

Minutes

January 25, 2021

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, Janet Feight, Bastien LeCouffe, Phil Blau, Drew Feight, and all officers (Tony Ward, Kyle Vick, James Reneau, and Jennifer Napper).

Absent: Ruby Gray

3. Minutes: Motion to approve the November minutes was seconded by Sheena Shifko. They were unanimously approved.

4. Agenda: Motion to pass the agenda was seconded by Jim Reneau. Approved unanimously.

5. Remarks from President Tony Ward: I really have a very few remarks, this is a fairly light agenda. I hope everyone's semester is going great. We should have the 15-day enrollment report numbers in today I believe, President Bauer or Dr. Ahuja may give those numbers in their reports later. Everything I've heard from across campus or from other institutions has basically been fairly consistent with having difficulties reaching out to high schools and getting information to students due to the disruption in the school systems right now. Hopefully schools are going to be getting back more into face-to-face learning more than just a day or two here or there. That being said, I'm glad the semester started back, whether it's my in-person students or the ones in my online courses, I'm just happy for the opportunity to be back with them. Hopefully, we can find some type of silver lining in these crazy times.

6. Treasurer's Report: There have been no expenditures. We still have \$869 in the account. Motion to approve the report was seconded by Janet Feight. Passed unanimously.

7. Administrative Reports:

President, Jeff Bauer: Just a little over a year ago, actually January 19th of last year, there was a man from Washington state, a 35-year-old that became ill after visiting Wuhan China. His case was kind of obscure, but at that point in time we were still hearing mixed reviews on the virus, that maybe it wasn't so bad, maybe it was more like a flu, or maybe it only really affected older folks. Then I read about his case toward the end of January or early February. This poor 35-year-old, who was a perfectly healthy man, spent four or five days in the hospital suffering from terrible symptoms. He did survive but I had a really strong hunch at that point in time that this wasn't going to be something little, that it was actually going to be something pretty mean-spirited and it sure has been.

I'd like to lead off with the same statement I think I've made to this group and others here on campus over the last 10 plus months. I want to thank all of you for doing what you're doing to keep this institution going during these most difficult days. I think you certainly know that you're keeping the Shawnee mission alive and you're keeping students on track to complete their education, to graduate, and move on to successful careers. That's so important right now and maybe even more so now than ever before.

I pray that we can move on to more normal conditions soon. This semester opened like we ended the last one, actually slightly worse during our move-in of residential students a few weeks ago. We registered 80 COVID positive cases during move-in week and that number has dropped during the first few weeks of the semester. The good news right now is that I think that this semester will look a lot like the last semester in reverse. Last semester we started out slow, only having a few cases here and there. By the time we hit mid-semester, we picked up quite a bit. That prompted the decision to close things down, at least in person, after Thanksgiving break. By the time we got to Thanksgiving we were running probably between 20 and 30 COVID cases per week. Clearly, we've gone beyond that by quite a bit. However, I do expect that in reverse order, we're going to see the large number of positive cases at the beginning, turn to fewer numbers as we move along.

I'm hoping that a vaccination option will open up for our employees and for our students maybe at some point mid-semester or late semester. I don't think that's out of the question at this point. This may make the world begin to get back to a

little more like it used to be before the term COVID became part of our vocabulary. I am optimistic that we're going to open up fall semester '21 in a very nearly normal way. Tony Fauci even mentioned today that if most people get vaccinated by late spring and summer, we should see fall start turn back into a normal situation. During the IUC call I had today, our questions for fall semester are the same for all the state universities. Do we really expect to be going back to normal at that point in time? I think the consensus right now is that we will be back to near normal by fall. All I can say is please hang in there, because we're getting closer and closer to the end of the pandemic.

The Provost may have some additional notes about enrollment, but here is a summary for this academic year. We were down about five percent in the fall. I just saw the 15-day class numbers this morning and it looks like overall we'll be down about seven percent over spring semester last year. We're about even with where we were spring semester 2019. The only good thing, if there are good things in pandemics, is that we have been assisted to a large degree by federal funding provided through the CARES Act. The second stimulus, which was passed in December, will provide us with some additional assistance. This funding will have broader eligibility so that, at least compared to that of the first installment, we should be able to use it not just to pay for extra personnel in the health clinic, PPE, testing but also for other costs and lost revenue. With that in mind, I think we will survive this year financially quite well. We really need to move back to a growth mode as soon as possible however.

We, as well as many of the other institutions in Ohio, are really concerned about fall enrollment. Especially since as of yet, we haven't seen a lot of our high school seniors applying for college. Especially concerning for us is there are fewer applications from those students who would normally be coming to us from the six-county region here in southern Ohio. I would like to think that it's probably due to not being able to be in person for long periods of time, guidance counselors being more concerned with those students meeting their graduation requirements, rather than being able to work with them on their college applications. We'll have to keep this in mind as we move along.

We do have some activities set up starting next week. We will be visiting all of the Scioto county schools and passing out Shawnee state T-shirts to all of the seniors. Hopefully this will bring Shawnee State up in their consciousness. We will also be holding a couple of events in February where we'll be inviting superintendents, principals, guidance counselors from the PALS counties - 2 in person, 1 remote - for informational sessions. We hope to learn more about what's going on in the

schools and explore ways we can partner and help those graduating seniors find their way to applying for college.

I also wanted to emphasize to this group how important it is that we begin making modifications to our academic portfolio. This will allow us to offer a set of attractive programs that support the institution's need for growth and also address the needs of our future students, both traditional and non-traditional. I know there has been work going on with proposing new programs here on campus or online. I hope that will continue at a quicker pace as we move into spring semester.

As most of you know, we've accepted the resignation of our Vice President of Finance and Administration. We will be reinstating Dr. Elinda Boyles to fill that position on an interim basis. We have no immediate plans for a search. I've had some recent discussions with Dr. Boyles concerning the budgeting process, which at least in the last couple of years has been somewhat random and maybe lacking. She has indicated to me that she plans to outline that process soon.

The university's Health Clinic is authorized to administer the COVID vaccine, but to date, they've only been administering it to their own personnel as part of phase 1a. We've had very little allocation at this point in time. Currently, the local hospitals, health departments, and pharmacies are administering vaccines. They've already touched on phase 1a and are now working on phase 1b, which is directed at people who are 65 or older. On Friday of last week, we did a dry run for a drive-through vaccination center. This was set up on the access road and included registration sites and vaccine stations behind the ATC, Kricker, and the Health Sciences building. We're hopeful that when phase 1b is finished we'll have the opportunity to offer the vaccine right here on our campus for the community as well as our students and employees.

In terms of state funding, we received great news last Friday. Our state share of instruction, as well as our supplement, will be restored to original levels prior to the five percent cut that the state imposed at the beginning of the fiscal year. Which means, we'll have a little bit more money coming to us through state funding. We also sold the President's house. It went on auction. There were five bids and the highest bid was taken. That transaction should be complete very soon. The city's master plan, that was presented to city council a couple weeks ago, included our plan to reopen 3rd Street and includes a gateway feature at the juncture of 3rd Street and Gay. The Lieutenant Governor visited Portsmouth on Friday and announced a statewide initiative to expand broadband. That project will begin right here in Scioto and Jackson counties. We'll have a grant that will be

extended to broadband providers. We, and I'm sure the Governor's Office, are hopeful that we'll see an impact before too long.

Provost, Sunil Ahuja: Good afternoon everyone and welcome back to a new semester. It's the start of the third week already, I hope it's all going well all things considered. I also want to echo the president's comment again with my appreciation and gratitude for everything that you are doing for the students, as well as for the university.

First of all, we received the enrollment update this morning from the registrar's office. We are, as of today, almost exactly where we were two years ago (spring 2019). Today we have 3239 enrolled students, in spring 2019 we had 3238. This is about 240 down from last year (spring 2020) where we had 3479 students. The good news is that our graduate enrollment, both new as well as continuing, stands at 172 total students. This is up 26 from last year, and last year we were up 26 from the year before. Which means we have consistently seen an increase in graduate enrollment. I think this is a very good sign and points to something promising for us.

This leads me to my second point, which concerns program development and getting back in a growth mode with new opportunities. I think the leader in this area will be graduate programs. These may perhaps be offered online, which will allow us to tap into the working adult market. I think there are a number of good possibilities campus-wide. This is a very good time for us to capitalize on some of these positive developments that we are seeing. I encourage all of you to let me or the associate provost know if you have any suggestions on potential program development. I think there are some good opportunities that we can take to really put the institution in a stronger position for the future.

The current Strategic Plan ends this at the end of this academic year. We will still probably adopt the six goals from the previous Strategic Plan with some adjustments. We are adding a seventh goal, which is diversity and inclusion. As a part of this, there will be a metrics plan which will have the specific projects and responsible parties with deadlines which will enable us to keep track of our progress. I hope to share more details at the next senate meeting. The last thing I will say in reference to the strategic plan is that the broad theme that I see spanning the strategic plan, is program development. Its connection to enrollment, to institutional financial sustainability, and growth for years to come.

I want to officially welcome Dr. Jennifer Pauley as the interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. She took over on January 1. I certainly look forward to working with her and I hope all of you do as well in her new position.

8. Announcements from Senate floor:

Pat Spradlin spoke a bit about the upcoming presentations for Faculty Festival of Achievement. It will be virtual this year. Presentations are scheduled from mid-February through mid-March.

9. Committee and Director Reports

UFS Vice President, Kyle Vick: There was a December OFC meeting, but nothing significant to share.

10. Unfinished Business

None.

11. New Business

I. Curricular Proposals: Just one item on the agenda for approval. Phil Blau made a motion to approve the proposal. Adam Miller seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

12. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting was seconded by Janet Feight at 4:37.