

University Faculty Council Minutes

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

ZOOM meeting

Members in Attendance

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

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

GSEP = Dennis Lowe

CSOL = Shelley Saxer, Mark Scarberry

SPP = Ted McAllister

Admin = Jim Gash, Jay Brewster, Lee Kats, Phil Phillips

Absent

Seaver = Hollace Starr

GSEP = Veronica Kuhn

Admin = 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.** Chris Doran provided a brief prayer.
2. **Vaccine policy (currently no mandate). Discussion led by Phil Phillips.**
 - a. **Pepp decision making process.** Prioritization of university objective, which is to get everyone back together. Must take into consideration the fact that there is *no* scenario with 100% vaccination since a mandate would still allow for religious and medical exemption. Key is to figure out whether the the % of people who would not otherwise get a vaccine is meaningful; what is *material* impact/risk? Key to safely gathering is the vaccine not the mandate.
 - b. Decision making has been responsive to amount of knowledge + state and county requirements hence, it has changed from: strongly encourage (at the beginning) → mandate (when state/county/OSHA was going to require extraordinary social distancing measures) → strongly encourage (when those measures were lifted and vaccine showed efficacy).
 - c. **Privacy.** Right now, we are asking but only health office is storing that data. Supervisors should *not* take down names. In fall, vaccination status probably will work on an honor system—those who do not wear masks indoors are doing so as a sign of their status.
 - d. **Campus support or challenge by demographic.** Faculty (88.9%) and staff (64.6%) overwhelmingly support a policy that mandates vaccination; students do not (39.5%).

Decision-making not determined by voting but by the exercise of discretion as to what is best for the campus community and on-going feedback.

- e. **Nationwide trends.** We benchmark against other schools, but apply our own judgment. Nationwide, 506 there are mandating it but there are even more who aren't. 140 CCCU—we're an affiliate--1 of the 140 is mandating it. Many schools (like LMU) are only mandating student vaccinations.
 - f. **Efficacy.** The vaccine is very safe and effective and vaccinated people are not carrying and/or infecting the non-vaccinated. The breakthrough cases is 900 out of 3.3 million=.03%; 90% of those cases were minor.
 - g. **Classroom protocol.** Unvaccinated would still have to wear a mask. Mark Goodman is working on appropriate language about what faculty can use.
 - h. **Risk.** Vaccines are still not fully approved by FDA. Long-term risks are unknown; may show increased heart risk. Some students were very irresponsible this summer and broke quarantine, flew home, had parties, etc. Those students were appropriately sanctioned. Would also have sanctions in place for students who failed to follow protocol in Fall.
 - i. **Looking forward.** A final decision about the mandate could still come later.
3. **Academic Freedom Statement. Discussion led by Jennifer Smith and Mark Scarberry.**
- a. **Organization.** 1) Intro, 2) Adapted AAUP Statement, 3) Interpretation in light of CofC
 - b. **Purpose.** To preserve diverse points of view and search for truth; to help navigate conflicts and set specific standards that can be appealed to; to prevent ostracization of people who express minority points of view; to educate our community about our theological principles; to cultivate academic virtues.
 - c. **Threats to Academic Freedom on an individual level.**
 - i. **by a Dubious Administration.** That's why we have tenure. (cf. hiring protocols that ask for statements of faith-Is it to discern community fit or is it acting creedally, i.e. requiring faculty to swear to certain beliefs?)
 - ii. **from Within-Groups/Mobs.** Groups of academics inside the institution may get together and write letters, etc. but should be careful not to write on behalf of the university and/or any unit of the university (schools, divisions, departments, etc.) (cf. case of letter writing by university groups against school dean) or seek to ostracize members of the community.
 - iii. **from the Outside-Groups/Mobs.** Religious responsibilities vs. scholarly responsibilities (cf. case of religion professor being subjected to letter writing campaign)
 - d. **Threats to Academic Freedom at an institutional level.**
 - i. **from Outside-Organizations.** Accrediting bodies and/or government agencies, CofC, esp. in ambiguity between church activities, convocation, etc. and academic work, organizations that would benefit financially (cf. case of natural science professor being asked to run tests for a company with school imprimature)
 - ii. **[from the Outside-Groups/Mobs.]**
 - e. **Comments about draft language.** Academic freedom is not provisional; faculty must seek to be accurate (i.e. show humility); don't include hiring language that extends beyond by-law requirements.
 - f. **Doesn't currently cover.** Students or staff—these groups should come up with their own statements if they so desire. Freedom of speech—this is already constitutionally protected (cf. case of law school professor appearing in commercial).
 - g. **Next steps.** Should be a Provost's policy after approval at each of the schools through SFS or faculty committees, board approval.

- h. **Budget Realignment (Administrative Summary).** There was no overall net cut to the university budget. There was a target of a 7.5% realignment within the budget aimed primarily at fixing chronic shortfalls in certain line items. Ultimately, the net realignment was 4.3%, which amounted to about \$12.8 million being realigned (largely from non-school areas), including about \$6-7M into Seaver scholarships.

-JatS