

Chair's Report
September 2021
Submitted by John Smith

Covid: Raise your hand if you thought we'd still be dealing with this in September, 2021 when it first started. Me neither. It's amazing how much time so many of us spend in covid related meetings. Since day one, it has been one of the more liquid scenarios I have ever seen. Here's where we are now with things that have just developed in the past week. There are questions revolving around President Biden's mandate for employers of over 100 people to mandate vaccinations. Right now that applies to federal employees, which we are not. There is a question as to whether it may apply to us from a Medicare and OSHA standpoint though. Our legal counsel is investigating that right now. I have received numerous calls about in-person meetings. I have asked administration to provide a campus wide communication with the protocols for meetings so we can all know what we should or should not expect in those. Here is how it was explained in a recent meeting. All indoor, in-person meetings should be conducted wearing masks. The "presenter," which is anyone who has the floor to speak, may remove their mask if they are at least 6 feet away from everyone else. If 100% of the attendees are fully vaccinated, there is an option for the meeting to be conducted without masks. Anyone has the right to wear a mask whether the option is present or not though. People also have the right to reclude themselves from the meeting if they are not comfortable with the scenario they are in. I hope this helps. I'm sure more information will be coming as things continue to evolve.

There is good news to report from a vaccination front. Here are the vaccination rates as of September 14. Students, 84.1%. Faculty 81.9% and Staff 82.3%. Those numbers have risen dramatically since the start of the semester. A lot of people are asking about breakthrough infections. It was reported to our covid leadership team that medical studies have shown that the breakthrough infection rate is between 0.2 and 0.4%. I know, that sounds like a low number unless.....

We are also expecting direction on booster vaccinations soon. President Biden's plan included mandating booster shots but there have been a number of medical advisors recommend holding off on boosters until more testing is completed. The three different vaccines available in the US will probably have different recommendations for each one.

We are about to transition to providing flu shots very soon. Everyone is encouraged to participate in that opportunity as well. Given the many similar symptoms, the more of the regular flu we can prevent the better for everyone.

President and Provost: I am looking forward to having Lori Gonzalez and Michael Wade Smith in our meeting today. Neeli was trying to attend but has been called into another meeting that she cannot miss or re-schedule. Both Neeli and Lori are working on their calendars to meet with us on a regular basis. Both will not be able to attend every month but one of them will join us almost every month. It is encouraging that both are working on their schedules to join our EC on a more frequent basis as well.

Miller Hall: I was very grateful to be able to attend the dedication and opening of the new resident hall. The students have dubbed the hall the “BRH” for Belknap Residence Hall so if you hear that term around campus you’ll know what it means. The hall is going to be a “game changer” given the financial option it will give many students and its’ location right in the middle of campus, virtually next door to the SAC and the many student activities that take place there. Construction has started on the “new Threlkeld” and is on schedule.

Board of Trustees: Our next meetings are next week. They are committee meetings. I will attend all meetings. Our newest trustee has been named. We welcomed to the BOT former Mayor of Louisville, Lieutenant Governor and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at the White House, Jerry Abramson. I have met with Governor Abramson (what he actually to be called) and look forward to the contributions I think he will make to the University of Louisville.

We did have a special meeting dealing with the federal court case revolving around a former basketball assistant coach. That information has been widely disseminated by many media sources and is readily available. Because of the nature of the situation, our meeting was held in executive session so I cannot really add more than is already available through those sources.

Shared Governance Workgroup: This committee seems to be stuck in neutral but I found out what was happening. With the elections of new officers in the Faculty Senate and Student Government Association, the representatives for those

bodies had not been seated. Those were just completed and the group will begin actual functioning very soon. Myself, Andrew, Kevin and Angela Lewis-Klein will represent the Staff Senate on that group.

Meetings Attended:

Monday, July 12, Workday Implementation, 9:00

Monday, July 12, Staff Senate Leadership, 1:00

Thursday, July 15, Board of Trustees Annual Meeting, 1:00

Monday, July 19, Senate Leadership, 1:00

Monday, July 26, Workday Implementation, 9:00

Monday, July 26, Senate Quarterly Financial Review, 11:00

Monday, July 26, Senate Leadership, 1:00

Tuesday, July 27, Belknap Safety Committee, SAC

Tuesday, July 27, Senate Leadership, 1:00

Tuesday, July 27, Senate EC, 3:00

Thursday, July 29, Foundation Board Meeting, 11:00

Monday, August 2, Special BOT Meeting, 8:30

Tuesday, August 3, Neeli Leadership Team, 9:00

Tuesday, August 3, Provost Covid Planning Team, 11:00

Wednesday, August 4, BOT Executive Committee, 8:00

Monday, August 9, Workday Implementation, 9:00

Monday, August 9, Staff Senate Leadership, 1:00

Friday, August 13, President's Retreat, 8:00 – 5:00

Monday, August 16, Senate Leadership, 1:00

Friday, August 20, Executive Budget Committee, 11:30

Monday, August 23, Workday Implementation, 9:00

Friday, August 27, Neeli Meeting, 9:45

Monday, August 30, Senate Leadership, 1:00

Monday, August 30, Provost Covid Planning Team, 2:00

Tuesday, August 31, SACSOC Leadership Team, 11:00

Tuesday, August 31, Executive Budget Committee, 1:00

Wednesday, September 1, Workday Demonstration, 9:00

Monday, September 6, Senate Leadership, 1:00

Wednesday, September 8, Provost Covid Team, 3:00

Thursday, September 9, Workday Demonstration, 8:30

Friday, September 10, Senate EC, 10:30

Monday, September 13, Workday Steering Committee, 9:00

Monday, September 13, Provost Covid Team, 4:00

Tuesday, September 14, Council on Post-Secondary Education, 8:00 AM (Frankfort)

Tuesday, September 14, Neeli Senior Leadership, 9:00