



University Faculty Council

Meeting: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 - 4:00-5:30 PM

Location: Stockdale Boardroom | <https://neomed.zoom.us/j/97592756946?pwd=mqrxS6oUNTHbu2fm9ACJXmG02HFTeK.1>

ZOOM Information: Connection time 3:55 PM

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Or Telephone: +1 312 626 6799 (US Toll); +1 646 876 9923 (US Toll)

Meeting ID: 975 9275 6946 | Password: 928357

Members (attendees in bold): Jeffrey Mellott (chair), Petrea Cober (vice-chair), Timothy Barreiro, Natalie Bonfine, Stacey Gardner-Buckshaw, Yeong-Renn Chen, Lukas Everly, Sheila Fleming, Alex Galazyuk, Kristen Knepp, Yong Lu, Jennifer McKay, Vahagn Ohanyan, Matthew Smith, Erica Stovsky, Xinwen Wang

Speaker: President Langell

Administrative Support: Andrea Coard

4:00 p.m.- 4:05 p.m.	1	Welcome <i>Jeff Mellott, Ph.D., Chair, University Faculty Council</i>	Dr. Mellott convened the meeting at 4 p.m. and informed the council members that President Langell would be providing the leadership report.
	2	Approve previous UFC minutes 03.04.2025 <i>(Approved minutes located on NEOMED website)</i>	Dr. Galazyuk moved to approve the minutes; Dr. Ohanyan seconded. The minutes were approved by the council members.
	3	Executive Management Team Notes Executive Management Team Spring 2025 meeting sign ups	Dr. Mellott thanked the council members for signing up for the EMT meetings and reminded them to submit their notes to Andrea.
4:05 p.m.- 4:10 p.m.	4	AMP Bylaws Changes <i>Jeff Mellott, Ph.D., Chair, University Faculty Council</i> Appendix G, AMP	The proposed revisions to the Academic Management Partnership (AMP) bylaws have been circulated to council members for review. Minor adjustments to the membership composition have been requested. Dr. Mowad, Chair of the Bylaws Committee, had asked that the University Faculty Council (UFC) review the changes and provide approval. Dr. Cober moved to approve the motion and Dr. Bonfine seconded. The council unanimously approved the motion.
4:10 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.	5	Grants and Indirect Costs	

Jeff Mellott, Ph.D., Chair, University Faculty Council

Dr. Mellott began by saying this issue is two-pronged and has been raised by faculty.
There is a potential risk that indirect costs on federal grants may be reduced. If this occurs, service contracts currently supported by NEOMED could be eliminated. This concern has been communicated by the Vice President for Research. Other areas may also be at risk, although the specific elements remain unclear.

The second issue concerns faculty who apply for non-federal or non-NIH funding. These individuals are often subjected to indirect cost rates imposed by NEOMED when submitting their grant applications. Several faculty members have observed that there is no consistent process for determining these rates.

Dr. Bonfine shared that, based on her experience with state grants, NEOMED's policy has been to request the highest possible indirect rate. Another council member agreed, noting that NEOMED typically defaults to using the NIH rate, which is higher.

Dr. Mellott emphasized the need for consistency across the board and suggested that NEOMED develop a standardized template or workflow. He noted that multiple faculty members have expressed frustration with inconsistencies in how the grants accounting office handles these matters.

Dr. Gardner-Buckshaw said she understands that bench based researchers require more costs than those conducting research in social services or those evaluating social type programs. During interviews with foundations, it can be challenging to justify how resources are allocated – especially when dealing with private funders.

Dr. Mellott encouraged faculty to share any concerns related to grants and indirect costs with him so he can assess how widespread the issue. He also raised the question of whether there could be a standardized approach to handling indirect costs across different funding entities.

A faculty member asked, "How do we get questions about service contracts answered?"

They further inquired, "If service contracts are eliminated, what are the implications?"

It was noted that the University might still support equipment through basic services like phone support, labor, and parts. However, without any institutional support, the concern is that the equipment could fall into disrepair and become unusable.

Dr. Thewissen suggested that one potential option could be to charge grants based on actual usage—some services could remain free, while others would

			<p>require payment. He emphasized the need for a transitional system to implement this approach effectively.</p> <p>The Budget Committee is scheduled to meet with the Vice President for Research tomorrow, and these issues should be included in the discussion.</p>
<p>4:30 p.m.- 4:55 p.m.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Leadership Report <i>President Langell, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.</i></p>	<p>President Langell provided the leadership report.</p> <p>President Langell began by asking the council members if they had any questions.</p> <p>Dr. Mellott asked the President about the proposed NIH indirect cuts and how would the University respond. He said the service contracts and budget are determined by the Vice President for Research. He continued to say the budget committee is meeting with her tomorrow, and currently, her request has an 11% increase. He did not see anything substantial around service contracts</p> <p>Dr. Galazyuk inquired about the reduction in indirect costs and whether he should adjust his behavior and if he should apply for more grants? President Langell responded that it is always a good idea to pursue as many grants as possible. Indirect costs are designated for facilities and administration, and these functions will continue to be maintained. He encouraged the faculty to continue their current efforts. Under the Faculty Workload Policy, tenure-track faculty are allocated at least 40% of their time for research. For non-tenure-track faculty, the research allocation ranges from 10 to 30%, as outlined in their agreements. These research allocations will remain in place. It is likely not to have a big difference on researchers at the institution. The University remains committed to supporting research and hopefully grow it, as research is part of NEOMED's mission.</p> <p>Part of the agreement with University Hospitals is to continue supporting research. The commitments made so far are Artificial Intelligence and Data Sciences, the Hearing Research Group and the Neuro Degenerative Group. The intent is to bring in other RAFs.</p> <p>The President anticipates more dollars to support collaborative research, UH want NEOMED's scientists to work with their clinician-scientists. He said emphasized researchers should feel at ease, as they are likely to experience significant impact. Some adjustments may be incorporated into individuals' direct funding allocations.</p> <p>The President stated the University is in a strong financial position. The cuts are not ideal but the university is well-positioned to absorb them if necessary.</p>

			<p>A question was raised regarding the Faculty Workload Policy and the classification of student mentoring as part of expected citizenship responsibilities. Specifically, the inquiry focused on how "mentoring students" is defined.</p> <p>Many faculty members involve students in their labs for educational purposes and consider this a form of teaching. The question was whether the administration views this as mentoring and whether it is an expected duty.</p> <p>The President clarified that mentoring, as considered under citizenship, refers to informal guidance—such as advising students who seek help or career advice. Formal teaching activities, such as supervising PhD students or mentoring graduate students for capstone projects, are considered teaching and are accounted for separately through established workload formulas.</p> <p>He also noted that within programs like "Bench to Bedside" and other research innovation initiatives, student mentoring is categorized as citizenship and recognized as a contribution to the University community.</p> <p>The most important thing is that the University's Faculty Workload Policy is 100% compliant with Senate Bill 1 (SB1), which becomes law at the end of June. The President said the Faculty Workload Policy clearly defines what qualifies as teaching and what constitutes as research credit; all other activities fall under the category of citizenship. Department chairs will be responsible for monitoring faculty activity to ensure workloads remain appropriate and no faculty member is exceeding their designated responsibilities.</p> <p>Provost Faison said there are no negative consequences for not getting 30 credit hours. He recalled that the workload policy goals are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To meet State requirements 2. To ensure an equitable distribution of teaching requirements 3. To inform faculty growth and succession planning 4. To provide departments with quantitative data. <p>President Langell shared that the state wants the following.</p> <p>For tenure-track faculty, 24 credit hours of teaching annually, typically based on 4-credit courses. The remainder of time is allocated to other responsibilities.</p> <p>For non-tenure-track faculty, the teaching load is 30 to 32 credit hours annually, with the remaining time available for other activities.</p>
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The State did not want to give credit for research but President Langell pushed hard with the senate to get the language added. NEOMED's Faculty Workload Policy is based on Northwestern University's to ensure protected time. NEOMED allocates 40% of faculty time for research. Faculty can buy out move, subject to approval by the department chair.

Provost Faison reported that faculty have expressed a desire to reduce administrative workload, both in meetings and through the Voice of the Customer (VOC) survey. Currently, there are a total of 107 committees; however, only 50 are required for accreditation, legal or regulatory compliance or are mandated by bylaws. The remaining 57 committees have no requirements and some appear to be redundant. After graduation, a workgroup will be formed to review these and consider sunseting those that are no longer necessary.

President Langell said that the administration is committed to supporting faculty and minimizing the impact of ongoing changes at the state and national levels. While some universities are reducing positions. NEOMED is monitoring the situation closely to ensure faculty positions remain unaffected.

President Langell reviewed SB1 with the faculty. It has been signed.

- Changes to Board of Trustees – 6 year term instead of 9 year term
- Permitted to have repeat members on BOT
- Board members educated by the Chancellor every year on their roles and responsibilities with Department of Higher Education
- Restricted language removed regarding NEOMED partnerships
- Undergraduate programs must post syllabi online
- NEOMED does not have an obligation
- Misconception that the time and location of the office needed to be posted but it is not a requirement
- Must have an Annual Performance Evaluation to include all the things you do as part of your job
- 25% of teaching evaluation must come from students
- Chancellor of Education is creating a survey that students must use. Can add questions, but cannot remove any.
- Example: Did your instructor create a classroom atmosphere free of bias
- Can run a classroom where all ideas are equally heard and discussed. A student should not feel threatened. Conversations must be allowed
- Research performance – up to department chair
- Must have a Faculty Workload Policy that is credit hour based
- Must have a Post Tenure Review Policy implemented
- NEOMED is 100% compliant
- Anti strike clause
- Retrenchment language

- University has to do reporting – waiting on Chancellor giving guidance. It will not impact faculty at NEOMED.
- SB1 will not be a huge challenge for NEOMED.

President Langell discussed a newspaper article from a NEOMED student's view on SB1. It was an incorrect interpretation. The Executive Order did say student infinity groups can continue but must be open to everyone. The Provost is checking the committee charters to ensure compliance with legal guidelines. If a committee's primary purpose is to serve a specific race, it is not permitted under current regulations.

Senator Cirino confirmed that Social Determinants of Health can continue to be taught.

NIH is cutting grants that are race based. Getting 56% now. 15% is on hold for possibly two or three years. It is thought it could move to 40 or 50%. The university has reserves for this year if necessary.

Dr. Boyle asked whether students would receive reassurance that nothing will change for them. President Langell responded that a public statement had been issued and the most recent University update was recorded and made available.

The Office of the Provost and General Counsel is putting together an FAQ and giving students guidance. Students from the NSC committee have been invited to attend the weekly EMT meetings.

President Langell discussed campus space.
 The Student study space should be ready by mid April.
 The Institute for Teaching Excellence is complete.
 The Bitonte College of Dentistry will be finished by July.

He discussed future plans for campus space, including a potential refresh of the hallway between Advancement and Marcom. The broader goal is to gradually refresh the entire campus.

The Senior Vice President for Operations and Finance, Mary Taylor, has reviewed the cost of constructing a fourth tower for student housing. The bond has increased, but moving forward will depend on interest rates and good business decisions

They are looking at options for food retail space and have a meeting with a national retailer during April.

			<p>UH has agreed to increase the NEOMED footprint in Cleveland. The funds will be from UH.</p> <p>Looking at plans to update Olson Blair, Liebelt and Meshel Halls.</p> <p>Dr. Mellott thanked President Langell for his report.</p>
4:55 p.m.- 5:30 p.m.	7	<p>Open Forum and Department updates from Council members <i>Group Discussion</i></p>	<p>Dr. Mellott provided an update on the UFC membership, noting that six individuals terms will conclude on June 30, 2025. He advised that Andrea will reach out to inquire if these members will be interested in serving for another three year term. If a faculty member is interested in continuing, their department chair will be contacted for confirmation. If a member declines, Andrea will work with the respective department chair to identify a replacement.</p> <p>Dr. Mellott asked Provost Faison how the Faculty Empowerment Plan (FEP), Faculty Improvement Plan (FIP) and Annual Performance Evaluation (APE) processes could be aligned on the same schedule. Provost Faison responded that he is currently reviewing these plans in collaboration with the deans. The new Executive Director for Human Resources will also be involved in efforts to better align and streamline these processes. In addition, he is reviewing the tenure and promotion calendars to ensure consistency and improve clarity for faculty.</p> <p>Dr. Ohanyan moved to adjourn the meeting and Dr. Chen seconded. The meeting concluded at 5:24 p.m.</p>

Upcoming Agenda Items

May 6, 2025 – Working Meeting

June 3, 2025 – Leadership Report – Provost Faison

SAVE THE DATE: Upcoming Faculty/Professional Development Opportunities

COHPE: Monday, April 14. Theme - AI in Health Professions Education.

[IAMSE Spring Webinar Series](#): Thursdays at noon (Mar. 6 – Apr. 3)

AI Prompt-A-Thon: Monday, May 12 at 12:30 - 1 p.m.