

Academic Senate (Zoom Meeting)

May 27, 2020

Present: Huitt, Selig, Karim, McMillan, Prather, Post Ginell, Post Steven, Lefler, Pranav, Riley, McNatt, Hayar, Roberts, Mendiratta, Burgess, Meyer, Rosenbaum, George, Miller

Call to order: 2:06 p.m.

Agenda:

1. Approve Minutes: Minutes from March 25 council meeting approved.

2. Report from Colleges

Graduate School: No updates

College of Health Professions: A new CHP Academic Senate representative will be elected to replace Tiffany, now that she is the President. 3 Faculty members in COHP who had to take a forced volunteer reduction in effort in time (in addition to those who did a voluntary reduction).

College of Medicine: COM is fully opened now, all clinics are open with precautions. It is a combination of in person and TeleHealth visits. COVID testing is being completed at least 3 days prior to elective procedures. Tiffany asked if we had met with the Dean Westfall, and we have not met yet.

College of Nursing: Have not met with the Dean because there is too much going on. They have lost contract faculty, and difficulty with coverage. Getting contingency plans ready for the Fall.

College of Pharmacy: No update.

College of Public Health: All Fall classes have been moved online. Received an email from the Dean that there was greater than 100% voluntary reduction in either salary or time. They have taken a role in Contact Tracing.

3. Committee Reports

Research: No

Communications: Reminder to check website for updates on officers. We need to circulate the May 7 minutes and get approval. Tiffany asked if we can approve minutes via electronic voting. Members were agreeable to this method.

Faculty Affairs: Still needs a Chairperson. We discussed taking nominations versus appointing chairs. James said he prefer nominations, and that we could nominate anyone, including people who are not already on council. Tiffany is going to create a description of the position, and we can send to people in our colleges who we think would be a good fit.

4. Updates

UAMS COVID response special meeting: 2 main outcomes: 1. A meeting with Dr. Gardener. 2. A Town Hall with Faculty by Chancellor.

Tiffany, Andy, and Edgar met with Dr. Gardener, and she said that the Chancellor would be amenable to a Town Hall meeting, but suggested after the BOT meeting, and after budget approval. At the meeting with her, they discussed the Council's primary concerns. As a group, we reviewed the letter sent to Dr. Gardener prior to the meeting with her. She was unable to answer questions regarding financial/budget questions, as they were waiting for BOT. Her assumption was that given the voluntary reductions, these were short term, until the new budget. They did anticipate continued financial loss for the short term. She did point out that the 2020-21 budget had been approved, and that they were hopeful that the reductions were temporary, only for May & June. She said that this was not a financial crisis, and said the reason for the urgent request was to get it completed by HR for the month of May.

Question regarding WorkShare program by Arkansas, that if people have greater than 10% reduction can apply for unemployment benefit. No one was familiar with this to answer.

Question regarding what details of the letter and the response we can share outside of the Senate: Tiffany said that she thinks it is fine to share the letter, and the questions we are asking. Tiffany said that she was hopeful that the communication/response would be through Dr. Gardener's attendance at our meeting or via a Town Hall by the Chancellor. And would be hesitant to share the response outside of the official communication from them.

We discussed again requesting a Town Hall with the Chancellor. Priya recommended a Town Hall across all the colleges, independent of the Chancellor. It was reminded that these meetings are open to all faculty every single month. We can send out a renewed meeting reminder to faculty, with link to our website with Zoom link. An idea was to have a Town Hall in each college, and can filter ideas/comments to full Academic Senate meeting.

Dr. Gardener joined the Academic Senate meeting late at this point. She said that she does not have a talk ready, but is ready to answer questions. We asked if the Chancellor is willing to have Town Hall at this time? She assumed he is willing to have a Town Hall, if that is the desire. She thinks it is better to get a communication to him more quickly, if we know the concerns. She reminded us that the expenses outmatched income by about 1 million per day in April. But we are getting quickly ramped up, and are on the road back to normalcy. She said that she was asked in past about the BOT meeting reference to senior leadership not taking cut and wanted to clarify this BOT meeting comment. She confirmed that they have taken a 20% cut. She thinks the BOT comments were to be applied to all employees, not just senior leadership. Next year's budget was approved by BOT. This morning she got an e-mail to ask people to make the voluntary cut for June. Mandatories are being reevaluated.

We asked her about the question earlier in the meeting, regarding what can be communicated to the Colleges from this meeting. She said that what she communicated can be shared. She said it would be helpful that if we disseminate information broadly, it may be helpful for she and Amanda George CFO to look at it to make sure what Dr. Gardener said was correct (regarding financials).

Dr. Gardener said that we are already in a much better place at this time in May than last month. And they are hopeful that by June we are out of budget issues.

Dr. Gardener could not answer questions about the WorkShare program. They encourage people to explore the program if their hours are being cut.

Dr. Gardener said a thank you to everyone who took voluntary reductions. Even folks who were 100% grant funded took a reduction.

Question regarding potential of more grants, federal dollars. Dr. Gardener said they have received \$16 million of CARES money. They are putting together another proposal, and expect the review 2 weeks from now. Dr. Gardener left the meeting at this point, for another meeting.

Tiffany asked for recommendations regarding a request for Town Hall, if we still want to request that from the Chancellor.

5. Other Business:

Reminder that we will have elections in most colleges.

Also if we have information from the College P&T committee, to forward to them. Colleges had to submit 405.1 revisions to P&T, and if have not been submitted, then this is delaying full approval via BOT.

Council Goals tabled until next meeting.

Adjournment: approximately 3:05 p.m.