- Engaging universities that have had demonstrated success in reducing DFWI rates and improving student success in early-career math; and
- Convening a summer workshop for faculty to plan for initial implementation.

Impactful Research and Scholarship

As you know, through our very thoughtful and thorough strategic planning efforts, we have identified four [Grand Scholarly Challenges](#) (GSCs) i.e. specific areas to which the university aspires to turn focused scholarly energy, resources and attention. Through each of the identified GSCs we will endeavor to address the unique challenges and opportunities most relevant to communities in which we are embedded by leveraging the university's scholarly strengths in **powerful nodes of inquiry and action**. As noted in the strategic plan, many of the complex challenges of the day require the merging of ideas, approaches, and technologies from widely diverse fields of knowledge to prompt innovation and this is precisely the spirit of these Grand Scholarly Challenges.

Having identified the four specific areas of focus, namely: “**Climate Equity and Urban Coastal Areas**”; “**Bridging Divides in Health Equity - Cells to Societies**”; “**Education for the Future**”; and, “**Advancing a Just Society – Local and Global Dimensions**,” we are now convening a team to refine the plans for the GSC’s implementation and execution. The work of this GSC Coordinating Committee, will be critically important in helping to shape the trajectory of our ever-growing research enterprise and will include among other key efforts, developing an internal grant process for \$100,000 in funding from the Office of the Provost.

The committee will pursue the following goals:

1. Develop an RFP proposal for initial funding to launch the GSC effort. The RFP should articulate:
 - a. Selection criteria, including priorities and competitive preferences and key performance metrics;
 - b. Timeline for submission, review and awarding initial grant(s); and
 - c. Expectations for subsequent reporting of progress, outcomes, and impact.
2. Create a plan for identifying, cataloging, and recognizing ongoing and future scholarly work that contributes to the GSCs.
3. Draft a strategy for successfully steering the GSCs for the duration of the *For the Times* strategic plan.

The committee will provide a final report to me on Monday, March 10, 2024.

Enriching the Human Core

The University Club, located in the Campus Center, 2nd floor, reopened in September for use as a lunchtime lounge and gathering space for faculty, staff, and graduate students. Since then, members of our campus community have been bringing their lunch or ordering from one of the dining venues on campus while they connect with colleagues and take a much-needed break during the busy semester. During this initial phase of reopening, feedback has been received about various aspects of the University Club experience and recommendations about next steps. We are pleased to announce that a committee has been established to review that feedback and to make recommendations on any next steps.

The committee is charged with reaching out to stakeholders on campus to determine priority needs, reviewing successful, self-sustaining university dining club models, and reviewing potential options with Campus Services. The committee’s work will result in the recommendation of potential future efforts.

We look forward to updating the campus community further as this committee completes its work.

Kathleen Kirleis

Vice-Chancellor for Administration and Finance Report

Monday, November 6, 2023

- 1) The university's Board of Trustees is scheduled to meet in December here on campus and there are two major items will be reviewed at its Administration and Finance Committee meeting to then go to the Board.

A) Five Year Forecast – the university system updates its five year forecast on a regular basis. The most recent five year forecast was completed in fall 2022. The forecast has now been updated to take last year's actual financial results into consideration as well as FY24's fall enrollment results to continue to plan a path to achieve a 2% operating margin by FY2025. Activities for our strategic plan are also being built into the forecast over time. The updated forecast will be presented at the December Administration and Finance Committee meeting.

B) FY24 first quarter projection – this agenda item will report out on the results of the first quarter from July 1, 2023 through September 30, 2023 as well projected results for the remainder of fiscal year FY2024, which runs through June 30, 2024. Enrollment results for the fall semester will be included in these results and in our campus' case, since our enrollment results were within the range of what had been originally budgeted, there are not going to need to be any significant budget adjustments this year due to enrollment levels. We have also adjusted the forecast to reflect the latest timeframe around the closing of the Dorchester Bay City project, which has moved from the originally planned date of December 31, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

- 2) The Office of Budget and Financial Planning kicked off the budget process for the FY25 operating and capital budgets last month. As in previous years, we will continue to use the UM Plan, the budget planning software tool in this process. We also are running a parallel Beacon Budget Model process to continue to build the budget model and develop the processes necessary for a successful implementation. The Provost's Office will also launch specific requirements for Academic Affairs as part of the budget process later this month, so your colleges and department heads will be receiving more information as part of this process.
- 3) The residence hall P3 project has a calendar year budget and the Board of Directors for the project will be meeting later this month to adopt a budget and rates for academic year 2024-2025. UMB plays an active role in the governance of the project. Our Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, Dr. Karen Ferrer-Muniz represents our campus on the project's Operations Committee and the Vice-Chancellor for Administration and Finance is the representative on the Board of Directors. We also have additional representation through the UMass Building Authority, who also has seats on the Operations Committee and Board of Directors. The residence halls have full occupancy this fall.
- 4) Construction continues on campus. In addition to the SDQD progress already reported by the chancellor, a Construction Update/Lunch and Learn was held on October 19th. At this session, an update on campus planning and sustainability efforts and campus construction projects, and

last year's "spruce up" projects was presented. I'd encourage all to take a look at the presentation on the university's website if you didn't have a chance to attend.

- 5) Campus Master Plan – In order to begin implementation of the Campus Master Plan, a committee is going to be formed to make recommendations to the chancellor about potential priorities in the plan that could be funded by the proceeds received from the Dorchester Bay City project. Proceeds from the project will be available to fund campus capital projects after the debt on the Bayside parking lot and the remaining costs of the SDQD project that have been funded using commercial paper are both paid off. The committee is planned to include members of the Space Committee Working Group, faculty, staff and students.
- 6) Project Fast Lane – the campus is part of a system-wide project called Project Fast Lane that is designed to improve business and travel expense functions. Policies and standards are being updated, processes are being streamlined, new technology is being implemented and support is being enhanced with a goal of improving speed, efficiency and compliance for all members of the campus community who travel and/or incur business expenses. We are in the process of piloting the project with a number of users on campus this fall.
- 7) Student Payment Plan project – first reported last spring and more recently at October's Campus Forum, work has continued on this project. An increased amount of students were able to successfully have a plan to pay in place for the fall semester. We had 1,130 additional students file a FAFSA this year for financial aid and an additional 659 signed up for a payment plan.
- 8) New Department of Education ruling – last week the Department of Education released its new rules regarding the withholding of transcripts, which will be effective 7-1-2024. While we have been anticipating the issuance of these rules for quite some time and began our student plan to pay project in anticipation of them, DOE has now issued the actual rules so that our campus can plan for the next steps that will need to be taken.

**Faculty Staff Union (FSU) Report
November 6, 2023, Faculty Council Meeting**

2023-2024 Anti-Racism Grant Program

Thank you to all who applied. We received over 20 applications! A four-person committee is hard at work reviewing them.

Endowment and Grants Processing/Management

Thank you to those who attended last week's forum and to those who were unable to attend yet sent us comments. We are keeping the conversation going. If you are managing a grant, please contact us to be added to the listserv.

Impact Bargaining: MGS and CLA

We have begun impact bargaining related to the merger of MGS and CLA. In addition to FSU leadership, three MGS faculty members are part of the sessions with UMB Labor Relations.

Save the Date: International Faculty Gathering

Join with fellow international faculty on Wednesday, December 6th at 9AM to meet, mingle and share.

Massachusetts State Legislature and November 15th

November 15th is the day that the Commonwealth closes the books on the prior fiscal year (ended June 30, 2023). Usually this means all spending bills for the prior fiscal year are passed by this date.

Why do I mention this? Our raises along with the raises for all state employee unions are part of the supplemental budget that has still not come out of the House Ways and Means Committee. Please call your legislator to tell them to act on our raises!

From: Jonathan Vega Martinez <Jonathan.VegaMart001@umb.edu>
Sent: Sunday, November 5, 2023 7:36 PM
To: Zong-Guo Xia <ZongGuo.Xia@umb.edu>
Cc: Chidimma Ozor Commer <Chidimma.Ozor@umb.edu>
Subject: Re: Written Reports for the Faculty Council Meeting on 11/06/2023

Hi Zong-Guo,

Here is GEO's report for tomorrow's meeting.

Hope everyone is doing well. At the GEO we've been prepping for the upcoming contract bargaining. Our emergency fund has launched, and we've been able to offer financial support to various of our members. I encourage all professors here to spread the word among graduate students. While we've been diligently informing our members about this benefit, we know that emails are easy to ignore, so the more avenues that this information is dispersed through, the better! We have also settled a grievance with university: Last semester the university altered how incoming graduate students were informed about the GEO which has negatively impacted our membership. We are happy to announce that the grievance was settled in our favor, though we are becoming increasingly frustrated as the university continues to be deliberately obtuse, claiming that in simply providing us with the names and emails of those students they had fulfilled their legal duty to work with us to ensure the affected students received appropriate notification of the GEO. While the GEO fundamentally disagrees that providing us with a list of names and emails fulfills their legal obligation to collaborate with us to ensure affected students are properly informed of their union rights, it also quite worrisome that the university is adopting this spiteful attitude with contract negotiations on the horizon.

Best,

Jonathan Vega Martinez (he/him)

PhD Student Sociology

GEO Organizing Committee

[Office Hours Sign-Up](#)

Graduate Student Government

NOVEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

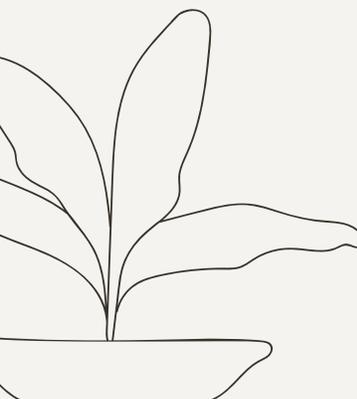


Delaney Bowen
President



Chirag Nemani
Vice President

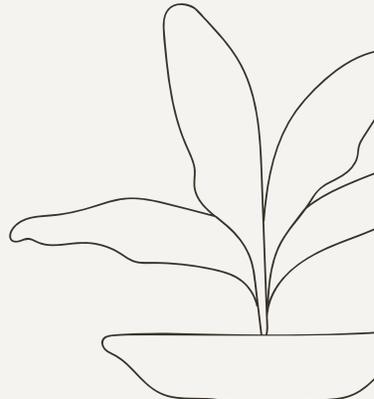
Announcements



Have an event or collaboration idea?
Please reach out to us gsg@umb.edu

Know a Graduate student attending a
conference?

Have them apply for our Professional
Development Grant!



gsg@umb.edu

UMBeInvolved Graduate
Student Government



Graduate Student Leadership Council

GSG is partnering with Dr. Karen Ferrer-Muniz and The Office of Graduate Studies to work on improving the graduate student experience

Upcoming Events

First Generation Student Breakfast
(In partnership with Phil Begeal and The Writing Center)
November 7th 9-11am Alumni Lounge
Campus Center

Diwali November 17th 6-11pm
(In partnership with Phil Begeal and The Writing Center)
Campus Center Ballroom

FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA



[HTTPS://BIO.LINK/UMB_GSG](https://bio.link/UMB_GSG)

Faculty Council Report –

Good afternoon, Chairperson Zong-Guo Xia, Chancellors, Provost, Faculty, Staff, and fellow representatives. We truly appreciate the opportunity to present the Undergraduate Student Government Report on the Menstrual Equity Project in front of the Committee.

Vice-President Kaley Whipkey and I are thrilled to share the successful approval of the Menstrual Equity Project on campus. The project addresses the critical issue of ensuring accessible and affordable menstrual products, specifically pads and tampons in bathrooms, to our campus community. The project was born in 2021-2022 when the Undergraduate Student Government passed legislation to support the initiative. After some extensive amount of research and planning work over the past summer, VP Whipkey and I were able to propose the pilot project proposal to the Office of Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and the Reproductive Health Working Group, which was set up to review and enhance the institution's reproductive health care approach. Initially, the project was out of the scope of the Working Group, but after reconvening, the Group and USG decided to prioritize providing free menstrual products in bathrooms on campus.

This project was a collaborative effort between numerous stakeholders on campus. After a substantive amount of planning and advocacy work, with the students' input, we are moving forward with the pilot program, which would include the installation of 12 dispensers in 12 bathrooms on campus. These dispensers will be available in all the buildings on campus: two in Campus Center, two in University Hall, two in Wheatley, two in McCormack, two in ISC, one in Quinn, and one in Healey Library.

The USG will cover the pilot project funding, and a portion of the budget will be covered by the Office of Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs for this academic year only. Specifically, USG has contributed about \$7k to the pilot program, and OVCSA is contributing about \$3k to assist us with the first semester of the initiative. As we move forward with the implementation, some of the key points to regard include the sustainability of the products, educational methods to be employed to educate our peers about the project, and monitoring the usage and effectiveness of the initiative.

After months of work with our student leaders and partners on campus, seeing this project come to fruition makes us hopeful and optimistic about the work of USG and its initiatives that have the capacity to impact our campus community. But we would be remiss not to acknowledge our shortcomings, one of which is making this project financially sustainable and envisioning institutionalizing it in coming years. To the members of the Faculty Council, we look forward to your support in formulating strategies and putting together cogent ideas to sustain this project for the coming years. The Undergraduate Student Government would much appreciate any input or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Kaushar Barejiya, President

Kaley Whipkey, Vice President

