

**UAMS Academic Senate Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

**Attendance:** Tiffany Huitt, Saleema Karim, Cherika Robertson, Williams Edward, Ashley McNatt, Edgar Meyer, Dana Moser, Andrew James, Lee Ann MacMillian Crow, Wendy L Ward, Brad Martin, Jen Gan, Stephanie Gardner, Gunnar Boysen, Amber Teigen, Claire Tucker, Christ Arthur, Ginell Post, Eric Rosenbaum, Steve Post, Emily Sparkman, Elizabeth Riley, Dana Moser.

**Academic Senate Council Meeting Agenda**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 pm by Tiffany Huitt.

**II. Report of Minutes**

Edgar Meyer reported the minutes were approved by majority vote. Minutes will be available on website and on Teams. Senate council meetings will be transitioned to Microsoft Teams in the next few months.

**III. Updates and New Business (T. Huitt)**

Dr. Mary J Burgess has resigned from her position as Council Secretary. The Academic Senate Council thanks Mary for her service to the senate and give her best wishes for all of her future endeavors.

**(a) Meetings with Provost**

**i. UAMS COVID-19 vaccine updates**

Approximately 75% of faculty have been vaccinated. Dr. Gardner asked assistance from the Academic Senate Council to encourage faculty and students to get vaccinated – assistance would be greatly appreciated. Other ideas where Academic Senate Council can help to promote this effort should be sent to Senate members.

Dr. Gardner confirmed that there are no current discussions on mandatory vaccination at UAMS. It is desired that all faculty, staff, and students will take advantage of opportunities to receive the vaccine. Since this still remains under EUA, this is not a requirement, but perhaps in the future it is likely that the vaccination will be warranted. Presently, vaccination is not considered to be a requirement.

Council member asked if it was possible to have family members vaccinated at a UAMS. Dr. Gardner confirmed that family members will be able to get vaccinated. The clinic on 12<sup>th</sup> street has been set up for vaccinations, but appointments are required. Dr. Gardner to send the link for the site to Dr. Huitt. The Governor has approved individuals above the age of 16 to be able to get the vaccine without the restrictions.

**ii. Post-COVID work from home policies**

A discussion focused on whether the work from home policies would be revised post COVID. Council discussed this with Dr. Gardner and requested that Council would like to have some representation and input into what the policies would look like, i.e. faculty work obligations, responsibilities, hours. Dr. Gardner agreed to include Council representation to this process as it happens.

**iii. UAMS Childcare Center**

A discussion on whether or not the UAMS Childcare Center would be available to students or just employees. It was clarified that the primary focus is to provide for employees. Dr. Gardner clarified that the UAMS Childcare Center is intended to serve faculty and staff; however, this service may be available to the residents in the community or students to ensure capacity is achieved.

**iv. IT policies and restrictions**

A discussion on IT security policy and restrictions were discussed. Dr. James provided an update on changes he has experienced with the IT updates, (i.e. standardized desktop UAMS logos). Dr. James would like the council to provide input to changes in IT security policies. Dr. Gardner provided an update on the IT security updates. The intent of the standardized UAMS desktop logo was to ensure a unified look to patients who visit links. Dr. Gardner also provided an update on the use of USB drives to save data. To ensure information security and to prevent IT breaches, the use of USB drives will no longer be permitted.

**(b) Revised: 2021/22 Council Elections**

Dr. Huitt informed members that the nomination period for next year's council officer has been extended to April 9, 2021. The following positions are available: Secretary, Member at Large (2), President-Elect. Nominations should be sent via email to [academicsenatecouncil@uams.edu](mailto:academicsenatecouncil@uams.edu).

**(c) Special Council Meeting: Nominations Meeting**

A Nominations meeting will be held on Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am to announce the nominees and consider additional "off-the-floor" nominees. This is an open council meeting, and non-members are encouraged to attend. At this meeting, the slate of nominees will be finalized and included on the ballot. Two weeks are allowed for the elections. Elections will be concluded by the next council meeting in April.

The full senate meeting is scheduled for May 2021. The new officers will be announced at this meeting.

**(d) Senate Budget Spending**

Dr. Huitt informed the Council of outstanding Senate funds. Funds in the past have been used for refreshments, advertising, speaker fees, etc. Since the meetings have been conducted remotely via Zoom, the Council has not had the opportunity to use these funds. Members proposed potential uses of funds to advance the mission of the Senate. Dr. Huitt confirmed that the funds cannot be used for faculty gifts (discouraged and not recommended). Members provided ideas on how to use the senate funds, such as gift baskets for new faculty members.

**(e) Faculty Merit Salary Increases**

A discussion focused on the Chancellor's announcement regarding the current positive fiscal state of UAMS. Since faculty and employees were asked to take a voluntary salary reduction last May/June 2020, a Senate member raised a concern if a request can be made to UAMS administration to reimburse faculty for those voluntary reductions. Clarification regarding the UAMS budget status was requested.

Dr. Huitt asked members if the Council would like the Faculty Affairs Committee to continue this discussion, engage in the conversation, and draft a proposal. Dr. Gardner to take this proposal to UAMS senior leadership for input. The next steps to move this proposal forward was discussed. Dr. Huitt to work with senate members to send a request in writing to the Provost's Office.

**(f) March BOT Meeting Update**

Dr. James attended the meeting. BOT meeting update was included in the Chancellor's announcement.

**(g) Reports from College Representatives**

- i. Graduate School Report: Graduate faculty statuses and curriculum update. Summer classes are online. Hope to have fall classes onsite.
- ii. College of Health Professions: Representatives met with Dean.
  - U of A classes returning in the fall and changes in the social distancing from 6 ft. to 3 ft., concern regarding classroom space and competition.
  - A policy on faculty to return to campus and work from home policy was discussed.
  - CHP will follow the university policy – waiting to see if institution-wide policy is developed.
  - Update will be provided at the full College update.
  - CHP will be holding elections to fill the CHP representative. Two faculty interested in this position.
  - CHP representative interested in presentation on Faculty Retention (October 2020 meeting).
- iii. College of Medicine: No Updates
- iv. College of Nursing: No Updates
- v. College of Pharmacy: Representatives met with Dean. Discussion focused on remote working, classroom spaces, and merit raises.
- vi. College of Public Health: No Updates
- vii. Academic Affairs: No update

**(h) Committee Reports**

- i. **Research Committee (Gan):** Committee had first meeting; next meeting April 20<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. The committee is looking for new members. Gan meeting with Associate Deans of research for the different Colleges. Discussion focused on difficulty on communications (i.e., who to contact for what), research administration (i.e., department administrator versus OSPAN), and research resources available at UAMS.
- ii. **Communications Committee (Hayar):** No update
- iii. **Faculty Affairs Committee (Huitt, Interim):** Looking to appoint new chair for this new committee. The current committee has 7 members. Major initiatives from the Senate Council were discussed.
- iv. **Subcommittee for Constitutional Review (Martin):** Next meeting will be scheduled. The draft has been reviewed and edits will be reviewed before presenting to the council

**Reminders and Announcements:**

(a) Spring Full Senate Meeting on May 26, 2021: Members were asked to provide suggestions for speakers.

(b) UA System BOT meeting May 27-28, 2021

(c) [Ask@uams.edu](mailto:Ask@uams.edu)

Meeting Adjourned at 3:11 PM