

University Faculty Council Minutes

Thursday, April 22, 2021

2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

ZOOM meeting

Members in Attendance

Seaver = Christopher Doran, Matt Joyner, Jennifer Smith (secretary), Hollace Starr

PGBS = Mark Chun, Bob McQuaid (chair), Richard Walton

GSEP = Veronica Kuhn, Dennis Lowe

CSOL = Shelley Saxer, Mark Scarberry

SPP = Ted McAllister

Admin = Jim Gash, Rick Marrs

MINUTES

University Faculty Council meetings ordinarily consist of discussion of issues of university-wide importance. These minutes may identify issues that have been discussed and may record viewpoints or opinions held by one or more UFC members. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, these minutes do not reflect the views or opinions of the UFC as a body and do not indicate that any consensus was reached among UFC members.

1. **Prayer.** Matt Joyner provided a brief prayer.
2. **COVID-19 Update.**
 - a. **Jim Gash Administrative Summary**
 - i. **Current status.** Pep receives daily information from the county. All indications are that our county will move from the Orange Tier to the Yellow Tier in the next couple of weeks, which would expand the number of permissible activities and raise building capacity allowances. On Jun 15, however, the entire tiered system will be eliminated.
 - ii. **Fall.** Pep expects a full return to on-campus instruction in the Fall (for those schools that typically offer such courses) with a likely mask requirement but a removal of social distancing requirement for those who are vaccinated. Unvaccinated individuals will need to maintain social distance and will only be permitted to live in singles on campus.
 - iii. **Graduation.** Final determinations will be made on Monday.
 - iv. **International Programs.** Summer IPs have been canceled but there is hope that they will be allowed in the Fall.
 - v. **Quarantine.** Statewide recommendation, county-wide requirement, but no enforcement. CA is now 60th in the country for cases/100,000 and CA is 47/58 for all counties for exposure level (good).
 - vi. **Vaccine Policy.** There is a task force in place to determine the campus vaccination policy. 65+ other universities have declared the vaccination “mandatory” for students returning in the fall, assuming the CDC’s approval. And there is still a religious and/or medical exemption.
 - b. **UFC Member response.**

- i. **Dual Modality is hard on faculty.** Faculty who teach face-to-face
 - ii. **International students** pose a difficult problem since they may not have access to vaccinations in their home countries and if are vaccinated here, would not be fully cleared until one or two weeks after their final dose. With the two dose vaccines, it's prohibitively challenging to quarantine people for 5 weeks. With J&J, the quarantine would be only 2.
 - iii. **Pep Vaccine Policy Concerns.**
 - iv. **Population Requirements.** It is unfair to require students to receive vaccinations but not also require it of staff and faculty; however, doing so would be adding a new policy as a condition of employment. We must be careful about being coercive or oversimplifying the decision-making. Regular saliva testing ought to be an option for respecting human dignity while also protecting community. There is still no clear precedence for doing such a thing on the faculty level. (Waiting on a response from Phil Philips.) Reinfection rate for those who were already sick is at <1%.
 - v. **Segregation.** What are the social and/or pedagogical implications of physical segregation?
 - vi. **Legal Concerns.** What about HIPAA, ADA, EEOC? What is the legal framework that allows for proof of vaccination and/or proof of COVID infection?
 - vii. **Ease of Access.** If we make it really easy, then more people will get it who otherwise are on the fence.
 - c. **Action items.** Phil Phillips will find out what the history of the MMR policy adoption is.
3. **Academic Freedom. Discussion led by Jennifer Smith.**
- a. **Content.** After discussion, UFC decided that they would like to adopt the AAUP Academic Freedom Statement but also include framing language that is institutionally and religiously specific, including a rationale for why such a statement is valuable at this time in our history and what intellectual and educational virtues academic freedom ought to serve.
 - b. **Rationale.** A statement is important at this time because people are afraid to speak their minds on campus; there is a courage problem, an ostracism problem, a failure to deal with difference and conflict in a forthright manner problem. Freedom of expression is already well covered by the Leonard Law and the first amendment. But AF is an issue specific to faculty, specifically full-time and T/TT faculty, and therefore appropriate to this committee and university's mission. AAUP's statement is widely used and highly respected. An institutionally specific response can be framed around the CofC principles of non-creedalism, non-denominationalism, and non-institutionalism. Being able to articulate a theological rationale for AF is important since some secular academics do not believe that Christian institutions can have academic freedom and AF, when well supported, enhances the virtues that are necessary for a robust educational environment.
 - c. **Planning.** One or more campus-wide discussions should be organized for 21-22 AY, including potentially the University Conference.
 - d. **Action Item.** Matt Joyner, Mark Scarberry, and Jennifer Smith will put together an AF document for UFC discussion and debate in early summer.
4. **Next Meeting.** Philosophy of Christian mission and academic excellence as framed in university planning documents and review the composition of UFC representation.
- a. **Action Item.** Bob will aggregate necessary data and documents.