

Welfare Council Meeting Minutes

6/2/2020

4:00 pm

Via Zoom: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/93912386193?pwd=K1RDNXNPS0t3Y2NRS2Vub0R6MkxpZz09>

Present: Sylvain Doré, Suzan Alteri, Ray G. Thomas, Jodi Gentry, Leah Rosenberg, Chris Hass, Suzan Alteri, Joe Riley, Laurie Bialosky, Sean Trainor, Sarah Lynne, Kalen Manasco and Ray Issa.

1. Call to Order – Suzan Alteri, 2019-2020 Welfare Council Chair

-The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

2. Approval of 5/11/2020 Minutes

-The minutes were approved.

3. New Business

o Campus Re-opening Planning – Sylvain Doré, Faculty Senate Chair

-This previously unscheduled meeting was called to share information and feedback in the university's efforts to address COVID-19, specifically the proposed [blueprint](#).

-UF HR is working on a manual to share with campus to provide guidance on safety practices during COVID-19. UF Health is also releasing an expanded website tomorrow. The UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website will provide information and answers to common questions.

-The management of classroom best practices were discussed and VP of Strategic Communications & Marketing, Nancy Paton, is working on a central information site for COVID-19 resources to increase transparency and to offer a centralized information repository for students, staff, the community, and faculty.

-Clinical faculty practice challenges during COVID were discussed, including how to best orient students and clearly explain safety steps which must be taken.

-Council discussed faculty's general impression of what Fall classes and campus will look like based on the draft [blueprint](#) document.

-University capabilities and the broad operational logistics of testing students were discussed.

-Colleges are working on remote work location and other employee work plans specific and germane to their college. There will be flexibility for working remotely but it is recognized that the decision-making process is nuanced; Deans will have some latitude to make decisions based on the consideration of individuals' jobs and institutional needs, balanced with personal circumstances.

-County and city masking policies were discussed, as well as how the university can best re-assure and ensure the safety of faculty who have medical conditions. The limited (15-minute) period between classes may make swabbing and temperature checks between classes challenging.

-Classroom occupancy could be reduced to 25 percent capacity if students are spaced eight feet apart.

-Options such as distributing N95 masks for faculty and installing plexiglass barriers

between faculty and students were discussed.

-Not having a vaccine is a key consideration; if the state and nation are 'open on phase number x', the university and employees will need to be flexible enough to adjust and re-open to a 'new normal'.

-The handling of visitors, volunteers, invited guests, and vendors on campus and expectations in those relationships was discussed. There are approximately 50,000 volunteers at UF per year. Operational concerns were discussed, including quarantine expectations and protocol for such visitors as well as all employees.

-Council suggested that the draft proposal: mention that the nose and mouth are to be covered when using masks; may need to add that elevators are to have only one person as a maximum capacity; and successfully addressed alternatives to post-Thanksgiving instruction.

-Additional comments can be sent to reopen@ufl.edu.

-Other concerns which were discussed included:

-COVID policy enforcement issues and possible pushback from students or the community.

-Graduate students and faculty interaction; remote teaching is more time-consuming for faculty and it will be important for colleagues to address the time needed to help students succeed and continue their projects, dissertations, etc. Dr. Andy McCollough, Associate Provost for Teaching and Technology, and the Associate Deans are sharing remote teaching resources with instructors. Mark McCallister, Academic Technology Director, is also looking at which rooms can be utilized as Zoom studios.

-Also discussed was the need for faculty to:

-Utilize the Center for Instructional Technology & Training (CITT), which provides services to the UF community in high quality online course development. Also, the Faculty Update Newsletter announced that faculty stipends are being made available for online course development.

-Encourage the use of telehealth options to assist with individuals' mental health or other areas of concern.

-Be aware of economic disparities which are being amplified during this crisis and direct students to UF resources for help with internet assistance, etc.

-Encourage and help students engage in a culture of caring, especially during this time of crisis.

-Be attentive to the welfare of colleagues and students needing support, particularly given the national social unrest following the George Floyd incident.

-Faculty are currently represented in COVID policy making and planning conversations through task forces and on the managerial group.

-Faculty Senate will continue to engage with State University System (SUS) Chancellor Marhsall Criser through the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates (ACFS) and other SUS colleagues as the SUS works through the COVID-19 crisis.

-The Faculty Senate Chair welcomes suggestions and feedback to assist faculty during the challenging forthcoming academic year.

-This academic year, each Faculty Senate agenda will include a topic related to diversity. Suggestions to include contributions from active and newer campus members, such as VP of Student Affairs, D'Andra Mull, and College of Arts Dean Onye Ozuzu, were made, as well as to host a free speech panel discussion.

4. Adjournment

-The meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.