

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 29, 2021, FACULTY ASSEMBLY

Faculty Assembly Chair Ann Hall called the meeting to order at 2:03 PM.

The assembly approved the minutes from the November 2020 meeting.

A discussion arose regarding distribution of meeting recordings, as in-person assembly meetings are not recorded. It was determined that the recording link for this meeting would be held in the dean's office and the link added to the meeting minutes:

<https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/ebc9c28c-b83b-4468-a4b1-e2265c75db6f>

The Chair recognized Interim Dean David Owen for Q&A. Dean Owen shared that he is excited to continue serving as Interim Dean for the next 18 months and that he expected to have clearer view of the budget in a few weeks. Hoping that the College can now begin shifting away from crisis management, Dean Owen plans to spend the remainder of his tenure on the following initiatives: 1) the morale task force; 2) defining our identity as a College; 3) systematizing anti-racism and leadership development; 4) focusing on enrollment via creative program development (especially interdisciplinary programs; 5) reenergizing student success initiatives; and 6) actively reaching out to alumni and donors.

A question was posed about how impact statements will be used in merit decisions. The Dean replied that the goal is to frame your materials in a way that puts your accomplishments in context, allowing the DPC to see how the pandemic has affected your work.

The next question concerned the fate of the four tenure-track requests that were not funded by provost. The dean responded that these are currently on hold pending budget updates, which should come through in a few weeks; however, he is not terribly optimistic these will be approved as we came in \$1.3 million short of our fall revenue target.

Regarding raises, the budget development process has just begun, so it's unknown if this will be included in the 2022 budget.

The Chair next recognized Provost Beth Boehm. She began by addressing retirement contributions. The University ended up with \$6 million over-realized and, after discussions with faculty and deans, the decision to partially restore contributions to 6% was made.

Regarding vaccines, 80% of current hospitalizations in Louisville are in 70+ age group, so the state made the determination to raise the minimum age to 70 for the first vaccine recipients. The next phase will likely be ages 60+. UofL is currently vaccinating 2000 people per week but has the capacity for double that amount. Regarding the vaccination prioritization of faculty and GTAs who will be required to teach face-to-face, the provost said that she cannot ensure this can happen by June.

The Provost recently hired security to enforce mask wearing in Ekstrom Library. Individuals will be asked to leave if they do not comply after one warning. Since library security has faced

serious criticism for unfairly targeting black students entering the library, faculty wanted to know what safeguards would be put in place to protect black students. The Provost says ULPD will no longer be checking IDs at the only open entrance (3rd street) and that the racially-diverse group of security guards will undergo anti-bias training. There was pushback on this from faculty who noted anti-bias training among police has been shown to be ineffective and suggested that structural initiatives would likely be more effective. Regarding library computer access, the Provost says over 700 Pell-eligible students received free computers from the University this year, but she acknowledged this does not solve the wi-fi access problem.

Regarding Fall modalities, the Provost does not expect a fully hybrid semester, but believes there will be fewer in-person classes than Fall 2019, for instance. Tuition has now been equalized to make all courses the same cost, regardless of modality.

On the topic of the failed dean search, several names were forwarded by the search committee but an offer was only made to one, so there were questions as to why this occurred. The provost responded that there was not confidence in the amount of experience of two of the candidates and that this was relayed to the search committee. The next search committee will be formed after the new provost takes office on April 1. The same search firm will be retained.

The Chair recognized W3 committee member Natalie Polzer. Prof. Polzer joined the W3 committee after chairing the faculty salary committee (see attached memo). The committee is currently working to hire a consulting firm to conduct a survey of faculty and staff salary and benefits in comparison to benchmark institutions. The expectation is that the study will take 18 months, after which time equity bumps can only occur based on the available budget. While the goal under Dean Leonard was to reach 80% of benchmark, this was based on the budget available at the time. Many faculty commented that the goal should be higher this time and should not relate to an existing lump of funds. Questions arose regarding staff job descriptions, which Prof. Polzer will take back to the W3 committee. The Chair suggested this discussion should continue at the next meeting.

The Chair recognized David Schultz of the Faculty Senate. He reported the Senate is considering approving several new degree programs. He related that the budget planning and monitoring committee includes A&S faculty and staff senators, all of whom voted in favor of reinstating retirement contribution. He reiterated that anyone wanting input into the budget process should contact their faculty senators. He relayed that he is working to clarify the Canon printer policy and that a parking rate raise is being discussed. A new ad-hoc diversity committee will include a representative from each of the University's 12 areas. The senate is working to promote shared governance and a new section to highlight this has been added to UofL Today.

The Chair recognized Wendy Carson Yoder, who reported that the Student Grievance and Academic Discipline Committee has been reviewing appeals from students accused of cheating. The two main penalties currently used to punish cheating are expulsion or suspension. The committee is considering a broad range of corrective options.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 PM.