



University of Massachusetts  
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University Governance  
Faculty Council  
[https://www.umb.edu/faculty\\_staff/faculty\\_council](https://www.umb.edu/faculty_staff/faculty_council)  
Monday, April 4, 2022  
1:00-3:00  
Zoom Webinar

## Agenda

### I. Approval of the Agenda

### II. Motion to approve the March minutes

### III. Chair's Comments

### IV. Reports – 10 mins maximum

- a. Chancellor – Marcelo Suárez-Orozco
- b. Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs – Joseph Berger
- e. Representative from the Faculty Staff Union – Steve Striffler
- f. Representative from the Graduate Employee Organization—Chidimma Ozor Commer

### V. Motions from the Academic Affairs Committee

#### Motion 1

Moved: that the faculties recommend to the President and the Board of Trustees that the listed students and any additional candidates who upon completion of all requirements for graduation and the maintenance of good standing be awarded the degree of Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science.

#### Motion 2

Moved: that the UMB administration require Facilities to provide forthwith electronic access to all doors leading to and from the Campus Center garage elevators, specifically the doors associated with access to the single elevator leading to the UL and LL handicapped parking spaces.

### VI. Resolution from Marlene Kim and Joel Fish

**RESOLUTION ON TEACHING EVALUATION MODALITY AND SUPPORT AND AFFIRMATION THAT  
DEPARTMENTS CHOOSE TEACHING MODALITY**

**Whereas** many students do not complete online teaching evaluations since the change to online evaluations only approximately two years ago, and

**Whereas** the sample size from these evaluations can be very low and the results skewed on teaching, and

**Whereas** fewer comments and thus qualitative information are obtained from these results, and

**Whereas** these evaluations are used not only to help instructors teach better but also in our promotions review, and

**Whereas**, everyone has an interest in having high response rates and better evaluations, and

**Whereas**, departments are the units who decide on how to evaluate teaching, and

**Whereas**, some departments are unhappy with the low response rates and low qualitative outcomes and want to go back to paper or in-class evaluations or otherwise increase response rates, and

**Whereas** the university reported to Faculty Council on December 6, 2021 that Gradescope could resolve these problems but information on this has been inconsistent and this software cannot be used for teaching evaluations yet because it does not yet compute department averages and frequencies of responses, and

**Whereas** the solutions the university proposes to increase response rates for online evaluations are not tenable for all faculty in all classes in all departments using the current online software available (some classes don't meet before these evaluations are due in some cases; classes cannot obtain computers for all students in classes, which are necessary for completing these evaluations; some students do not have smart phones to complete these evaluations), so the problems of low response rates, skewed results, and lower quality assessments continue, and

**Whereas** the Academic Technology Committee (ATC) recommended that "ALL course evaluations be completed using either Evaluation Kit or Qualtrics—hence no paper evaluations" (ATC power point presentation to faculty council on December 6, 2021), but that these software fail to meet the needs of all faculty and all departments as discussed above, and

**Whereas** Provost Berger affirmed in Faculty Council on February 7, 2022 that departments choose how to evaluate teaching, including the modality of teaching, so that departments decide whether to use paper or online evaluations and not the administration, but

**Whereas** departments cannot use paper evaluations today because the university eliminated this possibility and option, and

**Whereas** the Provost's office has been diligently and commendably worked with IT to put into place a paper evaluation through Gradescope by working with Gradescope for the spring 2022 teaching evaluations so that departments can use paper evaluations again if desired for spring 2022 and calculate instructor, class, and department averages, but this is taking longer than expected,

**Be it resolved** that the Faculty Council affirms departments' ability to decide on how to conduct teaching evaluations, including the modality (such as using paper evaluations), and

**Be it further resolved** that the ATC reexamine their recommendation, be informed of the problems some faculty have been having with the online evaluations so that they are informed that the two mechanisms that they recommended are unsatisfactory for all faculty and departments and should not be the only two recommended (and that the Gradescope paper options be evaluated as a recommended option), and

**Be it further resolved** that the university IT department investigate and offer mechanisms that will allow for paper and other in-class evaluations for teaching that resolves the problems above should departments want to use this and that they work with faculty and departments who are reporting these problems so that these problems are indeed resolved; and

**Be it finally resolved** that Faculty Council encourages the efforts underway so that such mechanisms be available to departments and faculty by early April 2022 and the support provided to departments so that departments can use this option if desired and that the university inform all faculty and departments so that departments who want to use paper evaluations and this new software/mechanism may do so in Spring 2022.

## **VII. Motions from the General Education Committee**

*from the Distribution and Diversity Subcommittees Motions 1-6:*

**1. Moved: That CINE 304, Understanding Television, be approved as satisfying the Humanities Distribution.**

**WISER Course Description:** This class focuses on television's evolution as a cultural practice from a historical and theoretical perspective. Taking a humanistic approach, it examines the nature, institutions, technologies, aesthetics, and socio-political functions of commercial and public-service broadcast television. Further, it scrutinizes contemporary technological and cultural changes, such as the rise of digital and transnational television phenomena, questioning how television formats, programs and institutions are influencing and influenced by major shifts in global mediascapes.

*General Education Capabilities:* Verbal Reasoning (Critical Thinking) and Critical Reading and Analysis

**2. Moved: That Cinema Studies/Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures/Arabic 352L, Middle Eastern and North African Cinema, be approved as satisfying the Humanities Distribution.**

**3. Moved: That Cinema Studies, Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, Arabic 352L, Middle Eastern and North African Cinema, be approved as satisfying the International Diversity requirement.**

**WISER Course Description:** This course focuses on how Middle Eastern and North African films have reflected, perpetuated, and criticized national ideologies, as well as how themes of individual and collective identity, memory, and trauma have been represented by filmmakers. By exploring how films have told stories about socio-cultural conflicts, we will open further questions about the place of cinema in nation building and in the formation of historical narratives. The course's specific theme varies from semester to semester, depending on the national contexts being studied. This course satisfies the International Diversity requirement. As such, questions of Race, Gender and Culture (national or regional origin, ethnicity, religion, language, or sociolinguistic identity) are integral parts of the course. Taught in English. CINE 352L and MLLC 352L and ARABIC 352L are the same course.

*General Education Capabilities (for Distribution proposal):* Verbal Reasoning (Critical Thinking) and Critical Reading and Analysis

**4. Moved: That History 186, Road to Black Lives Matter, be approved as satisfying the Humanities Distribution.**

**5. Moved: That History 186, Road to Black Lives Matter, be approved as satisfying the U. S. Diversity Distribution.**

**WISER Course Description:** This introductory course documents the mistreatment, abuse, and violence inflicted on African Americans in the U.S., starting with the Atlantic slave-trade up to present times. Organizations like *Black Lives Matter* (BLM) follow a long history of earlier organizations with active platforms denouncing and calling for an end to this antipathy and violence. This course surveys the history of this violent mistreatment; explores the general responses to this culture; and examines the emergence and resolutions of pertinent organizations in different eras. Variables including race, class, gender, and regional location will be considered throughout the course.

*General Education Capabilities (for Distribution motion):* Critical Reading and Analysis and Effective Communication (writing, speaking, and other forms of expressive communication).

**6. Moved: That Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies 347, Feminisms, Intersectionality, and Social Justice: Histories, Debates, Futures, be approved as satisfying the U. S. Diversity requirement.**

**WISER Course Description:** Students critically engage a sampling of key works, some classic and some 'hot off the presses' that explore feminist thinking about a variety of topics, as well as the ways that feminist theorists construct and complicate analyses of power, privilege and oppression. The aim is to train students to grapple with a range of concepts and frameworks that inspire and inform feminist research and activism. Throughout the course, we engage the burgeoning critical scholarly discussion of 'intersectionality'—at once a lens, a framework, and a core concept—which has gained increasing prominence in feminist discourse and requires careful consideration. The course is structured around broad themes through which gender is complicated by multiple axes of identity-- race, culture, social class, and sexual orientation.

*From the General Education Committee and Writing Proficiency Subcommittee:*

**7. Moved: That the Faculty Council accept “Report and Recommendations on Two Pilots,” February 21, 2022, and approve its two recommendations:**

**A) That all students with retake scores on the Writing Proficiency Examination may resubmit their challenge essay after participating in retake counseling, and further:**

A1) That the Associate Director of Writing Proficiency may allow individual students who received “void” scores on the Writing Proficiency Examination to submit their challenge essays after participating in retake counseling;

(A2) That students who resubmit their challenge essays may appeal the resubmission decision to the Associate Director of Writing Proficiency, who will review their revised challenge essay and provide students with commentary to explain the decision; and

(A3) That students who do not succeed in satisfying the Writing Proficiency Requirement with a resubmitted essay will be strongly encouraged to take Critical Reading and Writing 282, Elements of Writing Proficiency.

**B) That the Electronic Writing Assessment Portfolio (“EWRAP 2”) be adopted for Critical Reading and Writing 282, Elements of Writing Proficiency.**

#### **VIII. Motion from the Graduate Studies Committee**

**From: CLA (HIST)**

**Request for a new course:** HIST 684 Topics in Food History

**Rationale:** Food studies stands at the intersection of History, American Studies, Economics, Science, and Anthropology. As an interdisciplinary subject, it is of great interest to many students who can pursue

research from many different perspectives. There are several faculty members in the department with interests in food studies through different geographic lenses; the sample syllabi provided give examples of sample reading lists from three possible vantage points of teaching the course. This course is proposed as an elective.

**IX. Motion from the Budget and Long-Range Planning Committee**

Moved: The Faculty Council approves the Ethical Vendor Policy submitted by the Budget and Long-Range Planning Committee and recommends it for adoption to Chancellor Marcelo Suárez-Orozco.

**X. Resolution from the Executive Committee**

**Resolution:**

WHEREAS, elimination of debt in higher education and pathways to education as a public good represents substantial opportunities for the University of Massachusetts Boston to demand support for and reform of higher education, increase economic and public health security, expand prosperity, create jobs, and save our community money;

WHEREAS, cancelling student loan debt and eliminating debt in higher education represents an enormous economic opportunity for UMass Boston to support students, staff, and faculty in moving upward in social mobility, creating and pursuing better jobs, increasing spending in our local community, and providing a deeply needed stimulus during the pandemic;

WHEREAS, Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian and Pacific Islander, and other communities of color; economically disadvantaged residents; older people and young adults experience the impacts of student debt and debt generally most acutely;

WHEREAS, abolishing of student debt also represents a social justice opportunity for UMass Boston to support students, addressing racial and gender wage gaps, and providing better overall health outcomes to students since debt is associated with negative mental and physical health outcomes, like stress, depression, general health, obesity and mortality;

WHEREAS, cancelling student debt is a policy that is strongly supported across all political parties and across the country, but especially here in Boston, and now President Joe Biden and the Democrats committed to some form of student debt cancellation during the 2020 election;

WHEREAS, student debt cancellation is only one step toward relief and a better higher education system, and examples from overseas and locally show the need for elimination of full student loan debt and investment in and pathways toward free higher education and other programs to support higher education as a public good;

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED by the Faculty Council of the University of Massachusetts that we call for the Federal Government to commit to cancel all student debt.

The Faculty Council further requests that the Federal Government enacts a plan to cancel student debt and begin the transition to education as a public good.

**Rationale:**

**THE PROBLEM**

More than 45 million people in the United States hold nearly two trillion dollars of student debt. Student debt exacerbates class, race, and gender inequalities. It reduces students' access to education, and hinders

them from taking jobs of their choice in the fields in which they were trained. It burdens our faculty and staff, who also carry student debt into their offices and classrooms. And most importantly, it's unnecessary, as there are clear opportunities now for canceling that debt and reforming higher education finance to prevent students from incurring further debt.

#### **THE MOMENT**

In December 2021, Biden extended the federal student debt payment pause until May 1st, the *second* extension since 2020. But, our communities are suffering and need student debt cancellation now, more than ever. Now is the time to turn the payment pause into permanent cancellation. The idea of student debt cancellation has never been so popular, or possible [Over two thirds of Americans support some kind of student debt cancellation](#). Substantial numbers of elected officials and grassroots organizations are ready to mobilize.

#### **THE DEMAND**

We are therefore calling for full student loan debt cancellation and a pathway to tuition free college.

#### **XI. New Business**