

Name	Position	Present	Absent
Brad Martin, COP	President	x	
Tiffany Huitt, COM	President Elect	x	
Priya Mendiratta, COM	Past President	x	
Summer Khairi, CHP	Secretary	x	
Clare Brown, CPH	Parliamentarian	x	
Elizabeth Riley, CON	Member at Large		x
David Ussery, COM	Member at Large	x	
Nukhet Aykin-Burns, COP	Member at Large	x	
Layla Simmons, CHP	Representative	x	
Christopher Walter, CHP	Representative	x	
Lin-Xi Li, GS	Representative	x	
Melanie MacNicol, GS	Representative		x
Corey Nagel, CON	Representative	x	
Pamela Degravelles, CON	Representative	x	
Darin Jones, COP	Representative	x	
Laura Gressler, COP	Representative	x	
Stefani Gafford, AA	Representative	x	
Kay Strahan, AA	Representative	x	
Steve Cherney, COM	Representative		x
Ronald Sanders, COM	Representative	x	
Ben Stronach, COM	Representative		x
Anthony Goudie, CPH	Representative	x	
Vacant, CPH	Representative		
Hannah Hunt, ASG	Representative	x	

Guests: Abdallah Hayar, Amber Teigan, Claire Tucker, Grover Miller, Gunnar Boysen, Jen Gan, Katy Allison, Kerry Evans, Noelle Danylchuk, Shayla Stinnett, Susan Long, Tina Maddox, Wei Li, Wendy Ward

Academic Senate Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2023
ZOOM

I. Welcome and Call to Order (Martin)

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Martin at 2:01pm.

II. Approval of February Meeting Minutes (Martin)

The minutes were approved.

III. Updates and New Business (Martin and others)

a. University of Phoenix

i. Excerpts from President Bobbitt – March 3, 2023

1. U. Phoenix was recently acquired by the Apollo group which restructured U. Phoenix that has largely ended the predatory practices of the prior owners.
2. Desire to expand the online footprint of the UA system and to respond strategically in a more competitive environment in higher education.
3. Transformative Education Services, Inc (TES) would purchase U. Phoenix to provide a legal and financial barrier between the UA system and U. Phoenix.
4. TES would be an affiliate of the U of A system and enter into a licensing agreement for the use of UA images.
5. There would be no requirement that UA System Schools or faculty resources used to support TES but there would be the hope that when mutually beneficial opportunities existed that collaboration between the UA system schools would evolve.

ii. Arkansas Times

1. A Japanese bank would provide financing for a nonprofit affiliate of the University of Arkansas System to buy the University of Phoenix, according to the chairman of the system's board of trustees.
2. Speaking on condition of anonymity told the *Arkansas Times* recently that a cost estimate of \$500 million to \$700 million was about right.
3. Phoenix now has about 79,000 students, compared with about 470,000 students at its peak in 2010. University of Phoenix spokeswoman Andrea Smiley has said 99.5% are online students.
4. In December 2019, Phoenix agreed to a \$191 million settlement with the Federal Trade Commission. The commission said the college had lured students with fraudulent claims.

5. In January 2022, George Burnett was named Phoenix's president. But months after taking the post, Burnett resigned following an inquiry by the U.S. Department of Education.
- iii. Veterans Education Success
 1. Charges from the Federal Trade Commission ("FTC") that the University of Phoenix specifically "targeted active duty servicemembers, veterans, and military spouses" with deceptive advertising.
 2. The Department of Education's determination that there are "strong indicia regarding substantial misconduct" by the University of Phoenix, warranting its inclusion on a list of schools whose students will receive automatic federal loan discharges.
 3. Allegations from whistleblower(s) that the University of Phoenix certified students who did not have a high school diploma or GED, and deceptively inflated job placement statistics.
 4. Student veterans' allegations that the University of Phoenix misled them about the cost of their education and job opportunities and provided low quality education.
 - iv. Action Item: Vote on joining other UA System faculty governance bodies opposing U Phoenix affiliation with UA System – Draft letter below
 1. Motion made by Dr. Ussery, seconded by Dr. Huitt
 2. Discussions on the pros and cons of the University of Phoenix
 - v. Motion to table the vote for joining of the draft letter opposing the U Phoenix affiliation with the UA System.
 1. Yes-Priya Mendiratta, Anthony Goudie, Corey Nagel, Nukhet Aykin-Burns, Gunnar Boysen, Layla Simmons, Clare Brown, Laura Gressler, Pam de Gravelles, Lin-Xi Li, Summer Khairi, Tiffany Huitt, David Ussery, Chris Walter, Darin Jones, Kay Strahan, Stefani Gafford, Brad Martin, Ron Sanders Jr.
 2. No- None
 - vi. Invite Steven Caldwell to attend next Academic Senate Meeting.
 - b. Discussion: CPR training (Mendiratta)
 - i. Offer CPR training not BLS certification.
 - ii. Just to receive information and awareness about CPR.
- IV. Provost Updates**
- a. Met with Wendy Ward and Stephanie Gardner on March 27, 2023
 - i. Invitation to Wendy Nembhard to present at the April Senate meeting on the Faculty Retention Committee.
 - ii. Discussed U. Phoenix Affiliation
- V. Committee Reports**
- a. Research Committee (Gan)
 - i. No updates
 - b. Faculty Affairs Committee (Aykin-Burns)
 - i. In the process of the Parental Leave Policy

- c. Communications Committee (Hayar)
- d. Administrative Council (Hayar)
 - i. March 15th – Budget
 - 1. At the end of the February, we are \$29 million in the red.
 - 2. Trying to find solutions to help with the situation.
- e. Membership and Elections Committee (Mendiratta)
 - i. Nukhet Aykin-Burns is the chair of the committee.
 - ii. Please spread the word and encourage people to participate.
- f. Academic Policy Committee (Ussery)
 - i. No updates
- g. Intercollegiate Faculty Committee (Khairi)
 - i. No Updates
- h. Space Committee (De Gravelles)
 - i. When the committee is doing their efficiency walk throughs to think about teaching and learning spaces first.

VI. College Officer Reports

- a. Graduate School (Macnicol, Li)
 - i. No Updates
- b. College of Health Professions (Walter, Simmons)
 - i. No Updates
- c. College of Medicine (Cherney, Sanders, Stronach)
 - i. No Updates
- d. College of Nursing (Degrauelles, Nagle)
 - i. No Updates
- e. College of Pharmacy (D Jones, Gressler)
 - i. No Updates
- f. College of Public Health (Goudie)
 - i. Had a full day in person retreat to update the college's strategic plan.
 - ii. Focus groups starting this week regarding various aspects of the strategic plan.
 - iii. We have our 2 nominations for a new COPH representative.
- g. Academic Affairs (Gafford, Strahan)
 - i. No Updates
- h. Associated Student Government (Hunt)
 - i. No Updates

VII. Academic Senate Budget

- a. Current Balance Available for '22-'23: \$1,659

VIII. Adjourn at 3:13pm.

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