

Chair's Report
April 2020
Submitted by John Smith

Well this is different. I just looked back on my Chair's Report from April of last year. Man I wish we were dealing with those types of things instead of what we are right now. That also seems like a decade ago and not just last April.

Naturally most of what I've been doing has been related to the Covid-19 situation. Many other things like the Provost search etc. have been put on hold. I've been sending you updates after those meetings so I don't think there's any benefit to re-capping those things here. I will say this. I have been genuinely impressed with the level of concern exhibited by all the deans and vice presidents, senior leaders, the Provost, the Chief of Staff, the President and everyone else in those meetings. If you look back just a few weeks it is amazing at everything that got done in a very short time frame. Taking our entire academic program to an online setting, starting so many virtual and online programs and support mechanisms for our students, staff and faculty, having all this happen while many of our students were overseas during Spring Break, it is just crazy what we've accomplished in a very short window of time.

The biggest thing that I find hard to deal with is the fact that we don't know when this is going to be over. It would be so much easier to say "just stick it out until the end of May and everything will be OK" but we just don't know that. The uncertainty of the entire Covid-19 scenario is hard to deal with mentally.

I am proud of how the Senate is moving and communicating in dealing with this. Our EC has met twice in the past week just to stay up to speed on everything. We are making sure we are active in every way possible. I sincerely appreciate the speed at which people respond to things when they are sent out on the list serve. It shows our senators are staying engaged and in touch. That is going to continue to not only be important, but will only become more and more so moving forward.

I am also very cognizant that our SHARE committee is about to advocate for staff in a way that has probably never been done on any campus before. They are

about to be part of real life situations that will be very emotionally hard to deal with. Please join me in supporting them in any way possible. Our committee is:

Sally Molsberger, chair
Kari Donahue, vicechair
Bonnie Dean
Kim Laun
Steve Lindsey
Lee McWhorter
Jennifer Stephens

List of Meetings I attended in March:

15 Senior Leadership Covid-19 Response meetings to date

Senate Leadership meetings, Several per week

Senate EC Meetings, two to date

Board of Trustees, one meeting to date

Foundation Board of Directors, one meeting to date

Strategic Plan Implementation W2 Cardinal Principles Sub Committee, one meeting to date

Free Speech Task Force, two meetings so far