Towson University Retired Faculty Association

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 20, 2020 via WebEx.

Attending: Jim Anthony, Pat Alt, Peg Benner, Fran Bond, Ray Castaldi, Janet DeLany, Don Forester, Ellie Hofstetter, David Larkin, Tracy Miller, Ron Matlon, Florence Newman, Jim Paulsen, Martha Siegel, Precha Thavikulwat, and Jane Wolfson

Absent: Jim Dilisio

Invited Guest: Joanna Maxwell, Ph.D, RN, CTN

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm by President Matlon.

1. Community Outreach Proposal - TURFA collaboration with the BTU (Maxwell)
   • Maxwell provided a brief overview of her professional involvement with Towson University community outreach, Baltimore-Towson University (BTU), and service-learning initiatives during the past 20 years.
   • She highlighted
     o the BTU vision statement (TU website on BTU, October 15, 2020)
     o the importance of the current 531 BTU initiatives to the Baltimore community, TU students, and TU faculty
     o opportunities for retired faculty across the colleges to continue to remain engaged in the communities they served, and the importance of sustaining the rapport and trust the faculty members established within those communities.
   • She proposed that TURFA Executive Committee
     o view the BTU website (https://www.towson.edu/btu)
     o contact the following people to explore potential opportunities and processes to support BTU- TURFA collaboration
       ▪ Matthew Durington, PhD, Director, Community Engagement and Partnerships
       ▪ Bobbie Laur, Associate Vice President, Outreach
       ▪ Kathleen Crostic, Partnerships Manager
     o Hold a forum where BTU can meet with retired faculty who can offer ideas on how they might serve (see Spring 2021 luncheon action plan)
   • Action plan: TURFA President, Ron Matlon, will contact the BTU Director, Associate Vice President, and Partnerships Manager during the next few months to explore:
     o opportunities for interested TURFA members to volunteer for various short-term and long-term BTU projects
     o processes for TURFA members to learn about and become involved with these projects, including the possibility of having BTU make a presentation at the Spring 2021 retiree lunch
   • Because service learning and community engagement initiatives are suspended due to Covid-19, TURFA members’ participation in such projects may not begin until fall 2021.
2. Minutes from the September 15, 2020 meeting were accepted as submitted.

3. President’s Report (Matlon)
   A. Art Document and Emeriti Status
      * On October 12, 2020, the Academic Senate proposed revisions to the Emeritus Appointments section of the ART document.
      * Martha Siegel, TURFA representative to the Senate, requested that the motion to approve this section of the ART document be postponed until TURFA could discuss:
         o The gendered language of the document (the document used the phrase Emeritus exclusively)
         o The implied limitations to the list of benefits included in the document
      * A subcommittee of TURFA Executive Committee met electronically to:
         o Investigate the language norms and guidelines used by other academic institutions regarding the following terms: emeritus, emerita, emeriti, emeritae, emeritx
         o Explore historic and current dictionary definitions of those terms
         o Investigate whether another USM institution used gender inclusive and non-binary language in its emeriti documents
         o Determine which benefits should be included in the document
      * Ron Matlon discussed with Vice Provost Reitz the proposed ART document and TURFA plans to suggest amendments to that proposal.
         o The Provost’s Office and the Academic Senate are looking to TURFA for guidance regarding appropriate inclusive and non-binary language.
         o The Provost’s Office plans to create a web page that lists emeriti faculty benefits.
      * On October 16, voting members of the TURFA Executive Committee and TURFA’s representatives to the Academic Senate met and drafted an amendment to the proposed Academic Senate document (See Appendix A) that included the following:
         o The use of the term *emeriti* when referring to a group of faculty members as the term is plural and refers to all members
         o The use of inclusionary and non-binary language when specifying the status awarded at the individual level, i.e., *emeritus, emerita, or emeritx* based on the individual’s preferred language
         o A list of the more salient benefits to serve as a documented reference for what those benefits are, and to minimize the potential of those benefits being omitted in future publications
      * Next Steps
         o Ron Matlon submitted the recommended TURFA amendments to the Academic Senate Executive Committee and asked to be invited to that meeting to explain and advocate for the TURFA recommendations (See Appendix A TURFA Recommended Amendments to the Emeritus Faculty ART Document proposed at the October 12, 2020 Academic Senate).
         o The Academic Senate Executive Committee will review, potentially make revisions, and then forward the proposed amendments to the Academic Senate for its consideration in November.
B. Update on the TURFA-Towson University Foundation (TUF) Collaboration
- TURFA continues to work with TUF to establish procedures for TUF to collect and process TURFA membership fees and gift transactions, track TURFA directory information, and provide weekly TURFA fiscal reports. The Provost Office supports this initiative. Once the procedures are finalized, the job description for the Coordinator for Commencement and Program Specialist in the Provost Office regarding TURFA support will be adjusted.

C. Distribution of TURFA Annual Report
- The TURFA’s first annual report was distributed to TURFA members and to the TU President, Provost, Associate Provost and Deans. As part of its initiative to minimize the number of emails faculty receive, the Provost Office denied TURFA’s request to share the report directly with all faculty. Rather, the Provost invited the deans to distribute the report to their faculty in a manner they deemed appropriate for their specific colleges. Though TURFA President Matlon requested the TU Provost to distribute the report as widely as possible, he has not been informed as to who received it.
- TU has established policies and procedures that TURFA needs to follow regarding the distribution of materials and documents. Thus, TURFA cannot distribute the report to the University community without explicit permission. President Matlon asked the TURFA PR committee and the TURFA President-elect to assess the benefits and challenges associated with developing and distributing a second annual report in fall 2021.

D. AROHE IDEA Exchange and TURFA Topics for Discussion regarding Programs and Events- TURFA President Matlon shared a list of strategies and suggestions for virtual TURFA Programs that President Elect Wolfson and he gathered during a virtual AROHE conference (See Appendix B AROHE Idea Exchange). The TURFA Executive Committee added the following suggestions to that list:
  - Allow participants to post questions by using the chat feature or raising their hands, depending on the number of participants and participants’ technology access.
  - Assign the responsibility of monitoring the chats to a person other than the host of the meeting.
  - Record virtual programs and events and post them on the TURFA web page, using a hyperlink. Obtain permission from the presenter prior to recording the presentation. Contact Christine Tennies for guidance as to how to obtain presenter permission to record, inform participants about the recording of the presentation, monitor, sound quality, and edit the recording.
  - Offer virtual events and programs that feature student research, music recitals, and visual arts.

4. Membership Report (DeLany)
Total membership = 119; Lifetime membership = 37; Associate membership= 8
5. Treasurer’s Report (Castaldi)- As of this time, a check for one member has not been located by the TU Foundation, although TURFA granted this person full membership for 2020-21. The current Account Balance is as follows:
   - TURFA Cash Account Balance = $5,059.48
   - TURFA OHP Fund Balance = $6,465.83
   - TURFA Research and Scholarship Fund = $639.06

6. Program and Events Committee (Paulsen) - The events committee is planning the following virtual WebEx events:
   - **October 21, 2020 12 pm to 1 pm- Gary Vikan Lecture**
   - **November 17 - Pre-Thanksgiving focus on Yummy Food and Drink (Tracy Miller and Jim Dilisio)** - Time TBD. Tracy Miller will demonstrate how to make Baklava: Middle Eastern cooking, phyllo, honey. Many people are afraid of working with phyllo, but they need not be. Then, Jim DiLisio will show how he makes his highly touted limoncello.
   - **December 8 at 2 pm - Collaborating for Real Literacy by Sharon Pitcher**. Dr. Pitcher was the Director of the Towson University Reading Clinic for five years and taught future reading specialists in the College of Education. She will share ideas on books and holiday gifts for children of various ages that encourage “real literacy” activities and foster family memories. Many of the activities come from her book, *Collaborating for Real Literacy* (Pitcher & Mackey, 2013) and activities she has done with her grandson, Alex, age 10. After a 30-minute presentation of ideas, Sharon will answer questions and offer suggestions for participants’ grandchildren. Participants can email her at spitcher4@comcast.net with a description of their grandchild’s age and motivations ahead of the presentation. A handout of book ideas and recipes will be offered to the participants.
   - **January 2021 (Date and Time TBD)** - Art is: What are the essential Components of Successful Visual Art by Jim Paulsen, Emeritus Professor of Art. This power point presentation will focus on components such as design, concept and material that directly impact what we know of as art. Many questions will be posed that are central to the art making and viewing process.
   - **January 2021 (Date, Title and Time TBD)** - Jim Anthony will discuss some or all of the below topics:
     - What is Music? Definition of Music: Sound organized in time, abstraction, elements of music, how is it perceived, melody, harmony, rhythm, meter, dynamics, consonance, dissonance, how is it presented, notation vs. improvisation
     - Composition: the creation of Music: Improvisation vs. conscious composition. musical forms and structures
     - Performance: Recreating a work of art: Musical notation, the performer
     - Experiencing Music: Generating emotions: Music and text, textless music
     - Functions of music: religious expression; entertainment; accompaniment of human motion: dance, marches
     - Evolution of musical styles: History of styles, styles of different ethnic traditions
• Other potential events
  o UMBC colleague to present an in-person wellness event when COVID-19 precautions and restrictions are lifted
  o Gardening videos in Spring 2021 - how to prepare your garden

6.B TURFA Spotlight Series and other Lectures (Miller)

• TURFA, in conjunction the Alumni Association, sponsored Fraser Smith’s and Donn Worgs’ discussion of Civil Rights in Maryland. It was a two-part talk, one in August and one in September.
• The first “Spotlight on…” talk occurred on October 9 and featured Tracy Jacobs, Director of the Osher Institute for Lifelong Learning. Eight TURFA members participated.
• The next two “Spotlight on…” will be on the second Friday of the month and feature Vernon Hurte on November 13 and Chris Chulos December 11, 2020.
• October 21 at noon will feature Dr. Gary Vikan, retired director of the Walters Art Museum who will discuss his new book *The Holy Shroud*.

6.C.1 On-line Information (Benner)- Benner accomplished the following:
• Created new “ADVOCATE Newsletters” folder in SharePoint and listed the nine *Advocates* from Fall-Winter 2015-2016 to present time
• Added the Annual Report to SharePoint and worked with Kam to get it posted on the website.
• Worked with Kam to put up changes and add new information on the TURFA website.
• Consulted with Christine Tennies, Ashley Arnold, and other OTS staff to solve technical problems encountered while putting up new information on the website.
• Planned the next steps: Continue to work with Kam and others to add and revise content on the TURFA website.

6.C.2 The Advocate (Newman)- The fall-winter edition of *The Advocate* was published and disseminated electronically to TURFA members and the TU President, Provost, and Deans. It was posted electronically to the Cook Library Archives, the TURFA web page, and the TURFA SharePoint. The TURFA Executive Committee thanked Florence Newman for the excellent quality of *The Advocate’s* content, writing.

6.D Oral History Project (Forester)- Forester compared the quality and content of TURFA’s oral history project with that of the University of California at Berkeley. Based on that comparison, he determined that TU’s oral history project was “on the right track,” though nuanced to reflect TU’s mission and vision. In addition, Forester noted that the University of California at Berkeley also included transcribed copies of its oral histories. Forester will investigate the feasibility of transcribing and/or providing closed captioning of TU’s oral histories.

6.E Research and Scholarship Committee (Larkin)- The committee has nothing to report.
6.F Emeritus Status and Faculty Rights and Privileges Task Force (Siegel)

- The TURFA Task Force will continue its work and may make suggestions that can lead to further amendments to the ART policy, including emeriti status for long term adjunct faculty. There have been several inquiries about the omission of the sentence appearing in the current ART document on Emeritus appointments, “Other faculty members who have completed five years of full-time service or the equivalent at Towson University at the time of retirement shall be designated as Faculty Emeritus.” The current proposal on the floor of the Senate omits this completely, addressing only clinical faculty and senior lecturers.
- Siegel will send the references to the current legislation (online) in the third chapter of the ART document, the (postponed) motion recommended (on the October agenda of the Senate), and the item as it appears on the November agenda of the document (not yet available) to the Faculty Rights and Privileges Task Force and will try to arrange a virtual meeting for October 26, 27, or 28, 2020.
- At the request of TURFA President Matlon, Benner and Miller will form a subcommittee to investigate emeriti status for adjunct faculty and staff.

6.G Gerontology Program (Alt)

- The Task Force contacted the Gerontology faculty in summer 2020. Because the Task Force members have not yet received a response, they will contact the Gerontology faculty again regarding potential opportunities for TURFA-student engagement and projects.

6.H FACET (Thavikulwat)

- The FACET Advisory Board met online on 9 October 2020, the second meeting of the academic year, chaired by Babu Baradwaj. Issues discussed were as follows:
  - Plans for two annual research conferences- spring and fall.
  - Dropped plan for adding the position of Associate Director, due to belt tightening.
  - Planned board activities for this academic year.

6.I Associate Provost of Research and Dean of Graduate Studies Search (Larkin)

- The Associate Provost and Dean search is proceeding. The job title reflects Towson University’s new Carnegie research classification. There are five candidates still under consideration. The Search Committee will interview them via Zoom on October 20, 21, 23, 28, and 30, 2020. After the last interview, the committee will meet to decide what to recommend to the Provost.

6.J Faculty Senate (Siegel-Anthony)

- At the request of the TURFA representative to the Academic Senate, motion 20/21-9 Emeritus Appointments was postponed until the November meeting of the Senate. That meeting is probably November 2. The TURFA representative objected to the motion 20/21-10 because all faculty whose names were submitted were designated as Professor or Librarian Emeritus without regard to one’s chosen gender. The TURFA representative agreed to research how other institutions handle gender specific and non-binary designations.
• The list of professors and librarians to get Emeritus status was approved, except for Deborah Nolan, who does not qualify under the current ART document. She will qualify if the proposed change to the ART document passes in November; her case will be considered then.

6.K Legislative Issues (Miller, Alt) Statements about the 2021 State of Maryland benefit changes for eligible employees and retirees for healthcare and income protection are as follows (https://mymdbenefits.com/enrollment/):

• Online benefits enrollment is mandatory for active and contractual employees who wish to make benefits elections for plan year 2021.\(^1\)
• Wellness activities reset in 2021. See the Wellness section of this site or pages 4-5 of the 2021 Health Benefits Guide for details on earning incentives to reduce your costs this calendar year.
• As a result of the injunction granted by the court in Fitch vs. State of Maryland, there are no changes to the prescription coverage provided to those eligible for Medicare eligible in 2021.
• Healthcare FSA annual amount increase to $2,750.
• Expanded access to Flu Shots at most pharmacies nationwide – $0 copay

\(^1\)Note: The following statement was included in the Health Benefits Open Enrollment Instructions for Retirees that was included in the hard copy of the benefits package retirees received: “If after reviewing your current benefit election and the options available, you do not wish to make changes - DO NOTHING. However, if you would like to make changes, we are pleased to offer two methods for processing elections: Retiree Enrollment Form (paper) or SPS Benefit System (electronic).”

6.L Health Insurance Benefits for Surviving Spouses (Wolfson) - There are not any updates to report regarding the survivor benefits issue. The subcommittee continues to explore the details in the retirement process and necessary paperwork that enables a State retiree’s surviving spouse to automatically receive access to their spouse’s State retiree health benefits.

6.M College of Education (Bond) - The College of Education is working with the TU Alumni to offer a professional development event on Best Practices for Teaching for education alumni on October 22 at 4:00. Two education faculty members will present.

7. New Business

A. TURFA’s role in counseling those contemplating retirement (Siegel) - In past years, as part of a Human Resource workshop, Martha Siegel and Fran Bond provided a presentation on retirement to faculty who were contemplating retirement. HR has discontinued these workshops. More recently, faculty and staff contemplating retirement have been invited to attend retirement workshops conducted by Baltimore County Community College. Siegel and Bond will investigate the potential interest in and format for TURFA led forums and discussion groups that focus on faculty retirement.
8. **Next Meeting**- Tuesday, November 24, 2020 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm.
Appendix A: (October 12, 2020 proposed Academic Senate revisions are in black.
October 16, 2020 TURFA amendments to the proposed Academic Senate revisions are marked in red.)

(viii) Emeriti Appointments. Emeriti status shall be bestowed by a USM institution on the basis of both quality and length of service. A faculty member holding the rank of professor at the time of retirement, who has completed at least five years of full-time service or the equivalent at Towson University, and who has an overall record of positive five-year reviews, may be awarded the title Professor Emeritus, Professor Emerita, or Professor Emeritx. A faculty member who holds the rank of associate professor at the time of retirement, who has completed at least fifteen years full-time service or the equivalent at Towson University, and who has an overall record of positive five-year reviews, may be awarded the title Faculty Emeritus, Faculty Emerita, or Faculty Emeritx. A librarian who holds the rank of Librarian IV at the time of retirement, who has completed at least five years of full-time service or the equivalent at Towson University, and who has an overall record of positive annual performance evaluations, may be awarded the title Librarian Emeritus, Librarian Emerita, or Librarian Emeritx. Deans and the Vice Provost shall compile a list of faculty who meet the above criteria and present it to the Academic Senate for review twice a year. After Academic Senate approval, the Office of the Provost shall notify approved faculty and librarians of their emeriti status and extend to them the benefits and privileges of that status. These are to include, but are not limited to: the privileges of University parking, library borrowing, and academic computing; the benefits associated with maintaining one's Towson University I.D. number and an official Towson University I.D. card with emeritus, emerita, or emeritx status noted on the card; and eligibility to join the Towson University Retired Faculty Association (TURFA). Faculty holding emeriti status shall be included in the faculty/staff listings of their home department or college as having attained that appointment. Once awarded, emeriti status will continue in perpetuity. However, any behavior, action, or conduct that would otherwise constitute grounds for discipline or reprimand of a university faculty member may result in the revocation of emeriti status and/or privileges at any time by the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and by the Academic Senate.
Appendix B: AROHE Idea Exchange

- During an online program, keep the audience muted but keep a chat room open for people to type in their questions. Have the moderator read those questions to the presenters during Q&A.
- Start interactive programs by getting the audience involved. For example, with lots of faces on the screen, ask people to raise their hands if they have had to cancel a trip or trips because of the coronavirus. Then, ask that group to type into the chat room where they had planned on going. This gets the audience involved with the chat room right away.
- Record all virtual programs and put them on the organization's website for members who could not attend to access.
- Here is a list of recommended programs/events to ponder:
  - Arrange for good weather walks in parks while wearing masks and social distancing. Small outside gatherings where we can see each other again in person can be reinvigorating.
  - Have an online Pet Show and Share program. This would be interesting and fun, and something different from just the usual monthly talk. Host "Armchair Adventures" - people who travelled along with their slide shows.
  - Offer programs that involve TU students - fascinating research projects, performances and exhibits from those in the arts, home made films and videos, and intergenerational exchanges with students at other schools were successful and meaningful opportunities.
  - Host virtual happy hours or lunch get-togethers. One institution hosted lunch colloquia weekly by Zoom. Video spotlighting and extensive Q & A were used to engage attendees. To encourage social engagement, they have folks join early and visit informally with one another.
  - Have a theme-oriented movie course with the speaker recommending movies that the members might watch
  - Have a film professor or critic lead a discussion about a film that participants watched beforehand.
  - Invite a Wellness Coordinator to do a session for retirees.
  - Host *So You Want to Retire* panel discussions about the topics not covered by HR. This program would be for current faculty who are contemplating retirement.