
FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE MEETING

January 14, 2021

12:50 P.M. to 2:20 P.M. OKT N142

Present: Tim Newman, Gwaku Gyasi, Mike Banish, Kader Frendi, Laird Burns, Carmen Scholz, Jeff Weimer

Zoom Remote Participants: Ex-Officio: Provost Christine Curtis; Guest: President Darren Dawson, Emil Jovanov, Paul Whitehead

- **Faculty Senate President Tim Newman called the meeting to order at 12:54 PM.**
- **Meeting Review:**
 - **Summer School Operations Policy moved to Special FSEC meeting 1/15/2021.**
 - **Use of Outdoor Areas on Campus Policy passed to be placed on FS agenda.**
 - **Use of Facilities Policy passed to be placed on FS agenda.**
- **Administrative Reports**
 - **President Dawson**
 - There aren't many changes to schedule. We received bids back in December from two companies on the Greenway. The two bids were substantially higher than the allotted budget. This project is on hold until we reassess. Spragins Hall interior renovation will move forward. We received a substantial donation to allow us to move forward. We will take it to the board in February. We will try to start in April/May have it completed before fall semester.
 - We have ordered 1,000 COVID vaccines. We don't know when we will receive those vaccines. We are developing a plan on our distribution. The rollout in Alabama hasn't been very good.
 - Tim – When we talk about doses, are these to vaccinate 1,000 people? Or 1,000 shots to vaccinate 500 people?
 - President – I think these are just 1,000 shots. If they ship you 1,000, and you have 28 days until the booster, you are in the queue for the second 1,000.
 - Tim – Were those ordered with idea that they were for faculty/staff or whole campus community?
 - President – We just put in the order for the 1,000. You have guidelines. Anyone involved with health care situations, then move to housing and dining. We will survey out who will actually take it and then move down the list. By the time we get the first 1,000 doses, I think the guidelines will be redone.
 - Kader – Let me state that I am ecstatic to be back on campus. I do question the rationale to be in hybrid mode with the increasing rate in deaths within the state. We didn't have data in the fall semester to open fully, what numbers are we making the rationale to be on campus?

- President – We have a task force composed of the three campuses and relying on information from UAB. It was determined by that task force that we could open up in hybrid mode as long as we move holidays back.
- Kader – The numbers in Madison County are increasing. The hospitals are at capacity. We are really at the near peak or going to a peak. We haven't seen one yet.
- President- I follow the data very carefully. The idea is the classroom doesn't spread the virus. It is spread outside the university.
- Jeff – It seems perhaps the students are not getting the routine notification to do their COVID check in. Is that true?
- President – We will find out about that.
- Provost Christine Curtis
 - I received my health check from UAB yesterday. Faculty and staff should be receiving their health check message. The question is were the students getting them in the fall? I will contact Malcolm Rice and ask him what the student needs to do.
 - Jeff – A student in the class stated they weren't receiving the notification like before.
 - Continuing with health and safety guidance, we are not going to have re-entry testing for faculty/staff. Only residential students and athletes/coaches are tested once a week. I was in a meeting last week with Christi and she is working hard to ensure they are getting tested. We have 23 positives on re-entry and 25 in isolation. It's really important that we follow all the safety measures. I understand, Kader, it is difficult to know what to do. We haven't linked any contraction back to the classroom. There has been talk to make the social distancing smaller, we haven't done that. You are to wear face coverings. Cleaning supplies should be made available to you.
 - Tim – This room we are meeting in today did not have any of that stuff.
 - Provost – Send an email to me and I will forward that on. They are doing their very best. Notify us of the room number and building and they will get to it.
 - About four weeks in last semester, I was asked by the FSEC to buy more face masks/shields. When we try to disperse those among the campus, the colleges said they have everything they need. At the beginning of this semester, we decided the best measure to ensure each person has their supply, we would place the supplies in a supply room. If you know of anyone that needs the supplies they are in the supply room and can be dispensed. I included in this brief the suggested information to go into the syllabus. I encourage everyone to use that in their syllabus. We are still requiring a green passport to come to class. You should be receiving the email from OIT to let you know if the student is compliant. If there are issues with receiving that, I need to know.
 - We try to make sure our students have as many resources as possible. The library has areas for small study groups to gather together. If larger groups need to gather, they are to contact user services in the library. We are trying to provide that opportunity to students. The library has the same hours as last time, M-TH until 10:30 PM, Friday until 8 PM, Saturdays 1-10 PM.
 - The Student Success Services have new opportunities for students.

- There is a complete return to campus website that I encourage you to look at. I will be happy to address any issues. Notifications are the same as last semester. If someone has tested positive, they are to let HR know. The notification system on cleaning seems to be working well. The custodial service seems to be prompt and thorough. They are aware and making sure everything is safe including equipment.
- At the end of the last semester, we had three days for pass/withdraw. I do not have any data yet. I will share it with you as soon as I get it. We had only a few, less than 10, that gave us complaints. There were some that started very late to do the pass/withdraw. We are asking they go through the grade appeal process.
- The numbers aren't as good for spring enrollment – 7,253 undergraduate and 1,896 graduate.
 - Tim – Do you have the enrollment number on this day for last year?
 - Provost – Yes, we were 101 more in graduate. We 1,768 graduate. We are 37 below in undergraduate.
- The ELC had to be closed this week. We had several staff and four/five teachers that had to go into quarantine. We had some positives. We had a whole class of children that had to go into quarantine. Since we had too many teachers out, we had to close. They will open next Tuesday.
- **Officer/Committee Reports**
 - Tim Newman, President
 - I was asked for a name for the working group for Graduate Studies and Chief Police search.
 - We passed a revision to Chapter 6. There have been some comments on that from Graduate Studies. We will be meeting with the Dean that is the overseeing Graduate Studies. One concern is who is serving on Graduate Council. What is done on Graduate Council? We also want more involvement if there are closures.
 - You probably saw in late December CARES II was passed. There will be another allotment coming to the university. We should see this as an opportunity to further our resources. I am of the firm view that the monies need to be better publicized than before. Students may not be aware of what they can get compensated for or reimbursed. I have made the point we need to reach out. I am firm that we need to get the Financial Aid Committee on board with this.
 - Jeff – We do have FYE first year experience courses in engineering. I am going to propose that it is an excellent place that this information should be disseminated. There should be someone going to these classes making a dedicated presentation.
 - Carmen – I want to add to the list of discussion for Graduate Council that communication needs to pass from them to faculty.
 - Laird – Will we have representation on the VP Associate Provost Search committee?
 - Emil – I am on the search committee.
 - We have had a number of structural changes over the years at UAH. They have never been reflected in the handbook. We need to make it known that if I am going to make a change that will be contrary to the handbook, I need to bring the change of language forward. One example would be

summer pay. It was never changed in the handbook. We have got to keep the handbook up to date and brought forward. The changes in the Graduate Council, it needs to be brought before the faculty senate and approved upon. Those small changes should be made quickly. The foundational documents will then be up to date. That will be beneficial for new faculty and administration.

- We had a discussion on sabbatical last time we met. I am in the view that it is important to our faculty. I am proposing that it is brought back and no delay.
 - I want to talk about return to classroom. There has been concern about the state of our room. There are faculty that are discussing this. A faculty went into the room and the equipment wasn't working. One had to cancel the class. The state of the classrooms are not where they need to be. I have concerns about the state of our rooms. I did state my concern about the return to class memo. There were several point from communicable disease, but that committee did not meet.
 - Maybe you have seen the billboard that states UAH has 10,000 students now. I am personally glad to see it. As we have had many discussions here in the FSEC, with the increase in workload, there needs to be an increase in faculty workload. We have been told we would wait until we have the increase number of students. We have reached the milestone. The support has been promised for five years. It needs to start coming. Our registration numbers are good. It is time to address staffing and faculty short falls.
 - A university that is 90 miles north of us, they are hiring 20 individuals in my discipline. We have lost and will not be able to replace. They are only 30% larger than us.
 - Kader – Our own sister campuses within the UA System are advertising tenure track positions. We have a freeze on that. Are we in the same system or different? UA Tuscaloosa can hire but we are froze. I don't comprehend that.
 - Tim – A few months ago, I brought numbers that showed tenure and tenure earning faculty. There was an upward trend on that. Our numbers have been flat to decreasing.
 - Kader – We are supposed to be an engineering campus but UA Tuscaloosa is eating our lunch. We may not be competitive.
 - Lastly, I have a list of bills and policies. We have had a lot of policies that have come in recently. There are four bills from last academic years. There are four that have been resubmitted. There is a new one and it has issues. We have pending policies. Many are new to us, but a few have been with us. Summer School Operations have been with us the longest. It is coming before us today. I appreciate having a policy with clean language. This needs to be at the top of our priority list. I hope you will vote to put this on the faculty senate agenda. We have three bills that are sitting with committees. One of our big task today and tomorrow is how to sequence this list of bills. I have never remembered us having this load before us. We may have to seek extension on our ninety day limit.
- Carmen Scholz, President-Elect

- I received one bill and is on the roster.
- Laird Burns, Past President
 - You asked if I received data on faculty salary. It has been stripped on necessary detail. There are no names, departments. It is going to require me to write scripts to cross validate that. This is a complex, doable analysis that looks at disciplines. It is a multi-level analysis over years. As we provide that to the university it is needs to be solid. President Dawson has stated that we would need tuition increase to provide increases.
- Mike Banish, Parliamentarian/Personnel Committee Chair
 - We are still looking at Chapter 7. I sent everyone a data file on the budget. It goes with comments that Tim made. I am going to defer the discussion until Friday. I do have a request for President Dawson. I want to say I appreciate the tracking sheet with Policies on Policies. There is a section that ask did we check with other universities. If there is a yes, can you list the title or number so we know we are working from the same data sheet? If this policy requires a change to the faculty or staff handbook, that be noted on the form.
 - President – Can you send those request in writing?
 - Mike – Yes.
- Kader Frendi, Governance and Operations Committee Chair
 - No report.
- Paul Whitehead, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Chair
 - No report.
- Jeff Weimer, Finance and Resource Committee Chair
 - RCEU Program is active. Student applications are due soon, then final proposals. I will have an announcement sent out tomorrow at the latest.
- Emil Jovanov, Undergraduate Scholastic Affairs Committee Chair
 - No report.
 - Tim – Did you committee consider any bankruptcy's?
 - Emil – No.
- Kwaku Gyasi, Faculty and Student Development Committee Chair
 - No report.

➤ Faculty Senate Agenda

- FS Minutes changes, first page, Bill 452 and 453, list resolution numbers.
- Academic Year 21 – 22 – This is a draft calendar from the Provost. We've been asked to provide feedback on this by tomorrow. We want to act on this today. Classes will begin the same time in August. There is a return of the fall break, two days. Thanksgiving holiday takes a different form. The entire week would be a break. For spring semester, we start on Monday, January 10. We will see a return of spring break. We would change ours to match Huntsville City Schools if needed.
 - Mike – Huntsville City and Madison County.
 - Tim – Sometimes they don't match.
 - Mike – Maybe President Dawson could talk to get them to match.
 - Tim – We can put that into our notes.
 - Carmen – I want to reiterate that faculty welcomes the whole week of Thanksgiving has a break. I think that will be very appreciated.

- Jeff – I want to applaud that we now have two study days. That was a frustration to me as well as some students. This is a much welcomed schedule.
- Tim – I did speak with colleagues about the final day and then commencement. They spoke about making that earlier.
- Kader – Since we are given the whole week of Thanksgiving for break, I don't understand why we keep the fall break. I say take it out and combine with Thanksgiving and finish early in December. The fall would be similar with the spring.
- Paul – I was curious if there was a plan B just in case numbers do not get better. Is there any consideration to going remote after Thanksgiving? I think planning would be smarter than trying to assume it will be better.
- Michelle Kennedy – The Provost has been shifted to the MLK Program.
- Tim – Michelle, have you heard if there is a backup plan to the calendar?
- Michelle – It is under review.
- Tim – Have there been any discussion on an alternative calendar due to COVID.
- Michelle – Yes, that is being discussed.
- Carmen – Even if COVID is still the same in the fall, we would just do the same as we did the past fall. To me, that doesn't affect the calendar.
- Tim – One concern for this year is if we send students away, we may not want to bring them back. I would just question fall break if COVID is still raging. What form should we give this feedback in?
- Mike – I would say cumulate ideas and send it back in.
- Tim – I have four comments that I noted and will put those in. One is encouraging university officials to work with schools to have a common spring break. Second is a sense welcome of the duration of Thanksgiving break. Thirdly, we are pleased to see the additional study day. Lastly, consider eliminating fall break and move final exams up. Are all those good? Kader motions and Mike moves to send these forward. All in favor. Ayes carry.

➤ **Summer School Operations Policy**

- Motion to accept. Kader moves. Jeff seconds.
- Carmen – This has been discussed in past and in the senate. It has received a lot of resistance in its original form. It doesn't address an increase in class size, increase in salary. If you prorate the salary for the summer, who will teach in the summer? This is a trap for assistance professors who may be armed twisted into teaching classes. Since you can't force some to do this, they may be forced with limited money. We went through the policy and cut out prorations. We took care of the minimum payment that had been discussed in the senate and suggested to be \$7,500.
 - Mike – I want to compliment the committee on the work they did.
 - Tim – Carmen moved to add four, three hour credit courses. All in favor. Ayes carry. Any other discussion? All in favor of putting this on senate agenda. Ayes carry.
 - Tim – We have five bills they have went through first reading and need to be on senate agenda. We have three bills that are with committee and need to be discussed. We have bill 4XX.
 - Mike – Can you remind me of where we are on Bill 454?
 - Tim – It is with Personnel Committee. We have to decide what will go through first reading today and what will tomorrow. We need to sequence things tomorrow.
 - Mike – I would like to look at the Beta Policy.

- Carmen – According to the Banish rule, can we send some back because they aren't of relevance?
- Tim – That may take as much time as putting it on the senate floor. Some you are thinking about, I actually have concern with.
- Kader – Some are just coming up for five year review. Have there been any changes?
- Tim – I am disappointed at the state of three of these policies. We have policies along these lines but we aren't given a change bar. If I don't see change bars, I feel like I have to sit with the old one and figure out what is different. My personal view some are overly broad.
- Kader – I think the ones coming up for review, we need to know the changes. We aren't going to start from scratch. That will save us time.
- Mike – Some things do change in the course of time. That is why I would like to go through the Beta Policy. This had a lot of effort put behind it. There are things that have been added to it. Tim could reach out and say we need to see the change bar or declare it is the original.
- Tim – I know the number of threats have changed.
- Carmen – Can we get the change bar by tomorrow?
- Tim – I doubt it. I asked for change bars on some and haven't received a response. I think Beta and Policy on Policies. Let me propose that someone move that these three policies ask for change bars and be deferred until tomorrow.
- Mike – Add 03.01.09
- Tim – Is this a new policy?
- Mike – No, four or five years ago in engineering we discovered this policy. We have lab cameras. What are we supposed to do with them and never receive an answer?
- Tim – All in favor of motion. Ayes carry.

➤ **Use of Outdoor Areas on Campus**

- Tim – This was put into place as an interim in June. I received notice that it would become a permanent policy in December. It had not fallen through. This had been sent to a wrong email address. It was moved back to interim and we have ninety days. Is there a motion to send to senate floor?
- Mike – Move to senate floor. Jeff seconds.
- Tim – There are some space restriction issues on this. Are we satisfied with those? All in favor of placing on agenda. Ayes carry.

➤ **Use of Facilities**

- Carmen – I am moving it to the floor. Mike seconds.
- Carmen – The policy prohibits open flame. It is not acceptable because it has to be permitted in labs.
- Jeff – Are we at liberty to make changes?
- Tim – We can try. I think the challenge is how do you prevent a bon fire or burning candles in dorm rooms? What about a classroom?
- Carmen – We don't have money.
- Tim – In theory that could be done?
- Carmen – We don't have the setup. It just needs to be written that open flame in labs are excluded.
- Mike – There needs to be some discussion. Is a cigarette lighter disallowed? There needs to be some language, common language.

- Jeff – One way around this is fireworks, luminaries, candles and other sustained open flames are not permitted in campus except.
- Tim – I am afraid authorized will be misused.
- Kader motions to extend. Carmen seconds. All in favor. Ayes carry.
 - Jeff – Mike, you are asking that we rework item 14. Is that your motion?
 - Mike – Yes. You can't have a candle in the theatre? If we say the activity is a legitimate science activity. Are we an engineering and science school?
 - Tim – I am sure we will have plumbing work done here at UAH and will have to use a blow torch. There are other uses of open flame.
 - Kader- I still like the authorized areas.
 - Carmen – I am not going to find authorization.
 - Jeff – I would point out other sustained open flames are not permitted except laboratories or with authorization.
- Meeting adjourned. 2:30 PM