

REGULAR MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

November 2, 2020 – VIRTUAL SENATE MEETING

4:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present: V. Alexander, A. Bhat, A. Biddle, C. Boncelet, D. Burris, J. Busch, D. Buttrey, J. Cohill, J. Daniel, H. Doty, V. Fedele, A. Fields, J. Fuhrmann, D. Galileo, M. Gardner, B. Hanson, A. Hestvik, F. Hofstetter, P. Huq, P. Inguito, J. Jebb, A. Hagstrom, T. Kaminski, A. Karpyn, S. Kaufman, M. Laberge, S. Lanteri, R. Lee, Sheng Lu, C. Montero, J. Morgan, R. Moore, James Morris, S. Mortenson, L. Nees, I. Obrusnikova, E. Orsega-Smith, S. Partridge, V. Perez, S. Raible, L. Reidel, M. Robinson, J. Russ, I. Shah, K. Schell, G. Schleiniger, J. Sharpe, H. Shenton, G. Silber, W. Simpson, D. Stevenson, J. Tanis, K. Theopold, Y. Tsai, T. Vickery, C. Williams, S. Bingaman, M. Aristigueta, D. Assanis, E. Atkewana, G. Henry, R. Morgan, K. Matt, L. Thompson, M. Reiger, J. Riera, C. Riordan, J. Pelesko, B. Weber

Members Excused: D. Brinley, D. Koltonski, W. Lewis,

Members Absent: None

Discussion of Zoom protocol by Joe Dombroski, UMS

Acknowledgment of the retirement of Karren Helsel

I. Adoption of the Agenda

- Discussion: none
- Approved

II. Approval of the Minutes: [October 5, 2020](#)

- Discussion: none
- Approved

III. Remarks: President Dennis Assanis

- A personal thank-you to Karren Helsel.
- Deep appreciation for everything you do to keep safe and keep educating our students. Only a spirit of optimism, good dialogue, and transparency will get us through this.

- I have provided to you everything I have at all times regarding our financial challenges. Have had several meetings with the Budget Committee. I want my administration to be known as one that provides detail. I have reached out to former senate presidents, endowed professors. deans. Want to reach more groups, including student groups.
- Personnel measures have been extremely painful. We value everyone. I express my appreciation to the 136 staff who took the voluntary retirement incentive. I am personally losing one of my staff.
- Staff positions are being realigned mostly where activities have been lost during the pandemic. 122 have been laid off, and we hope to bring them back when activities resume.
- FY17 3340 staff members when I arrived. That number went a few hundred higher but now going to be lower than when I started as president. We cannot perform what we need to do with the staff we have. We are in the bottom quartile of our competition in terms of number of staff we have. We have been through the worst of it be it is a long road back to normal.
- Operating budget deficit 228M to 288M, depending on how able we are to come back in spring. We have identified close to \$200M in savings if we have a nearly perfect spring semester. Still need to have \$30M and most has to come from academic sector. It is difficult because they have already taken 15% to 50% cut.
- Hope to have productive conversations with the faculty union, hope to get another \$7M from faculty furloughs.
- Potentially need to find another \$60M if spring doesn't turn out.
- Timing could not be worse; look at what's going on in Europe and US. We are going to go from 1000 tests/week to 4000. More face-to-face teaching and learning in spring, with more students on campus. Residential population to 60% (4000 beds).
- Applications for F21 incoming class are down, and in some categories down a lot. This common across academia. It's not fewer students out there, it's COVID.

Questions

- John Morgan (Physics and Astronomy). Are you able to be a little bit quantitative about what the reduction in applications has been so far?
- President Assanis. We are only a couple of months into the season. Compared to two years we are up in a number of categories. We are down from last year which was a record. Trending well is early decision applications. 15% below same point last year. We have 8500 applications from early decision students. Delawareans 30% down. Have seen a statistic that about half the kids graduate

from high school in Delaware are not continuing to a four-year education. Out-of-state continues to be strong. Still want state to join us in offering free education to Delaware students in families earning <\$75K.

- Ismat Shah (Materials Science and Engineering). After laying off 122 people, what did that do to the deficit. Michelle Bennett in particular was Sustainability Officer, which saves us money.
- President Assanis. We are committed to sustainability. Those activities were reassigned to Ted Socha in Sustainability, Energy, and Engineering. We felt we can absorb this effort in other positions. With respect to budget effect, we are going to have a structural deficit of \$40M/year that will propagate forward. Our Freshman class was 700 smaller than usual, and we had more than normal freshman to sophomore attrition. Easily between loss of students and extra support, we have a \$20M loss. Probably will not be able to raise tuition. Between retirements of staff and layoffs, planning to save \$25M/year. We are working hard in administration because we don't have the support we used to. We will need 40 more janitors if we open for Spring. We are not going to be building, so we don't need as many project planners.
- Hans-Jörg Busch (Language, Literature, and Culture). \$30M cuts needed from academic units -- could you elaborate?
- President Assanis. Provost area is largest element of budget, including all faculty staff. Put 15% on Provost areas, 25% on library and related items, and 35-50% on other support areas. We are doing this with fewer budget people. I'm realistic; I don't believe we're going to get to \$30M, so that's a goal.
- Provost Morgan. Most of our units made 15%, with more work we should be at about \$20M of cuts. Don't know where the rest is coming from.
- President Assanis. We have spent \$20M on COVID so far. I'm on the phone to Senator Coons and Governor Carney all the time asking for resources. We all are suffering and I hope we can work together.

Remarks: Provost Robin Morgan

- Faculty retirements. We delayed the signing date by a year, now June 30, 2021. In 2020, 43 faculty retirements. Next 4 years, have 153 already signed to be leaving up to calendar year 2024. Expect more as we approach June 30, 2021. There will be essentially no hiring this year. All the hiring plans put together by chairs are still valid. We are losing 200 faculty, and will need to replace many of them.
- Spring is very challenging. As of Monday October 26, we are better but don't have a large number of face-to-face courses for S21. F20: 9.6% have a face-to-face component. S21: 16% face-to-face. Need to know by November 9 when students start to actually sign up.

- Best way to help Spring is to get rid of COVID 19, but that doesn't look promising.
- Ramping up testing. Want 4000/week going forward. Right now our positivity rate with asymptomatic surveillance is 1% per week. May be able to pool samples and go from \$25/sample to \$6/sample. Have identified 125 individuals as positive who were completely asymptomatic. In many cases turnaround from test to reporting is 4 to 5 hours.
- We want to have as much of a personal touch as possible, even over zoom. Interactions beyond the classroom are important.
- Many events are happening on campus. The Ibram Kendry antiracism event was a success. We were able to go to a live Graduate Brass ensemble, socially distanced.
- Call on **Vice Provost Matt Kinservik** regarding the Task Force on Equity in Faculty Evaluations:
 - Open hearing last Monday was well attended. We got a lot of good feedback, and the recommendations are in the hands of Senate committees.

Questions

- Arild Hestvik (Linguistics and Cognitive Science). NYTimes has tracking of how many cases are associated with a particular institution by state. UD is largest source of COVID cases in Delaware. Seems like going to in-person classes is the wrong thing to do.
- Provost Morgan. Early on we were testing symptomatic individuals. Then we got a high percentage. As we started inviting their contacts and athletics, are positives have gone down to below 1%. As the weather got colder we had fewer people coming to the outdoor tents, but we have indoor locations now. We have town of Newark to deal with -- we have 5000 students in the city, and more of them go to Newark Urgent Care for testing, usually when they are symptomatic. Spread is mostly associated with living arrangements off campus, not with learning environments. What's happening in Europe is frightening. Delaware is doing well, but the holidays are coming and people are moving around.
- President Assanis. UD should be compared to other higher-ed institutions, we have much lower than many of our comparators. Higher-ed institutions are challenging. However, spread in classrooms is near zero, and only a couple of cases of spread in residence halls. I believe we can provide a very safe environment in our classrooms.
- Greg Silber (Computer and Information Sciences). One of the major concerns about agreeing to teach in person for Spring is the complete unknown about what is going on. What happens if someone agrees to teach in person and

decides in February it's not a good idea. If there was some clarity on that, we might get a higher number of people willing to sign up.

- Provost Morgan. We have told faculty that if they agree to teach face-to-face and decide not to in January, that will be looked at very badly by students, many of whom are making the decision to come here or not based on the availability of face-to-face courses. So we have asked faculty to stick to that commitment. Obviously, if the state or national government orders a lockdown we will comply. We have been looking how many people would sign up if we were tentatively face-to-face, but maybe not depending on circumstances, and that was not attractive to potential students. We hope that as spring goes on and weather gets better, there will be more in person interaction, such as socially distanced office hours. Labs have been going very well.
- President Assanis. If I felt it is not safe, I will be the first one to shut down this plan. I will not compromise safety.
- John Morgan (Physics and Astronomy). I endorse what Provost Morgan said about extremely low transmission in classroom situations. Getting more classes in person is very important, and we need more faculty to do those. Would you consider incentives to take the risk?
- Provost Morgan. We don't want to do that. We are going to prioritize health and safety first. We don't want to pay people to take risks they're not comfortable with. Faculty have been doing amazing things to get online experiences to be good, and we have to market those.

IV. Announcements: Senate President Charles Boncelet

- Karren Helsel is retiring. We will collect for a gift and will make a video tribute.

V. Consent Agenda: None

VI. Regular Agenda:

A. **Unfinished Business:** None

B. **New Business:**

1. Regular Resolutions:

1. Recommendation from the Executive Committee Senators: Hagstrom, Hanson, Boncelet, Karpyn, Williams and Robinson for the **approval of a resolution to Allow Faculty Choice for Course Modality in Winter and Spring 2021**

WHEREAS, the Human Resources Policy on "Extreme Weather and Emergency Conditions", states "The University does not expect employees or students to take unnecessary risks to meet their work

or learning obligations during adverse weather or emergency conditions.", and

WHEREAS, predicting the trajectory of the COVID-19 pandemic through the winter of 2021 is not possible, and worldwide trends in transmission are not encouraging at this time, and

WHEREAS, potential COVID-19 transmission could put faculty members at unnecessary risks, and

WHEREAS, recognizing that we have no present evidence that classroom and laboratory settings are epicenters of COVID19 transmission, and we acknowledge that some faculty members want to teach in face-to-face settings, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that for the Winter and Spring Semesters, if a faculty member believes they would be taking an unnecessary risk by teaching a course in an in-person setting, then the faculty member may opt to teach that course in an online format, and simultaneously, the University will make every effort possible to allow faculty who wish to teach face-to-face to do so.

- Discussion: none
- Approved: 63 to 0

2. Recommendation from the Faculty Senate Budget Committee (James Butkiewicz, Chair) with the concurrence of the Committee on Committees and Nominations (Allison Karpyn, Chair) and the Executive Committee (Charles Boncelet, Chair) for the **revision to the Faculty Handbook Section 1.3 Standing Committee System of the Faculty and its Senate – Budget Committee** ([Attachment 1](#))

WHEARAS, The Faculty Senate Approved the Biden School of Public Policy and Administration as a “stand alone school” April 2020, and

WHEREAS, Several Faculty Senate Standing Committees require faculty representation from the various colleges, including the Budget Committee, and

WHEREAS, the designee of the Provost serves to facilitate interactions between the committee and relevant administrative offices but is a non-voting member of the committee; be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the Faculty Handbook section 1,3 Standing Committee of the Faculty and its Senate – Budget Committee - be revised to reflect the increase in faculty representation and clarification of voting rights as in [Attachment 1](#).

Discussion

- Charlie Riordan (Vice President for Research). Is the last bit taking the provost's designee who was previously voting and making them nonvoting
- Allison Karpyn (COCAN Chair). There actually was no specification, and we just needed to make it clear. This was the preference of the committee, and COCAN approved.

Approved: 61 to 2

3. Recommendation from the Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Committee (Megan McInnis, Chair) with the concurrence of the Committee on Committees and Nominations (Allison Karpyn, Chair) and the Executive Committee (Charles Boncelet, Chair) for the **revision to the Faculty Handbook Section 1.3 Standing Committee System of the Faculty and its Senate – Diversity and Inclusion** ([Attachment 1](#))

WHEREAS, The Faculty Senate Approved the Biden School of Public Policy and Administration as a “stand alone school” April 2020, and

WHEREAS, Several Faculty Senate Standing Committees require faculty representation from the various colleges, including the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and

WHEREAS, New efforts to address diversity and inclusion at the University are underway, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the Faculty Handbook section 1,3 Standing Committee of the Faculty and its Senate – Diversity and Inclusions Committee - be revised to reflect the increase in faculty representation as in [Attachment 1](#).

Discussion

- Fred Hofstetter (Education). Attachment 1 has faculty members twice.
- John Jebb (Parliamentarian). Fixing grammar and typos is allowed and we can make that change and proceed to a vote.

Approved: 62 to 1.

4. Recommendation from the Faculty Senate Committee on General Education (Christine Cucciarre, Chair) with the concurrence of the Committee on Committees and Nominations (Allison Karpyn, Chair) and the Executive Committee (Charles Boncelet, Chair) for the **revision to the Faculty Handbook Section 1.3 Standing Committee System of the Faculty and its Senate – General Education** ([Attachment 1](#))

WHEREAS, The Faculty Senate Approved the Biden School of Public Policy and Administration as a “stand alone school” April 2020, and

WHEREAS, Several Faculty Senate Standing Committees require faculty representation from the various colleges, including the General Education Committee, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the Faculty Handbook section 1,3 Standing Committee of the Faculty and its Senate – General Education Committee - be revised to reflect the increase in faculty representation as in [Attachment 1](#)

Discussion

- Fred Hofstetter (Education). Need a semicolon after the word "appointments."

Approved: 61 to 0.

VII. Presentations: None

VIII. Introduction of New Business:

Such items as may come before the Senate. (No motion introduced under new business, except a motion to refer to committee, shall be acted upon until the next meeting of the Senate.)

Resolution introduced by Provost Robin Morgan.

WHEREAS, the University of Delaware is committed to the goals of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, ensuring a learning environment free of gender discrimination; and

WHEREAS, sexual misconduct is among the most harmful manifestations of gender discrimination; and

WHEREAS, a transparent, fair, and enforceable policy is a key means of addressing sexual misconduct and its discriminatory effects; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Education has recently updated its guidance regarding Title IX policies, with an effective date of 14 August 2020, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the University adopt a new Title IX policy in compliance with the updated federal guidance.

- John Morgan (Physics and Astronomy). I have been following this as a senator and AAUP officer for many years. I don't have a problem with the 2011 Dear Colleague letter. The problem is that UD and many other institutions went beyond the Dear Colleague letter and did not provide adequate due process. I hope that the scrutiny of this will be careful.
- President Boncelet notes that the proposed policy has been sent to Faculty Welfare and Privileges, Student Life, Diversity and Inclusion.

Resolution introduced by Senator John Cohill. (Undergraduate representative).

WHEREAS, The Student Government Association (SGA) at the University of Delaware serves to represent the undergraduate student population by actively addressing student issues as the liaison among students, faculty, and administration; and

WHEREAS, The Student Government Association seeks to advocate for ethical standards of instructional practice and transparency in current academic environments; and

WHEREAS, The University Delaware Faculty Handbook section 4.2.6 holds standards that its “officers, faculty members, and other employees of the University are to maintain at all times relationships and practices in their University activities that are legally, ethically, and morally correct”; and

WHEREAS, The University of Delaware Faculty Handbook states in section 4.2.2.B that they “avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students”; and

WHEREAS, The University of Delaware Faculty Handbook states in section 4.2.2.B “that teachers, professors encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the . . .ethical standards of their discipline”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The Student Government Association, in partnership with the University of Delaware Faculty Senate, works to create a policy outlining the requirements and expectations for all parties involved to ensure fair treatment in a virtual learning experience; and, be it further

RESOLVED that this virtual learning policy be in effect for all future instruction involving a virtual component in the academic curriculum at the University of Delaware.

Resolution introduced by Senator Samantha Bingaman (Graduate Students) co-sponsored by Senators Chris Williams (President elect), John Cohill (Undergraduate

Student Representative), Ryan Moore (Undergraduate Student Representative), and Jared Sharpe (Graduate Student Representative).

WHEREAS: In 2017, President Assanis joined 3,800 leaders from America's city halls, state houses, boardrooms, and 411 college campuses to pledge their support for sustainability efforts, reduce our carbon footprint, and fight against climate change. Building on that pledge, in 2019, the Provost's and Executive Vice President's Offices initiated a new University of Delaware Sustainability Council to improve the University's sustainability commitment; and

WHEREAS: By promoting greater sustainability at the University of Delaware we are: 1) already saving countless dollars each year through a 20% reduction in energy efficiency since the 2008 UD Climate Action Plan; 2) improving recruitment of the next generation of faculty, undergraduate and graduate students who overwhelmingly support environmental protection; 3) improving our graduates' education and dedication to environmental health and justice; 4) enhancing mental well-being and acknowledgement of the intrinsic value of essential ecosystem services and the natural environment; and 5) providing avenues for corporate investment in infrastructure and research collaborations; however

WHEREAS: On Tuesday, October 27th, as part of the University of Delaware's budget cuts, our Sustainability Manager, Ms. Michelle Bennett, was terminated thus 1) reversing the University's support and messaging that sustainability and addressing climate change is not a priority for our future, and 2) hinder the immediate and long-term campus wellbeing and reduce our competitiveness against comparator institutions that are far ahead in their sustainability efforts and programs; and

WHEREAS: Ms. Bennett is the one person at the University of Delaware who has the most comprehensive and holistic knowledge of sustainability topics in education, outreach, and campus operations, and her proficiency in such matters are well-respected even amongst the Sustainability Council's faculty experts, and

WHEREAS: Ms. Bennett has fostered a strong relationship with student organizations and her engagement in student life was exceptional and renewed student faith in the University of Delaware's path towards a more sustainable future; be it therefore

RESOLVED: While we recognize that the university is facing unprecedented financial hardships, we, the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus community at the University of Delaware, urge the campus leadership to reconsider and reverse the decision to terminate the Sustainability Manager and reaffirm the President's and Provost's supported pledges to holistically promote sustainability as a priority for the University of

Delaware. Indeed, as of the time of this resolution's submission, more than 1,200 students, alumni, faculty, and staff have signed a petition urging this reversal! Even in the most difficult and dire times, we need to ask ourselves what our core values are and not abandon our pledge to create a more holistic sustainable future for its students, faculty, and staff as well as the State of Delaware and the planet.

Fred Hofstetter (Education):

In previous years, when UD faced matters of importance related to the faculty, the union leadership would call a membership meeting to discuss campus-wide issues of import. Due to the pandemic, however, we do not seem to have a way of doing that. Because of the pandemic restrictions, the campus no longer provides the so-called "water-cooler" option for bargaining-unit faculty to discuss how the faculty want to help. Our current UD Zoom license limits the number of participants to far less than the union comprises. Yet the AAUP-UD Bylaws contain the provision for members calling membership-wide meetings. Given the inability of the union to call a membership-wide meeting, and due to the loss of collegial "water-cooler" conversations for all faculty, could the Senate provide a secure online forum for all faculty to discuss the financial crisis and what we, collectively, would like to do about it?

Stephanie Raible (Human Development and Family Sciences):

One of the other layoffs that happened last week showed that the university wanted to move ourselves from some Department of State grants. I would like to work with people in the Institute for Global Studies to move us toward recommitting to those grants.

Adjourned at 5:33.