

**Academic Senate Council Meeting Agenda
March 27, 2023**

I. Approval of February Meeting Minutes

II. Updates and New Business (Martin and others)

- a. Action Item: Vote on joining other UA System faculty governance bodies opposing U Phoenix affiliation with UA System – Draft letter below

- i. Motion made by Dr. Ussery, seconded by Dr. Huitt

Related News Stories:

<https://arktimes.com/arkansas-blog/2023/02/06/foreign-bank-reportedly-involved-in-proposed-purchase-of-phoenix-university-by-ua-system-affiliate>

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2023/01/26/report-u-arkansas-system-may-buy-university-phoenix>

<https://arktimes.com/arkansas-blog/2023/02/28/veterans-group-warns-against-a-phoenix-deal-ua-system-president-defends-moving-forward>

- b. Discussion: CPR training (Mendiratta)

III. Committee Reports

- a. Research Committee (Gan)
- b. Faculty Affairs Committee (Aykin-Burns)
- c. Communications Committee (Hayar)
- d. Administrative Council (Hayar)
- e. Membership and Elections Committee (Mendiratta)
- f. Academic Policy Committee (Ussery)
- g. Intercollegiate Faculty Committee (Khari)
- h. Space Committee (De Gravelles)

IV. College Officer Reports

- a. Graduate School (Macnicol, Li)
- b. College of Health Professions (Walter, Simmons)
- c. College of Medicine (Cherney, Sanders, Stronach)
- d. College of Nursing (Degrauelles, Nagle)
- e. College of Pharmacy (D Jones, Gressler)
- f. College of Public Health (Goudie)
- g. Academic Affairs (Gafford, Strahan)
- h. Associated Student Government (Hunt)

V. Announcements

To University of Arkansas System President Donald Bobbitt,

On behalf of the Faculty Senate Presidents/Chairs at each University of Arkansas System Campus, I write to express our opposition to the University of Arkansas's decision to acquire the University of Phoenix through an affiliated non-profit. We believe this acquisition would be detrimental to the University of Arkansas System and the students that it serves.

You are unquestionably aware that the University of Phoenix has a documented history of deceptive and unethical practices, including aggressive recruitment tactics and misrepresenting graduation rates, and their history of burdening students with high levels of debt founded upon predatory lending. Its accreditation has been repeatedly called into question, and it has been the subject of numerous investigations and lawsuits.

As an institution of higher learning, the University of Arkansas has a responsibility to prioritize the success of its students. Acquiring a university with such a poor reputation would be antithetical to that responsibility and is in opposition to the message we send to our students regarding the university's student-focused commitment to academic excellence and ethical academic standards.

We risk serious damage to the University of Arkansas System schools as centers of academic excellence. We risk cannibalizing students from our own campuses. We jeopardize recent System achievements. We risk associating ourselves with these negative practices as a System, and as individual scholars. We risk our foundational existence as a reputable institution of higher learning.

Furthermore, the University of Arkansas would assume a significant financial burden by purchasing the University of Phoenix, with estimates nearing one billion dollars. The acquisition would require a substantial investment of resources that could be better allocated to improving the university's existing programs and facilities. If the pursuit of the acquisition is a pursuit of future revenue streams, we must ask at what value is our reputation now, and at what cost do we dilute that brand?

In light of these concerns, we urge the University of Arkansas System to reconsider its decision to purchase the University of Phoenix. We recommend that the System continue its focus on improving its existing programs and facilities, investing in its students and faculty, and upholding its commitment to academic excellence and the utmost academic standards.

Sincerely,

Dr. Stephen Caldwell
Faculty Senate Chair
University of Arkansas - Fayetteville