

Minutes

November 30, 2020

4:00 PM

University Faculty Senate
Shawnee State University

1. Call to Order

UFS President Tony Ward called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. This meeting was held via Collaborate.

2. Roll Call:

Secretary Jennifer Napper recorded the attendance (as follows):

Sarah Minter, Eugene Burns, Linda Hunt, Barbara Warnock, Tom Piontek, Georgeann Kamer, Thomas Bunting, Sheena Shifko, Keijing Liu, Adam Miller, Mikel Stone, Sarah Clausing, Drew Feight, and all officers (Tony Ward, Kyle Vick, James Reneau, and Jennifer Napper).

Absent: Ruby Gray, Janet Feight, Bastien LeCouffe, and Phil Blau

3. Minutes: Motion to approve October minutes was seconded by Tom Piontek.

They were unanimously approved.

4. Agenda: Motion to pass the agenda was seconded by Sarah Minter. Approved unanimously.

5. Remarks from President Tony Ward: As the semester it comes to a close, I really want to take the opportunity to thank you for all your hard work this semester. Specifically, for your service and your engagement to the university. Services to me is even more important now than it ever was, particularly with the pandemic. It's difficult having to have virtual meetings. While this agenda is somewhat light on proposals, I just want to tell everyone I appreciate the fact you take your time to be here with us and for representing your department. We are seeing a continuing rise in positive cases for Covid-19, not only on campus but also in the community and in the surrounding area. That being said I am somewhat concerned about spring semester. I know this could have an impact on our academic calendar and I believe the provost and maybe the president will mention this in their remarks. I know we need to continue to be flexible and willing to engage our students in the best way possible. As we, as a collective faculty, continue to learn how to navigate our ever-changing surroundings, I just want to extend my deepest thank you for each and every one of you.

6. Treasurer's Report: There have been no expenditures. We still have \$869 in the account. The report is attached to the minutes. Motion to approve the report was seconded by Georgann Kamer. Passed unanimously.

7. Administrative Reports:

President, Jeff Bauer:

Once again, I just want to thank all of you in the Senate, as well as faculty in general, for the amazing job that you've done this semester. We had hoped that we would be coming back after Thanksgiving for a brief period-of-time, and then going into our normal final schedule. This proved not to be practical given the uptick that we've had in Covid cases, not just in the community but also right here on campus. I feel good though that we've gotten a good portion of the semester done in person. I hope that all of you have had an opportunity to meet the requirements that you established for your class. Let's just keep our fingers crossed that we don't have to be doing this for too much longer. Although, it does look like spring semester is going to be similar, at least at the beginning of the semester.

We're continuing our work on the university's updated strategic plan. Recall that that work began last year. We had spent summer and fall and part of the early winter developing goals and strategies for the strategic plan. Until that point in time when it was interrupted by Covid. We've reinitiated it and right now we hope that we'll have something, in terms of the update, by January. All that information will be shared with you as soon as we have a draft.

Our first goal was that Shawnee State serves the region, by offering programs that students need to thrive in a dynamic world. This is our academic program in Goal 1 and we intend to implement strategies that will build on strengths of current academic programs. We'll also identify and develop new programs or delivery modes. Obviously, we also need to assess and continuously improve our current academic and co-curricular programs as well.

Goal number two is to strive to grow our enrollment and build a diverse and sustainable student body. We have strategies of enhancing and applying best practices to student recruitment. That's been one of the greatest challenges over the last few months, to really retool our student recruitment practices so that it doesn't include much, if any, person-to-person contact. It's a shame because that was probably our most effective tool for student recruitment. We've always said that if we can show students our campus and allow them to look at who we are physically, generally campus sells itself.

The third goal was to prioritize student success in our decision making. This is our retention and completion strategies. We need to maintain high levels of student retention support programs and activities that increase quality of life and build strong student connections. Also, to provide services that are high quality and address student needs and deliver academic programs in schedules and modes that are attractive to current and future student demographics. This has been one of the toughest ones to address. We're really looking at the future more so than what we have been because we really can't maintain some of those programs and activities that increase quality of life.

The fourth goal is to enhance the quality of life of our community and region through positive partnerships. Cultivating diverse and strong partnerships within the community, implementing aggressive outreach programs, leveraging institutional resources to establish a set of community identified needs.

The fifth goal is to provide student-centered and customer-focused processes in our administrative operations.

The sixth goal is to use evidence data and best practices when making decisions.

Finally, goal number seven, added just this summer, is to foster an inclusive and equitable campus climate. Not that we shouldn't be doing this in all of our goals, but given current conditions here on campus, we felt that this was a very important goal to add.

We will be completing a draft of the plan probably before the end of this year. We will be presenting it to different constituent groups and eventually put it in place here on campus.

It is good to look on the bright side, what we've already accomplished this fall semester has been extraordinary. We navigated a minefield of Covid cases with employees and students and were still able to deliver a semester's load to our students. Obviously, conditions could have been better, but they could have been much worse also.

I did want to address one other thing that Tony mentioned, the concern that we all have with the transmission of disease here on campus within the current semester as well as the upcoming semester. I think all of you should know that we've been in constant contact with the health departments, both local as well as statewide. The one thing that is clear at this point-in-time, is that there has been little to no transmission of Covid within K-12 and university classrooms. Our local health department has confirmed that obviously we've had plenty of transmissions, but they've occurred with our students and with our employees in

events and gatherings and other such occurrences outside of the normal classroom activities. We've also had very few severe cases of Covid for our students and our employees. That's a big accomplishment. This should provide us with some confidence that our safety and health measures at least within the campus environment, are working. We did provide some in-person instruction this semester, which was a big plus especially for the student body that we serve.

We did pretty well with enrollment. We were down about five percent, but that's not bad considering what we've gone through and what we had to go through in the spring and summer, we haven't done too bad. And we really haven't done all that bad in keeping those students engaged during this semester. We've lost more than our share, but once again, less than what we may have anticipated. We finished at least the in-person part of our fall semester at the point leading up to or perhaps before peak levels of Covid were encountered. I think unfortunately the worst is yet to come. I think we'll see in the next few weeks, as well as throughout December and maybe early January, that we're going to continue to see those numbers rise.

So a quick question, where are we going for the remainder of the academic year? We will have students returning to campus in classes in January. We're working on testing strategies right now that will give us confidence that we can identify and isolate residential students who have Covid, as well as some commuter students. We are staying open and fluid with our testing strategy because a lot of it hinges on what testing supplies we will be able to obtain. Right now, we would like to have rapid tests available so we can do quick testing of everyone including employees, when we get back from winter break. We're not quite sure if those will be available so we'll have to keep open to the possibility of conducting the same type of PCR testing that we've been doing during this semester.

It looks like at this point in time that we've been selected as a vaccination center for the city, as well as our campus. We spent last week reviewing several sites on campus that can be converted into drive-through sites. We will probably set one up behind the Recreation Center when necessary. It looks like right now the first allocation of vaccines will be available at the in the middle of December. However, we won't be receiving that first allocation, but we're told at this point that we may receive something before the end of December which will be available only to first responders such as, firefighters, police, EMTs and others that are on the front line. I'm hopeful that we can continue to serve as a vaccination site throughout the distribution of vaccines. It would be more convenient for faculty, staff, and students.

As far as spring enrollments, what we're looking forward to with student numbers, I can't tell you it's great, but once again probably not as bad as we are anticipating. At this time, we're down about 18 new students for spring semester and we're down about 250 continuing students (a little less now). However, compared to last year, we're up about 30 graduate students. We may still recoup some of those students we lost, but it's clear that we're going to be facing some retention problems. This is something that we should have anticipated given the circumstances. Unfortunately, this will hurt us in terms of our graduation rates and will also hurt us financially.

We will continue to be ultra conservative on spending for the remaining portion of the fiscal year. We have to make several faculty hires in order to maintain our professional accreditations or to meet other academic requirements. Travel continues to be frozen for the foreseeable future. As far as fall recruitment, it's been difficult and in some cases alarming. Our applications are down about 50 percent over this time last year. Our admits are only down about 20 percent, which gives us at least some confidence that we're similar to all the other institutions. Among all of universities in Ohio, the average number of applications are down 40 percent and the average admissions are down about 33 percent. So, we're probably right in the mix with all of the other institutions. Our expectation is those numbers will begin to pick up, probably in the mid to late part of spring semester. Everything will just be delayed, but we certainly will keep our fingers crossed and continue to do everything that we can to make sure that we meet our goals for next fall semester.

The last thing I'll mention, to end on a high note, we're doing a great job. We're doing as much as possible to adapt to this pandemic. I think we're getting things done that we need to get done. This pandemic will be over at some point, I don't have any doubts about that. When we get through this, we're not only going to survive, but we're going to be a stronger institution. Until it's over, we just have to continue to take this day by day and to try our best to keep our mission and our students as our guide when we make decisions.

Provost, Sunil Ahuja:

First of all, once again I want to express my deep appreciation to all of you, in fact all of the faculty, for everything that you've done this semester. I really appreciate all of your efforts. I still feel very strange about the situation that we're in, not having met a number of faculty on campus. That is probably my biggest regret at this point, but understandable in the current situation that we're in. But even without knowing everyone personally, I sincerely want to express my

appreciation for everything that you've done to bring us to a safe, successful conclusion of a very weird fall semester.

I've referenced programmatic growth before, and the president mentioned before about some faculty positions that we'll have to fill. Additionally, strategic planning is going forward for the next phase of the university. In terms of where we are now with the strategic plan, hopefully even in the next week or so, I hope to send you an update on tactics and where we stand with the current plan. To give you a quick preview, we have about 44 tactics in the current plan dispersed among the six goals that we had. Based on my survey of all the responsible parties, we are about 91 percent either completed or ongoing. Even with the ongoing tactics, I would count as a success because there are clearly some procedures that are more time-consuming and progress from year to year. So, I would count these as a success as long progress is being made.

About the spring calendar, I met with the calendar committee last Monday where we talked about various options. As many of you know, other public universities in Ohio have tweaked their calendar, some dropping spring break or dispersing it over several weeks, giving a day or two off here and there. Some are starting virtually the first couple of weeks and may even go more than that. A lot of these plans are dependent upon local situations. I think the view of the committee was that we would prefer to start in the modalities that we've already established. The courses that are set face-to-face, would meet face-to-face and those set to meet online, would meet online. The only question that was left was what to do with spring break. The concern being that students will go away and return after spring break, which might result in a pretty heavy spike in cases. The committee really didn't want to disperse the spring break. So, now we are considering whether to drop spring break altogether, and just start a week later, or start when we are scheduled to start and then see revisit the spring break issue later. According to the Office of the Registrar, 47% of the total sections are planning to operate face-to-face this spring (434 of the 927 total course sections), 42% are online synchronous or asynchronous, and the remaining 11% are operating as hybrid or some other manner. I think our number of face-to-face sections are a little higher for spring than they were for this fall. This makes it all the more important for us to have as much face-to-face contact with students as early as possible. So, I think we're leaning towards a January 11th start versus the 19th. This, of course, is very much dependent on future conditions or state orders that may force us to go online the first couple of weeks or more. I will be doing some research and talking with people in the next couple of days, weighing the pros and cons, and

try to firm up our plans as soon as possible. I hope to get the decision about the spring calendar out relatively soon.

8. Announcements from Senate floor:

None.

9. Committee and Director Reports

UFS Vice President, Kyle Vick:

Chancellor Gardner would like to extend his appreciation for everything faculty have done during Covid. The only other part from OFC was that we got a report from Ohio state's governmental affairs people that we should expect to see some changes with the new presidential administration coming in. It's not entirely clear what they're going to be able to change at this point, but that there probably will be some changes.

10. Unfinished Business

None.

11. New Business

I. Curricular Proposals

Tom Piontek made a motion to bundle items 11.I.a-g. This was seconded by Barb Warnock. No discussion. Motion to bundle passed unanimously.

Motion to approve the bundled items was made by Georgeann Kamer and seconded by Drew Feight. Motion passed unanimously.

12. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting was seconded by Georgeann Kamer at 4:37.

**Shawnee State University
University Faculty Senate
Treasurer's Report**

As Of: 2020-11-30
Budget Per 2020-2021
Budget Acct 10-1010-30-10042-*

Object	Description	FY Budget	Committed	Obligated	Other Consumption	Expenditures	Consumption	Budget Balance	Expended %
56101	Other Professional Svc							500.00	
		500.00							
58103	PERS 2							70.00	
		70.00							
58201	Medicare							7.00	
		7.00							
58202	Unemployment Compensation 2							3.00	
		3.00							
58203	Workers Compensation 2							5.00	
		5.00							
58302	Life Insurance 1							1.00	
		1.00							
61007	Misc Supplies								
62101	Travel								
64104	Rental							283.00	
		283.00							
66199	Miscellaneous								
Total		869.00						869.00	

Notes: Nothing has been expended for the academic year.

Respectfully Submitted
James M. Reneau – Treasurer UFS