

**Faculty Welfare Annual Report to Faculty Senate  
2023-2024**

Committee Members (with academic affiliation and end of term): Dan Brackmann (Law School, 2026), Jennifer Deckert (Theatre and Dance, 2024), David Mike Berry (University Libraries, Sc Political Collections, 2024), Kathleen Klik (Palmetto College, 2025), Peter Chametzky (School of Visual Art Design, Appointee 2024), Breanne Grace (College of Social Work, Appointee 2024), Amie Freeman (University Libraries, Library Digital Resources, 2025), Suzy Hardie (College of Education, 2025), Liam Hein (College of Nursing, 2025, Chair and reporter).

Ex-officio: Provost Donna Arnett; Vice Provost Mary Anne Fitzpatrick; Senate Chair Wayne Outten.

**Committee membership and description**

This committee will consider university policies and the enforcement of policies regarding the welfare of the faculty, such as faculty salaries, other compensation and benefits, and any matters affecting the workplace environment. The committee may recommend appropriate changes or the enforcement of existing policies, propose new policies, or comment upon proposed university action affecting faculty welfare. Major changes in academic affairs policy should be forwarded to the Faculty Advisory Committee for its consideration. In addition to the six elected faculty members, there will be one faculty member from the regional Palmetto Colleges elected by the Palmetto College Campuses Faculty Senate and two members appointed by the provost. A representative of the Office of the Provost will serve as ex officio.

**2023-2024 Meetings and Actions**

The Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC) met virtually during the 2022-2023 academic year using the Microsoft TEAMS platform. FWC met once a month on the last Monday of the month. The Committee met on the following dates:

August 28, 2023	January 29, 2024
September 25, 2023	February 26, 2024
October 30, 2023	March 25, 2024
November 27, 2023	April 29, 2024

**Major initiatives and accomplishments**

- Discussed threats experienced by individual faculty via social media from other sources.
  - Outcome. Vice Provost Fitzpatrick developed a guide for [Dealing with Incivility on Social Media](#) in response to FWC concerns. The guide was shared with the Senate at the Dec. 6, 2023, meeting.

- Mental health resources for students were clarified. Reports of over a week for responses. Faculty were unaware the Behavioral Response Team (old title) still existed and were contacting Student Health for assistance. FWC met with the Student Care Team & Outreach (new title) on Oct. 30, 2023.
  - Outcome. Services available through the Care Team shared with Senate on Dec. 6, 2023.
  - These resources are not available to Palmetto College whose students are experiencing high need for services.
- Chair Hein met with the *Staff Senate Policy and Well-Being Committee* to discuss joint initiatives. Concerns over handicapped parking access on the south campus (College of Nursing and Humanities); and faculty/staff denial of services by the USC paratransit shuttle were noted. Chairs of both committees met with Brian Favela (Dir. of Parking) and Jason Cone (Dir. Facilities) to discuss.
  - Outcome: 1) Relabeling of some upper Henderson St. lot spaces to “Medical Clearance” or HC use. 2) Installation of automatic doors at lower Gambrell, allowing elevator access to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor courtyard, Nursing, Humanities and the rest of campus. 3) Immediate staff/faculty access to the university paratransit system. Faculty/staff must register with HR as disabled and schedule rides. App for on-call service is in development.
- Concerns about access to Benefits office staff (especially for state retirees), Open-enrollment sessions etc. FWC member Dan Brackmann met with benefits office staff Helen Mack to discuss. Request made for virtual and/or recorded sessions to be posted to the website.
  - Outcome: Noted the 403b Annuity plan offering was recorded and is posted to the benefits website in addition to Town Hall offerings.
- New members of FWC confirmed by Senate: Meir Muller (College of Educ.) & Kiesha Wilson (Sch. of Med.). Ideas for two new Provost appointees conveyed to Lisa Hammond and Vice Provost Fitzpatrick.
  - New co-chair elected: Amie Freeman. Suzy Hardie will be lead co-chair for 2024/2025 academic year.
- Changes to Professional Track rules in the Faculty Manual passed in the General Faculty meeting in April 2024. They will go to the Board of Trustees in June. A long list of steps to implementation was shared by Vice Provost Fitzpatrick. New titles will need to be integrated into the state HR system.
  - Vice Provost Fitzpatrick is leading the effort to BOT approval then implementation of the changes across campus.

#### Ongoing Work:

- Resources for faculty and student wellness at Palmetto College
- Revisiting the promotion base increases of \$6k/\$8k that has been unchanged for over a decade with the Provost