

motion was made to have the chair of Faculty Senate present that to the President's Council as a reminder.

- The fourth recommendation is to investigate which institutions we should use for peer institutions. It seems that this recommendation should be turned into a charge for the Economic Benefits committee to examine the peer institutions. It was mentioned that any future report using a comparison to peer institutions should always include a description of the methodology of the selection process of the peer institutions, so the selection does not seem to be biased. The motion was made to charge the Economic Benefits Committee – in part of their recurring charge to evaluate faculty salaries – to this year examine and select an appropriate set of peer institutions for which to compare, as well as to document their methodology for their selection. The motion was passed unanimously.
- The motion was made to ask the EBC to try to gather information on Clinical Track Faculty salary. This is in response to the fifth recommendation from the report. Some of the salary reports need to be purchased, and if that sort of information would be needed, they should figure out how much it would cost. It was noted that some of the applicable data are available from cupahr.org. Motion passed unanimously.
- New Business
 - Charge 2021.12 – Deadline for Final Grades: Rex received an email today from Shelly, who could not attend, that included a statement from the Registrar's Office explaining about why they need two whole days so that the advising centers can reach out to the students before Christmas. Since the University offices are closed on December 23rd, and since Christmas is on a Saturday, the Registrar's Office is requiring that the Faculty deadline be the Monday after Commencement. For Finals that are on Friday, this leaves less than one business day to grade exams. The Provost noted that nothing could be done with the deadline for this year, and that faculty will just have to try to get grades done in time, but acknowledged that some classes don't allow for quick grading, and they shouldn't be rushed.
 - The motion was made that Rex work with the Provost's Office to develop best practices with regard to the academic calendar to try to avoid such crunches in the future. The motion carried unanimously.
 - Charge 2021.13 – Salary Advance Policy: Motion was made to send the charge to the Economic Benefits Committee, and passed with one abstention.
- Next meeting: 5 Nov 2021 (Guy Fawkes Day)
- Adjourned at 3:43 pm.

Minutes recorded by Faculty Senate secretary Brandon Field.

CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

Name: _____ (Optional)

Date of Submission: 7 Oct 2021

Name of Faculty Senate Representative:

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

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:

Deadline for submission of final grades

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?

Our dean informed us that Grades would be due this semester on Monday, December 20. Although he did not give a time, final grades are typically due at 10am. You might recall that this past spring, they originally set a Monday deadline that was later delayed.

I expressed my concerns about the Monday deadline to the dean, because our Final Exam schedule includes exams that are scheduled on Friday afternoon from 2-4pm. If a faculty member is giving a final exam until 4pm on a Friday, I believe it is unreasonable to have a deadline on Monday morning at 10am. It means that faculty are forced to grade exams and post grades over a weekend. (Admittedly, we all work over weekends sometimes, but I don't think it should be forced!) That weekend also happens to be Commencement weekend, and is the weekend before Christmas, when some people have busy schedules of family activities, religious events, etc. I expressed my personal opinion to the dean that we should not have a Monday grading deadline, and he said he would provide my feedback to Provost's Council. He said the Registrar's Office was adamant about a Monday deadline. I left the meeting with the feeling that a change was unlikely.

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.

I believe that the Senate should push for a policy that states that faculty must have a minimum of one full workday between the last day of final exams and the deadline for grades to be due. (Honestly, I

think we should have two days, but at least one!)

4. Potential Resources:

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

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:

Actions taken by Senate:

Faculty Senate chair will work with the Provost's office to develop best practices that will help prevent this issue in the future.

CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

Date addressed by Senate:
10/22/2021

Name: Jane Weatherred (Optional)

Date of Submission: 9/21/2021

Name of Faculty Senate Representative:

1. Stephanie Young
2. _____
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:**

Investigation of Salary Advance Policy and Prepayment of Health Insurance for New Faculty

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?

New faculty in 2020 signed a contract of employment which stated that their hire date was August 12, 2020, however, new faculty are not paid any salary until the end of September. New hires have the option of requesting an advance in pay, however, it is not only taxed, but withdrawn back from your pay over the months of September, October, November and December. I signed paperwork to decline this option, but especially for those coming to USI with no pay during the summer, this places an undue burden on new faculty. Additionally, HR asks new hires to prepay the health insurance premiums for the month of September. What this meant during Covid 19 is that, in my case, I was paying high COBRA rates of insurance because I was coming to USI after the end of a one-year limited-term teaching contract that ended in May 2020 at another university. So, technically I was unemployed and having to pay via COBRA until my benefits were provided by USI. This could have also impacted other new faculty depending on if they had summer work or were covered by a spouse, etc. However, in my case, with some existing health conditions, I was to go in front of students face to face 5 days per week while masked for a period of time before being actually insured by USI. Since that time, I have discovered that this also impacted a new lecturer at USI in a similar fashion although, because this person transitioned from being a staff member to the lecturer position, I'm unclear on the health insurance component because that person would have already had benefits provided by USI.

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.

At a minimum, because it was not sufficiently explained to me, except that this was the policy or policies, I am requesting that the Faculty Senate investigate in order to find out the rationale behind these policies. Hopefully, the outcome will be sufficient justification provided for these policies/practices. I do know, that since this is my fourth institution that it does not align with the "best practices" in these areas at other institutions. For example, at every one of my previous institutions of higher education, new employees were hired on August 1 because the assumption was that you were preparing to teach and already working at that time and you signed up for your health insurance options that were then made retroactive to start as of August 1. At a maximum, should the Faculty Senate discover that there is not sufficient financial or other rationale behind these policies, to seek to change them to bring USI in line with the best practices of other universities and provide a better level of support for new faculty hires.

4. Potential Resources:

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

I am attaching an email exchange between me and Dr. Beeby, the former Dean of Liberal Arts, on these matters, an email exchange between me and Wendy Seitz of HR regarding this issue and copies of the forms I was able to locate regarding the salary advancement agreement/request.

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:

Actions taken by Senate:

The charge will be sent to the Economic Benefits Committee for further investigation and suggestions.