1. Professor Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez, Chair of the Faculty Assembly, announced that the Faculty Assembly Nominating Committee has been formed and is seeking names of interested faculty members to serve as Vice Chair/Chair Elect (3 year term) and Secretary (1 year term) for Faculty Assembly in 2017-2018. Names may be forwarded to the committee in advance of the April 26, 2017, Faculty Assembly meeting. Nominating Committee members are Professor Roxanna Curto, Department of French & Italian, Professor Andrew Forbes, Department of Biology, and Professor Stephen Voyce, Department of English.

Professor Rodríguez-Rodríguez also reminded Faculty Assembly that President Bruce Harreld will visit with Faculty Assembly at its meeting on March 29, 2017; FA members may send her suggested topics for discussion. Also in March, Executive Associate Dean Raúl Curto will present the Instructional Track Faculty Policy for a vote by the Assembly. The April meeting will include updates from FA subcommittees.

2. The minutes from January 25, 2017 were approved.

3. Professor Joshua Weiner, Department of Biology, presented a proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience, previously approved by the Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee. With intense interest and unprecedented growth in the field, one of the goals of the recently established Iowa Neuroscience Institute (INI) at the University is creation of an undergraduate major in Neuroscience. The major will be administered jointly by the Department of Biology and the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences. The INI will provide funds for two positions, one Advisor/Lecturer and one Laboratory Coordinator/Lecturer. Approximately 300 students are expected to enroll in the major within five years. After brief discussion, the proposal was approved.
4. Associate Dean for Outreach & Engagement Meenakshi Gigi Durham discussed with Faculty Assembly her vision and ideas for this new role in the College, including the importance of the College telling its research story more effectively, use of media training for faculty and graduate students to improve communication with stakeholders, public engagement through interactive online projects, and better coordination of K-12 outreach efforts. Associate Dean Durham also will act as the College’s Director of Diversity, with a focus on best practices for recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and students, such as use of peer mentoring and early alert and intervention systems. She also answered questions from the floor.

5. Associate Dean for Graduate Education Christine Getz reviewed goals for graduate education in the College. These include promotion of excellence by addressing completion rates, time to degree, and program health, and improving and sustaining graduate student diversity. She wants to reimagine graduate education by encouraging comprehensive funding packages for PhD students, integration of curriculum goals to include both mastery of content and development of practical skills, and redefining successful placement of graduate students. Associate Dean Getz responded to questions and concerns from the floor, including regarding time to degree issues, such as for students who must take family or related leave, students who transition from a master’s degree to a PhD program, and inherent differences in time to degree based on academic discipline.

6. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Professor Jacki Rand, Department of History
Secretary of the Faculty Assembly