

Chair's Report
September 2020
Submitted by John Smith

Last month I referenced Groundhog Day in my report. I really wish I didn't feel like doing the same thing again. Recognize anything here?

Provost Search: The provost search has resumed after its suspension when we went online in March. Applications for the position were left open and the result has been a significant strengthening of the applicant pool. Each member of the search committee had to submit a list of so many names for the original search. When we re-initiated the search, we had to do that again. At least half the names on my new list were not on my original list. The search committee has met twice. We are down to our final list of candidates who will receive airport interviews. I am not able to share names or the number of candidates or any identifying information about anyone at this time. That will come when we further narrow down the pool to campus interviews. I can tell you that the pool is very strong and very diverse from both a gender and ethnicity standpoint. I am personally excited to begin the actual interview process.

EC update: The EC has begun meeting every other week. We thought that was prudent given the nature of things right now. We did not want to have 4 weeks between our meetings. Also, Andrew, Rhonda, Gretchen and I are meeting every Monday so our leadership is meeting six times per month.

Covid Testing: The covid dashboard now includes all testing done by UofL. Originally it contained only tests completed by the Bluewater Labs who are on campus doing the mandatory testing. Now testing done by Campus Health, who see all the symptomatic patients, and Athletics are included. The dashboard is also being updated three times a week rather than the weekly Tuesday update. You may visit the site at <https://louisville.edu/coronavirus/dashboard>

I have a new meeting with Neeli, Michael Wade, Provost Boehm, Mark Watkins and Krista Wallace Boaz every Tuesday morning at 8:30. Those started this morning and is just a chance to bring up topics that are trending. This morning's conversation was centered around the changes to the dashboard mentioned above.

Vacation Sweep: We need to make sure our constituents know they should have their vacation balances to their “max” on December 31. That is when time over the person’s max will be “swept” back to that number.

In our meeting today we will hear about our new Anti-Racism Committee. Leondra Gully and Andrew Grubb will co-chair the committee. In my opinion, everything we do is important or we wouldn’t be taking it on but this committee is especially critical for us at this time. We are not setting limits on membership etc. as we want to involve everyone with an interest in moving this initiative forward. Please reach out to Leondra or Andrew if you are interested.

I am looking forward to not including this statement in one of my reports. I still say 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 June, July or whatever and everything will be OK” but we just don’t know that. The un-certainty of the entire Covid-19 scenario is hard to deal with mentally.

Now, more than ever, what you do makes a real difference in the lives of people. Thank you for all you are doing. I hope it doesn’t come off a pretentious for me to say I am proud of our group and the individuals that comprise it.