

MINUTES
November 9, 2021
UNDERGRADUATE ASSEMBLY

The Undergraduate Assembly met in regular session on Tuesday, November 9, 2021, at 2:15 p.m. via Microsoft Teams. Minutes for the meeting follow.

Attendance

Peggy Semingson	Sophia I Passy	Michael Holmes
Teresa Doughty	Darlene Hunter	Jianling Li
Syedali Abolmaali	Ceil Flores	Edith Reed
Allison Tomlinson	Amber Smallwood	He Dong
Salena Meeks	Leslie Jennings	Rebecca Lewis
Pranesh Aswath	Nathan Brown	Srinivas Prabakar
Pamela Johnson	David Rosser	Sergio Espinosa
Brenda Harris	Kay Yut Chen	Paul Conrad
Miguel Amaya	Aaron Brown (guest)	Cynthia Laborde
Alyssa Spencer	Rebecca Deen	Joshua Nason
Robin Jocius	Douglas Klahr	Grace Hao
Lynn Peterson	Nancy Michael	Jacqueline Fay
Tom Ingram	Shanna Banda	Joohi Lee
Catherine LaBrenz	Conroy Kydd	Nilakshi Veerabathina
Saibun Tjuatja	Aaron Smallwood	Young-Tae Kim
Kathryn Hageman	Laura Mydlarz	

Welcome Remarks

**Pranesh Aswath, Interim Provost &
Undergraduate Assembly**

Dr. Pranesh Aswath called the meeting to order at 2:16 pm and welcomed everyone. Pranesh reminded everyone of ground rules to have the meeting efficiently and for everyone to have their say. Reminder of UA Assembly social event on November 17 from 4:30-6:30 pm at University Club. Please RSVP. Attendance in Teams meetings is very positive and efficient by having it in on Teams.

Pranesh made a ground rules reminder: If anyone has a motion, please put the motion in the chat and we can bring the motion to the floor. There are two ways to ask a question: 1) Can ask a question by putting up a hand option or 2) put a question in the chat. Anyone who is asked to speak has a full minute to speak with no interruptions while anyone is asking a question.

Pranesh asked if anyone from student government is here, please announce yourself. Alyssa Spencer raised her hand and shared she is Chief of Staff from student government. Pranesh welcomed her.

Review and Approval of October 12th Minutes (attached in Teams)

Pranesh Aswath

Pranesh acknowledged Peggy Semingson for excellent notes. He reminded everyone the notes are in the Teams channel. Pranesh asked for a motion for the minutes and gave everyone a minute or two to look at the minutes in the Teams channel if they had not done so already.

Pranesh asked for a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. Paul Conrad motioned to accept the minutes as submitted. This motion was seconded by Catherine LaBrenz. UA Members approved in the chat. **Approved unanimously.**

- I. In Favor: ALL**
- II. Opposed: 0**
- III. Abstain: 0**

Submissions from the UCC

Tom Ingram UCC Chair

Tom Ingram shared that UCC (University Curriculum Committee) met on Tuesday 26th of October. They reviewed four new courses, 28 modifications, and eight course deletions. All passed unanimously. In UCC overview, two courses were inadvertently included and were not reviewed by the UCC. Those are Geology 4301 and 4309. Those are highlighted in yellow in UCC overview as listed in UA Teams file. One course also requires grad assembly approval: noted as Biol 3359/5339.

As chair of CC, Tom recommends approval as submitted today. Pranesh asked for any comments or suggestions from the floor. No comments or suggestions from the floor. Pranesh asked if there were any new program submissions. Tom said they did not receive any program additions. Pranesh asked for a motion from the floor to accept all the submissions from UCC.

Rebecca Dean moved to accept. Robin Jocius seconded the motion. Aaron Smallwood raised his hand to vote as he had no access to chat (noting record of his vote). Everyone else voted in the chat. **Unanimous approval of the motion from UCC. Motion accepted.**

- I. In Favor: ALL**
- II. Opposed: 0**
- III. Abstain: 0**

Pranesh recognized the work from UCC happens on the backend. He thanked Tom and the UCC for their service.

Sergio Espinosa provided an update on the core curriculum committee. They are about to meet next week because submission for proposals ends this Friday, 11/12/21. A reminder was sent by Katie Hageman. Link reminder: <https://www.uta.edu/administration/provost/faculty/committees-and-governance/core-curriculum-committee/submit-a-proposal> [link provided in chat by Sergio]. They will meet Tuesday to start reviewing the applications. Pranesh thanked Dr. Espinosa.

Honor's List

Aaron Brown Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Advising, Division of Student Success and Amber Smallwood, Assistant Provost of Academic Planning and Policy

Aaron Brown presented and shared his screen on a presentation on "High Achieving Students" (President, Dean, and First Year Honors). They are proposing consideration of changes for high achieving students and what they have worked on and proposed changes for the catalog. [Shared a few PowerPoint slides] Excellence in academic research—category of enrolling a class of high achieving students. FTIC—top 10% of high school is 897 students. UTA Dean's or Honor's list (Spring, 2021) is 8,445. Recent actions for Spring 2021—Discussed current inconsistencies. He shared a list of honors lists

projects leads and recognized their work on this project. Out of this conversation with the associate deans came the recommendation that a President's List be added to list of deans and freshman honor roll. Proposed language was shared to be included in the catalog. Suggested proposed language changed to Dean's list for steeper rigor when it comes to these lists. A second piece was suggested for changed language for the Dean's list to have steeper rigor.

Question from UA member: Is this GPA per semester or cumulative GPA? It is per term/semester. They are setting the minimum criteria. The college or school or division can go above that.

Second one: Proposed changes for freshman honor roll language were shared. Change freshman to "First year in college". It was about tidying it up and making it streamlined and consistent with other language. Discussion of 12 hours is a full-time student.

Question from UA member: Why 12 semester credit hours for one and 15 for another? Answer: 15 for the president's list will lead to graduating in four years (15 to finish). Dean's list is 12 hours as that is what they always used (technical full time). Pranesh added 12 hours, or more is technically a full-time student.

Question: Can someone be in first-year honor roll and be on another list? Answer: That is a piece we would add (not captured on the slide). Students may end up being on more than one list.

There was time for questions and comments from this, soliciting the UA input.

Pranesh commented that some programs have different levels of rigor. There may be differences in the way grading is done in different colleges. Would this put students at a disadvantage in certain majors? Answer: Aaron said he has seen that at peer aspirant institutions. He would have to ask the leads if they would be interested in doing that. What they have done here is staying true to the original language. Pranesh added a concern that certain disciplines have different grading policies and are we artificially disadvantaging them. UA member added he would be curious to know what students think about that. CAPPa has been positive, and they have 3.75 GPA for Dean's list and it has made it a "trophy" for CAPPa students.

Question from UA member: What is the advantage to the students and how do they know about the categories from the student point of view? Answer: Aaron responded they were looking at consistency on websites. He said websites need to have clear criteria on the websites to make it clear what the criteria are. Follow-up question from UA member: What do students get when they are on that list? Aaron responded that for low-income students for their grandmothers or those in their community, they can say "Hey, I achieved this" as a job well done. UA member commented yes, we can get high-quality students. Pranesh added that students put it on their CV that they got honors, dean's list. That is an additional advantage. Discussion followed about the benefit of putting it on their resume and letter of congratulations. Within 30 days of final grades, leads work on sending out a congratulations letter to recipients. Question: If we use GPA as opposed to 10% it could create disadvantages.

Question in chat: *For FYIC, is the max 30 earned hours supposed to be at UTA?* [not answered yet] Pranesh asked if certain majors would be at a disadvantage. What do students think of this? CAPPa response has been positive, and they have a 3.75 GPA. It's a real trophy for them. This is the proposed language and it can be changed. Doug Klahr shared a link: <https://www.uta.edu/academics/schools-colleges/cappa/academics/deans-list>. They get an official letter.

Shared in chat: CAPPA identifies students with a 4.00 GPA by boldfacing their names on the website. Suggestion was made to analyze top 10% per college versus GPA. Pranesh: Can look by major at aggregate data by major. Can get a rough idea proportionally. Pranesh said they can get a data request. Will get back by next meeting of undergrad assembly.

Question from UA member: Since it is based on semester GPA, if a student is here 4-5 years, do they get it every semester? Pranesh: Correct. It changes from semester to semester. Aaron: The website has the history. It is just the two full semesters and just traditional 16-week terms.

Pranesh: As we move to more flexible schedules, some students are enrolling in non-traditional terms. Amber: If a student were to enroll in 8-week terms, as long as cumulative enrollment met credit hours would still be eligible? Aaron: Says, yes, his understanding is they are. He will follow up to answer that. His understanding is that they are included as long as they meet full-time criteria. UA can weigh in.

Question: You are proposing catalog language change? Aaron: Yes, what do you think and what should we do? Pranesh encouraged UA to give input and weigh in. This is not a curricular issue directly, as a recommendation from UA, not a mandate.

Question: If someone has a question or suggestion on language, they can send directly to Aaron Brown. The proposed language was shared as documents with the UA. Peggy requested the language document be sent to be uploaded. (It is there now as of these minutes.)

Proposed Academic Calendar 2023-24

**Pranesh Aswath, Amber Smallwood,
& Kathryn Hageman**

Pranesh acknowledged the work that Kimberly Tate and Conroy made on the calendar document. The document is in the Teams area. Kimberly Tate and Conroy ran a report to make sure that the MW, T/Th, and MWF are consistent in every semester from Fall 2020-Spring 2024. For MW classes we consistently have 28 or 29 MW and for T/Th classes, we have either 30 or 29 so one extra T/Th that shows up. MWF are fairly consistent at 42 or 43. The area of challenge is the Summer 2024 first five-week session. Challenge because of one new thing which is the Juneteenth holiday which is right in middle of the five-week term.

The five-week term is very short and losing a single day has an impact. There are three options. Pranesh gave everyone a minute to pull up these options from the Teams channel (calendar). All these classes and options start on June 3. The issue is there are two holidays: Juneteenth and the July 4 holiday.

- 1) First option is the final exams are on July 8 and last day of classes is July 3
- 2) The last day of classes is July 5 and the final exams are on July 8
- 3) Last day of classes is July 3 and final is July 5.

He said the last option is the least appealing. He appeals which would be the best from a faculty perspective. UA members suggested option 1 is good to have closure, on the face of it. ash: concern for people coming back on the 5th.

Three options were discussed. Pranesh said unless there is an objection, he suggested option one. A UA member asked how does that compare to other summers if we pick option 1? Pranesh: Every option has 18 instructional days for option 1, 19 for option 2 and 18 in option 3. Question: What is typical of

instructional days? The second option has one additional instructional day if meeting on a T/Th. If meeting on MW it doesn't make a difference. Pranesh didn't have data for prior years in front of him. UA member said historically it has always had 19 instructional days. UA member noted option two gave the most flexibility for the instructor.

Amber: Option 2 can't have a Friday scheduled and it would have to be added in; those aren't usually scheduled. Pranesh: would be a moot point and would be stuck with 18 days in general. Conroy: there are a few instructors who decide they would like to have classes, but it is not traditional. UA member noted if it is on the calendar faculty will run their class on that day. A motion was made to accept option number one for the Summer 1 five-week session if there is no further discussion. Motion: there is a request for a motion to be accepted for the five-week option 1 in the first five-week term in summer 2024. Nancy Michael made a motion: A request for a motion to accept Option 1 for the First 5 weeks for Summer 2024. Nilakshi Veerabathina seconded the motion. It passed. Everyone accepted. Pranesh acknowledged and thanked everyone on the calendar committee.

IV. In Favor: ALL

V. Opposed: 0

VI. Abstain: 0

Adjournment

Pranesh: any other issues the UA would like to bring forth? There was nothing else for discussion. He asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was made by Catherine LaBrenz. Shanna Banda seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

VII. In Favor: ALL

VIII. Opposed: 0

IX. Abstain: 0

Pranesh reminded everyone about the UA event at the University club again. He thanked everyone for joining today.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:19 pm.

*Details regarding agenda items have been posted online for Assembly members to review.

Respectfully submitted, Peggy Semingson, College of Liberal Arts.