

Resolution 1: FAC Resolution Regarding Faculty Governance

Given that the duty of the UGA University Council Faculty Affairs Committee is “To review and recommend policies on matters of faculty concern related to faculty productivity and evaluation, including but not limited to activities and programs, appointment, promotion and tenure, post tenure review and academic freedom,” the Faculty Affairs Committee demands that faculty governance plays a greater role in choices made by university administration, and that faculty input is sought in decision-making processes about policies and procedures related to the COVID-19 pandemic and other circumstances at the University that pertain to our charge. To this end, the FAC supports that the Faculty Conference be convened to “provide a forum to discuss issues of concern to the faculty” as stated in Part IV of the University Council Bylaws.

Specifically, the FAC requests the following measures:

1. That faculty be able to postpone promotion and/or tenure or post-tenure reviews by delaying reviews for at least for one full academic year which could be extended due to disruptions and hardships caused by COVID-19 (inclusive of productivity, increased teaching demands, illnesses, and childcare demands).
2. That the evaluation of faculty teaching and outreach performance, research, service, and productivity by students and/or other stakeholder groups be viewed in light of disruptions and hardships caused by COVID-19. Specifically, we request that faculty are given the option to write a contextualizing letter that addresses pedagogical and other appropriate strategies or additional activities, and that the letter is weighted in equal parts to the evaluations themselves.
3. That the UGA administration continues to support academic freedom in all forms related to teaching, research, service, and outreach, including instructional content, pedagogical delivery, and classroom management. As defined in the University Statutes, Article X, Section 5, academic freedom is defined as: “University Faculty members are entitled to full freedom of expression in research, teaching, and publishing, subject only to those restrictions that are imposed by professional ethics and respect for the rights of others. University Faculty members have the right to criticize and seek alteration of both academic and non-academic University policies, whether or not those policies affect them directly. University Faculty are free from institutional censorship, discipline, or reprisal affecting their professional careers for exercising freedom of expression.”

Resolution 2: FAC Resolution Regarding Surveillance

The University of Georgia is notable for the experience and expertise of its instructional faculty. We pride ourselves on making students our top priority. The FAC asks for transparency and consistency across units regarding teaching responsibilities and practices. In particular, the committee is concerned with recent reports of faculty surveillance and auditing of classroom activities. We firmly believe that faculty governance directly corresponds with our ability to have teaching autonomy in the subjects in which we are experts. In this unprecedented time, faculty should be permitted to change their instructional plans to be flexible throughout the course of the semester as long as academic and pedagogical integrity is maintained.