

Chair's Report

Submitted by: John Smith

March 8, 2022

Hi everyone,

You can tell what my last number of weeks have been like from the list of meetings below. I'm going to cover some of the more pertinent here.

**Presidential Search:** I am on the presidential search committee along with all the other Board of Trustees members. The RFP's of search firms wanting to guide our search have been received. Board Chair Mary Nixon named me to a smaller ad hoc of the BOT Trustees to review, score and recommend a firm. I have several hundred pages of proposals to reach and score before our March 14 ad hoc committee meeting.

**Athletic Director Search:** Dr. Gonzalez appointed me to the Athletic Director search committee. There are two groups. One is the committee I am on that will conduct town hall meetings, solicit input from stakeholders and review applicants. There is a smaller group made up of former athletes, business leaders and trustee representation that will help Dr. Gonzalez make the final decision. I think both groups have been very well constructed and I have a lot of confidence that search will yield an outstanding athletic director for the university.

Naturally there are a couple discussions revolving around Covid taking place. These are the same conversations taking place around the nation as different governmental agencies, educational institutions and businesses move to relax covid related protocols.

One is talking about the need/lack thereof of continuing the mandatory testing for non-vaccinated students, faculty and staff. Medical professionals and researchers talk about the lack of validity or benefit of such testing. Covid is such a strange virus, you can test and be negative but an hour after testing, go positive. So here is what I have requested, which is supposed to be completed by our meeting Tuesday. I want to see only the data from the a-symptomatic Bluewater testing. That will give us an better picture of what the mandatory testing may or may not be doing for us.

The second conversation taking place is the possible easing of masking requirements. Several universities close to us have already gone to optional masking in non-instructional settings. Educational institutions that have relaxed mask regulations have maintained them in classroom and lab settings but eased them in more public areas such as student centers, recreation centers, libraries etc. In the Covid ASP Committee meetings when that topic has been discussed, I have advocated for some additional carve outs where masks could be required such as individual offices. I think anyone who is working in person and is going to meet someone in their office, has the right to insist the visitor wears a mask. Another is group meetings such as staff meetings etc. There really is no difference in a group meeting and a class right?

This is important and I need everyone to hear it and understand it. There have been NO decisions made. These are just conversations that are taking place that I want you to know about. Those same discussions are taking place across the entire nation right now. The conversations locally are sparked by continuing decreasing numbers of cases. Jefferson County has gone from an average of 17,000 (not an exact number) new cases per week to 1,200 in the past 4-5 weeks.

### **Meetings Attended:**

**Tuesday, January 4, President's Leadership Team, 9:00**

**Friday, January 7, President's Retreat, All Day**

**Thursday, January 13, Board of Trustees, 1:00**

**Tuesday, January 18, IM Staff, 9:00**

**Friday, January 21, Senate Financial Review, 1:00**

**Monday, January 24, Workday Implementation, 9:00**

**Monday, January 24, Neeli Meeting, 1:00**

**Tuesday, January 25, Senate EC, 3:00**

**Wednesday, January 26, Special BOT, 4:00, University Club**

**Thursday, January 27, Foundation Board of Directors, 11:00**

**Monday, January 31, Tuition and Fees Committee, 11:30, Teams**

**Tuesday, February 1, Presidents Leadership Team, 9:00 AM, Teams**

**Tuesday, February 1, HSC Meeting, 11:30**

**Tuesday, February 1, Staff Recognition Reception, 5:00, SAC**

**Monday, February 7, Staff Senate Officers, 11:00 Teams**

**Tuesday, February 8, Staff Senate Full Meeting, 2:30, Teams**

**Wednesday, February 9, Junteenth Planning Committee, 11:30, Teams**

**Thursday, February 10, Tuition and Fees Committee, 9:00, Teams**

**Monday, February 14, Workday Implementation, 9:00, Teams**

**Monday, February 14, Covid Coordinating Committee, 4:00, Teams**

**Tuesday, February 15, Office of Communications and Marketing, 1:00, Teams**

**Tuesday, February 22, Staff Senate EC, 3:00, Teams**

**Thursday, February 24, Tuition and Fees Committee, 9:00, Teams**

**Thursday, February 24, Lori Gonzalez, 11:30, President's Conference Room**

**Monday, February 28, Covid Planning Committee, 4:00, Teams**

**Tuesday, March 1, Shared Governance Committee, 8:30**

**Tuesday, March 1, Senior Leadership Team, 9:00**

**Tuesday, March 1, Total Compensation Meeting, 11:30**

**Wednesday, March 2, Sajid Mian, 9:00**

**Wednesday, March 2, Free Speech, 1:00**

**Thursday, March 3, Tuition and Fees, 9:00**

**Thursday, March 3, FCA, Noon**

**Monday, March 7, Huron Steering Committee, 9:00**

**Monday, March 7, Mark Watkins, 11:00**

**Monday, March 7, Health and Wellness Partnership, 2:00**

**Monday, March 7, Video Conferencing Future, 3:00**