

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

November 17, 2020

3:30 PM – ZOOM Meeting

ATTENDING: Julie Bannerman, Sheila Black, Si Blackstock, Serena Blount, Seth Bordner, Ibrahim Cemen, Jeremy Crawford, Rona Donahoe, Alexis Davis Hazell, Holly Grout, Heather Gunn, Luvada Harrison, Courtney Helfrecht, Conor Henderson, Jolene Hubbs, Lyndell McDonald, Preethi Nair, Regina Range, Ignacio Rodeno, Rainer Schad, Kelly Shannon-Henderson, Jenny Shaw, Edith Szanto, Bulent, Tosun, Vaia Touna, Jonathan Whitaker, John Vincent, John Yoder, Greg Cottrell, Jennifer Dempsey, Todd DeZoort, Chapman Greer, Ruth Ann Hall, Matthew Hudnall, Lexi Lowe Edwards, Mary Stone, Brian Britt, Leah LeFebvre, Bharat Mehra, Alyx Vesey, Steven Yates, Cecily Collins, Suzanne Henson, Nelle Williams, Andrea Wright, Stephanie Buckner, Joy Burnham, Andre Denham, Nirmala Erevelles, Kelly Guyotte, Michael Lawson, John Petrovic, Sriram Aaleti, Jaber Abu-Qahouq, Ajay Agrawal, Sushma Kotru, Sundar Krishnan, Patrick Kung, Shuhui Li, John Van Zee, Keith Williams, David Taylor, John Latta, Carla Blakey, Babs Davis, Michelle Tong, Jeri Zemke, Mirit Eyal-Cohen, Courtney Cross, Heather Elliott, Barb Dahlbach, Russel Peterson, Susan Appel, Michael Callihan, Rebecca Owings, Teresa Welch, Leah Cheatham, Robert Riter,

ABSENT with alternate: Tony Buhr/Litsa Cheimariou, Diana Dolliver/Matthew Dolliver, Andre Glenn/Shan Zhao, Christopher Lynn/Sara-Maria Sorentino, Sarah Steinbock-Pratt/Ellary Draper, Wanda Burton/Casey Totenhagen,

ABSENT with no alternate: BC Kim, Latrise Johnson, Amy Traylor, Donna Meester, Hank Lazar

GUESTS: PSA Representative Lynette Campos, Laura Braddock, Strategic Communications.

A recoding of the entire meeting can be found on Facebook at <https://fb.watch/2eyU0I5vIm/> if you have a Facebook account.

'Mini' Town Hall: Dr. Ricky Friend, Dr. Luoheng Han, Chad Tindol

Questions were addressed to Dr. Friend, Dr. Han and Mr. Tindol.

1. Why were the Faculty in the Law School not notified when a student tested positive for COVID? The students were informed before faculty.

Mr. Tindol-knowledge of the event is that the Law student positive test was traced to a Halloween party. Students in the Law School were offered testing after contact tracing. There was a small number of positive results. Contact tracing was preformed, and a larger number of positive cases were found that could be linked to individual students. An email was sent to faculty of the Law school when there were a number of positive cases.

Dr. Friend-We must make sure that we have accurate information. There is no need to rush out immediately after exposure for a COVID test. It takes 3-5 days, but really 5-7 days after exposure before testing is accurate. We are not trying to keep anything from anyone, but it is important to get the facts and information correct.

2. Why will only campus residents be subject to mandatory testing for reentry to campus for Spring 2021, especially when the administration is seeking to increase face-to-face opportunities?

Mr. Tindol-Students in on campus housing are exposed in an environment that contact tracing has indicated cases have been transmitted. Dorms have been identified as a place to focus testing efforts on about 10,000 of our students. Testing will still be available to any student, staff or faculty if they feel they need it. This will all be paired with the increased amount of

sentinel testing that will take place, especially over the first 3 or so weeks. The sentinel testing in the spring will be conducted by the University Medical Center. UA will no longer be using GuideSafe process and Verily for sentinel testing. You will no longer need to sign up for sentinel testing. Sentinel testing will still be voluntary, staff and faculty are encouraged to participate. We hope to see greatly increased numbers of testing with the UMC doing the testing.

Dr. Friend- We have listened to you regarding sentinel testing. Faculty should no longer be asked to participate more than once a month assuming you participate, testing will be more accessible, and to have the results reported in 24-48 hours on site.

3. What procedures are in place to ensure that students and employees who are tested by outside parties report their results to UA; are these tests reported in the UA Dashboard figures; are people who exposed and show symptoms required to be tested and is this data reported in the UA data?
4. Dr. Friend-Every case that is reported to UA is reported on the Dashboard. We strongly encourage students and faculty to report positive results if they are tested off campus. One of the reasons we have made testing so available on campus is because it is hard to obtain affordable and reliable testing off campus. There is a process in place that if students or faculty call and report a positive test result then the process of contact tracing and quarantining begins. If we can get the person to trust, then they are willing to give more information. We get more information when trust is involved than if we threaten them with sanctions. There have been cases where information has been withheld and these have been referred to Student Conduct.
5. Can you reiterate how the accommodation forms are private and do not violate HIPAA?
Mr. Tindol-The accommodation process for the Spring COVID accommodations is modeled after the already existing accommodation process. This process includes a medical verification or other expert of the condition in order to receive the accommodation. This information goes to HR for a decision, and the information is housed in HR. Once it has been decided that someone is entitled to accommodations, then there is the exchange process with the supervisor as to the reasonableness of the accommodations. This process does not include the revealing of any medical information outside of HR.
6. With the rising number of cases in the community, it seems rather harsh that faculty and staff are being told to enroll their children in face to face school because the University is not planning to support parents of children in virtual classrooms. How is the University being supportive of work life/balance in this context?
Mr. Tindol-The Expanded Family Medical Leave expires December 31 and has not been renewed. So, this is not so much a University decision as it is a federal government decision. The University is following federal guidelines.
7. What steps are being taken to encourage students to actually attend and come to the classroom face-to-face classes? How are faculty to accommodate those students who have approved accommodations?
Dr. Han-The process for accommodations for spring is different in that a medical excuse is necessary to receive accommodations. Part of the ODS process is trying to avoid scheduling these students in face-to-face classes but instead enroll them in online courses. Faculty can require attendance for face-to-face and hybrid classes.
8. Are UMC staff tested more frequently than other employees?
Dr. Friend-They are tested the same as everyone else.
9. How many faculty, staff and students are being sentinel tested?
Dr. Donohoe-This information is reported weekly on the UA dashboard. Sentinel testing has been considerably under the goal of 1,300 to 1,500 per week which is why the UMC is taking over the sentinel testing in the spring.

Dr. Friend-The UMC did not have PRT testing capability and technology in the fall which is why the University went to an outside company to do sentinel testing. The UMC is now set up to do the testing in house and can accommodate 1,000 to 1,500 and report the results.

10. Do we know if there have been any cases of in-class transmission?

Dr. Friend-Have not seen any. We do know of a few instances when people have violated protocols and the entire classroom has been tested with no transmission. It is really important to follow the protocols.

11. University is aggressively pursuing face-to-face teaching for the spring. What if the current spike continues through the holidays? Is there a contingency plan?

Mr. Tindol-There is always a contingency plan. We have learned to be prepared for what we did not expect. We have a process. There is a Situational Response Team that meets regularly. This team reviews the data and consults with the System's Health and Safety Taskforce and will make recommendations if the situation changes. This has been done throughout this time. We are prepared for any contingency.

12. Two weeks after a major holiday there is a spike in cases. The University has delayed the start of classes by a week so there is a 2-week period between New Years and the start of classes. As it is unlikely that a vaccine will be widely available, does the University still insist on increasing to face-to-face classes? What community numbers would lead the University to return to remote instruction?

Dr. Donohue-Yes, the plan is to return to face-to-face instruction.

Dr. Tindol-There is no set formal. There is no data point. All data is considered. The answer is the same as in September and this has been consistent.

13. At the recent OCTSA meeting it was announced that all staff will return to work fulltime on January 7. There will be no rotations or part time working at home. There is concern that this will increase the potential for on campus spread. Is there a plan to revisit this decision if cases rise?

Mr. Tindol-There is always a plan for review any decision.

Dr. Friend-We have proven that campus is safe, if protocols are followed.

14. The vaccine has an uncertain future. Will the vaccine be used to refuse accommodations for staff and faculty? Will the vaccine be decoupled from accommodation requests?

Dr. Friend-The Health and Safety taskforce has begun discussion on the vaccine. They will not make a recommendation for anyone to take the vaccine unless it is safe. Early data looks promising, but it is early data.

Mr. Tindol-HR has dealt with this by issuing a deadline for requests for accommodations before Thanksgiving. There won't be enough information on the vaccine by winter break for the vaccine to enter into the decision-making process for accommodations.

15. What is the cycle number of the COVID PRT tests on campus?

Dr. Friend-30, The FDA emergent use does not allow for more than 30. I feel good about where we are with testing.

Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Secretary Barb Dahlbach.

The October minutes were unavailable for approval. Attendance was taken via a Qualtrics survey.

President's Report – (Rona Donahoe)

There are multiple "Giving" opportunities for senators to consider contributing to if they are able. The United Way is substantially under the goal of \$400,000. President Donahoe urged people to contribute (if they had not already done so), stating that UA is the largest contributor to the West Alabama United Way and that the contributions from UA were greatly needed this year.

The SGA is sponsoring an Angel Toy Drive. The Steering Committee is gathering money through the “Giving” site (<https://give.ua.edu/>) to raise money to help in this endeavor. The Steering Committee is “Challenges” the Senate to sponsor 3 angels (\$150 / angel). ‘Faculty Senate, PSA, OCTSA Joint Service Projects Support Fund’ into Search Box)

Also 2 requests have come to the Senate from UA students for support due to the recent hurricane season.

Honduras Hurricane Eta Assistance - Sara Maldonado <https://gf.me/u/y7h6us>
Black Belt Relief - LaQuenna Lewis loveis.wld@gmail.com

The OAA Faculty Survey went out November 2nd. This survey will gather information on the mode of instruction and reactions to each, as well as work/life balance over the past months given COVID restrictions. There was no indication of the response rate at this time.

The Spring 2021 COVID Faculty Accommodations form has been revised to be more general without a specific list of medical conditions to choose from. It is now a two-stage process, one that is medical in nature and the other that has no medical information on it. No one outside of HR will have access to medical information. If you submit the request prior to Thanksgiving a response will be provided by the December holidays. There is also a dropdown box to include reasons concerning people outside your immediate family. Contact Erica Shumate (348-7732) – HR Service Center with questions.

Faculty Senate voted unanimously to support the PSA Resolution in Support of Extended Remote Work Arrangements for UA staff employees. This resolution requests to continue to provide UA staff members and their supervisors with the option to continue remote work agreements through the Spring 2021 semester.

Announcements from the Presidential Advisory Committee for Return to Normal Operations Update:

- About 2,500 students will remain on campus after November 20 for a variety of reasons. Investigation into which student services need to continue in order to support these students is ongoing.
- International students are in a special circumstance as they may not want not be allowed back in the country. If you are aware of students in this position encourage them to contact student life.
- Exit testing for students going home at Thanksgiving is free of charge but not mandatory. Please encourage students to take advantage of this free service

Announcement from the President’s Advisory Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion has released the final report, entitled Path Forward Diversity Report. It is on the DEI webpage at <https://diversity.ua.edu/path-forward-diversity-report/> Several of the recommendations have already been implemented.

Announcements from the Board of Trustees:

- New Trustee Mick Brock replaces Joe Espy who has retired
- New president pro tempore is Stan Starnes who replaces Ron Gray
- The evaluation of building names continues. Manly Hall (corrected from Morgan Hall) was renamed to Presidents Hall.
- President Bell’s address announced:
 - A 4% increase in diversity our student body this fall

- Opening of the Intercultural Diversity Center in the Ferguson Center
- New orientation programs have been instituted by the Division of DEI for African American students and their parents this fall
- External research funding has reached an all time high of \$168 million representing a 27% increase over 2019 and 70% over the last 2 fiscal years
- The Water Institute has a new Director- Dr. Scott Rayder
- The USGS Instrumentation Center will slated for campus
- \$222 million has been raised over the past year by the Development office; the \$15 million goal for the Performing Arts Center has been met
- President Rona Donahoe's report to the BoT
 - Feature Articles on faculty will be developed by Strategic Communications on faculty who have gone above and beyond inside and outside of the classroom. Have received more than a dozen nominations. Web page

Campus Culture Taskforce – *(Leah Cheatham & Heather Gunn)*

The PowerPoint presentation can be found on this page. <https://facultysenate.ua.edu/november-17-2020-faculty-senate/>

The Taskforce presented a brief update and next steps for the Taskforce. Some preliminary data from the February Interactive Forum and the survey conducted April.

The Taskforce may redistribute the survey in order to gather responses from staff as well as minoritized groups on campus. The staff response was substantially lower than faculty and the Taskforce would like a better representation of staff participants. Data presented is from the faculty respondents. The response representation closely resembles campus population based on race and ethnicity. But in this instance the Taskforce would like to over sample those who are to minoritized due to race and ethnicity to better understanding their perspective.

Responses to the question, I feel free to express my political and social views and opinions at UA? The Taskforce felt it important to evaluate this based on minoritized status, African American or Black, and Non-binary, non-white or disability. What the responses indicate is that faculty do not feel they can express they views freely. There is some variability. The following slide shows responses to the question, I feel free to express my political and social views and opinions on Social Media. There is a stronger response to disagree and strongly disagree on the comfort level to expressing their opinions on social media.

These are just to 2 questions that directly relate to the formation of the Taskforce in September.

The survey, will be shortened and reworded in places when it is redistributed as the Taskforce believes that some responses may have changed due to COVID, national and local events, such as the renaming of buildings.

Academic Affairs – *(John Vincent & André Denham)*

The Emeritus policy is under review again as it was not officially presented to the Board of Trustees. Also, the Council of Deans wanted Administrators with faculty status explicitly included in the language. The rewrite under discussion eliminated the inclusion of faculty in the process. The Academic Affairs and Steering Committees felt it necessary to include the faculty in the process based on existing precedent: Faculty are involved in all tenure, promotion and retention reviews. Also, wording had been added that require external funding for emeritus faculty to continue to do research on campus. Neither of these are acceptable to the Academic Affairs and Steering Committees Other minor changes were made which the Academic Affairs and Steering Committees approved of. The Committees met with Provost Dalton and Vice Provost Brouwer to ask that the original language and procedures be

reinstated, excluding external funding requirement and keeping the departmental procedures. The next step will be to send this to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Faculty Handbook Changes (see below)

The changes to the Faculty Handbook were first presented at the October Senate meeting. There were minor editing changes. The first substantial change was to the wording for Administrators reverting to faculty status. This is a clarification on how their salaries are calculated.

Changes to Appendix B to be in compliance with Title IX which were originally thought to be major turned out to be minor with changes being made primarily to position titles.

The Senate voted unanimously to approve these changes.

Research & Service – (Ajay Agrawal & Kelly Shannon-Henderson)

The R & S Committee is collecting statements and procedures from peer and aspirational institutions for accounting practices concerning ROH's especially how other institutions create and maintain these accounts. This information will be used for writing a proposal requesting the University alter its current ROH accounting practices. If anyone has any knowledge of institutions that handle these accounts particularly well, perhaps from previous employers please let the committee know of them.

The Committee is also gathering information on the impact of the pandemic on scholarly productivity, especially on female faculty. There is a lot on anecdotal and some data evidence, that suggests that women still bear the brunt of home and childcare responsibilities and are therefore struggling during COVID with research projects and therefore submitting fewer articles. The Committee is searching out other Universities to see how or if they are addressing this.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (Ibrahim Çemen & Jeri Zemke)

Nominations are open for the “Merger or Discontinuance of Academic Units Committee.” The election was opened during the Senate meeting and ran through noon on Wednesday, November 18th. There are 2 nominees.

There will be no Marshals for the December 2020 commencement.

Nominations and elections of Convocation Marshals for May 2021 is currently on hold as there been no announcement as to the format of Spring Commencement. If the format allows for Marshals, nominations and elections will be held at that time.

Financial Affairs – (Rainer Schad & Mary Stone)

The TASC Health Savings Accounts is being investigated by the Financial Affairs Committee. The accounting of funds seems unreliable. Those employees who have HSA accounts should monitor them frequently and obtain screen shots for verification of deposits.

Community & Legislative Affairs – (Joy Burnham & Steven Yates)

Brewer-Porch Children's Center (BPCC) is holding a coat & winter gear drive which ends November 13th. They need adult coats. These can be dropped off at 302 Russell Hall. Gift cards also are welcome.

The Teacher/Staff Appreciation Luncheon for BPCC is being planned for May 4, 2021 for the 80+ faculty and staff.

Student Life – *(Jennifer Dempsey & Ruth Ann Hall)*

The Amazon Wish List for REACH Program Students

<https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/291HVG3RP5OYT> is continually being update. Please include your name as the students are being asked to write thank you notes. Amazon automatically sends the item to Shannon Hubbard in the REACH office for distribution.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – *(Mirit Eyal-Cohen & Ignacio Rodeño)*

Met with Dr. Taylor. She shared updates of her activities. The Committee would like to encourage more winter holidays displays.

The Committee is continuing their effort on expanding new Affinity Groups.

The DEI Committee and the Research and Service Committee are working together to create three post-doc fellowships for under-represented minorities. They are looking at ways to expand the already-existing A&S initiative. They have investigated programs such as those at UNC and Virginia Tech. The DEI committee wants to put more emphasis on teaching (vs. just on research) and faculty mentorship. These kind of pipeline programs are critically important to increase diversity in faculty and staff. The DEI Committee will work with the Provost who is committed to this initiative to get 3 of these positions in the near future.”

IT & Strategic Communications – *(Matthew Hudnall & Patrick Kung)* – No Report

Faculty Life – *(Susan Appel & Christopher Lynn)* - No Report

Meeting adjourned at 5:09

Chapter 2, Section XV. Page 47:

C. Other Conditions

1. **Date of Conversion**

The date of conversion from administrative to faculty status is subject to negotiation, but normally will be the first working day after the end of the administrative appointment and will be no later than the following August 16. Administrative stipends begin to be phased out as soon as the administrative appointment ends. Similarly, administrative leave typically begins as soon as the administrative appointment ends. For example, an administrator who steps down January 1 and had more than five years of administrative service typically would take administrative leave in the spring and summer semesters at the 12-month salary, but then would be converted to nine-month faculty status, **and 9-month academic year salary, on August 16**, when the administrator returns from leave. If that same administrator steps down August 16, the conversion to nine-month appointment would take place immediately, and the administrator could take compensated leave either in the Fall or Spring semester that academic year and receive compensated summer leave (equal to 30 percent of the nine-month base) the following summer.

2. **Salary During Administrative Leaves**

~~Normally, administrators will have been converted to academic year salaries before beginning administrative leave. In such cases, sSalary during administrative leaves (distributed on a 12 month basis) will be one-half of the academic~~9-month salary for each semester **of fall and/or spring leave** and

30 percent of the ~~academic year~~9-month salary for a ~~summer~~summer semester leave. Any variation from this policy must be approved in writing by the Provost before the leave begins.

Chapter 2, Section V.B., Page 35:

Current language regarding tenure clock extensions for childbirth or adoption mandates that notice must be given “preferably within six months but no later than 12 months ~~of~~ birth or adoption.”

Revised statement: “preferably within six months but no later than 12 months ~~of~~ **after** birth or adoption.”

Chapter 3, Section XVII. Page 63: Summer Session and Interim Program Compensation

Current statement: “Each individual’s teaching assignment during one of the two terms normally is limited to six semester hours.”

Revised statement: “~~An Each~~ individual’s teaching assignment during ~~each one~~ of the two ~~summer~~ terms normally is limited to six semester hours. ~~An Each~~ individual’s teaching assignment during ~~Interim terms~~ normally is limited to three semester hours.”

Appendix B, (pages 85, 97-103).: Changes were necessary in order to be in compliance with new Title IX regulations.

Chapter 3, Sections IX and XII.A (pages 59-60); Appendix E. (page 117): Link added to to the new ORED Policy for the *Disclosure of External Activity*.... (Policy was approved by the Faculty Senate last Spring).