

Senate Steering Committee Minutes

April 30, 2020

3:00 p.m.

Via Zoom: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/98533787818?pwd=aUZMSGZPTEFvaXBnT1UxQW4yeU01Zz09>

Present: Chris Hass, Suzan Alteri, Hans van Oostrom, Kent Fuchs, Katie Vogel Anderson, Angela Lindner, Hannah Norton, Mike Sagas, Richard Scholtz, Rick Stepp, Sylvain Doré, Romina Gutierrez, Taylor Rose, Laurie Bialosky, Keith Diem, Ana Spiguel, Ray Thomas, Fred Southwick, Ashley Ghiaseddin and Joe Glover.

Call to Order

Ray G. Thomas, Chair

-The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. by Faculty Senate Chair Ray Thomas.

Approve [April 2, 2020 Minutes](#)

Ray G. Thomas, Chair

-The minutes were approved.

Reports

• **Chair's Report**

Ray G. Thomas, Chair

- Security protocols will be again followed for the May 7th Senate meeting.
- The ballot for the Faculty Senate Chair-elect runoff closes on Friday, May 1 @ 5 p.m.
- Thank you to all faculty who contributed to the leave donation program. Over 250,000 hours of leave were donated by faculty and staff.
- At the Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting on Tuesday, the board voted to approve moving the first day of Fall instruction from August 24, 2020 to August 31, 2020.
- The BOT Chair emphasized that this current economic setback will not deter us from reaching our goal of being a top five public university.
- The possibility of Faculty Senate hosting a second Town Hall was discussed, including options of a stand-alone Zoom webinar format (similar to the last one) vs. incorporation of the event into next week's Faculty Senate meeting. The event could focus on specific parts of campus' re-opening, with Fall discussion being more challenging and very less clear than discussions regarding May & June plans. Should the town hall move forward, Dr. Fuchs agreed to participate.
- Faculty Senator and Steering Committee member Dr. Fred Southwick addressed known infection algorithms and the fact that it is currently a moving target. COVID-19 treatment, prevention, and testing were also discussed by committee members.

• **President's Report**

Kent Fuchs, President

- Governor DeSantis' stay at home order expires tomorrow and the university will begin re-opening, with the advantages of owning a world class university hospital, and of having faculty expertise, experience, and knowledge in the areas of virus and infectious diseases.
- UF is fully supportive of bringing employees back safely and in a way which can maximally benefit the community. There will be announcement of test and trace in the next 24 hours and this will be the protocol used by the university to bring individuals back to campus.
- Student quarantine and testing options, and possible employee requirements are being discussed, including a potential Fall requirement to test all students.
- There are currently no age 25 or younger COVID-19 deaths in FL.
- Following a White House meeting on Tuesday, Governor DeSantis announced a 'Phase 1'

reopening plan yesterday and has approved the re-opening of museums, restaurants, beaches, and retail stores, with constraints.

-Risks of a second wave of the virus are being examined and will change dynamics moving forward.

-Ideally all employees will be back to working on campus at the end of May. The President's cabinet is meeting shortly to discuss how to best move forward, including opening the main administrative building, Tigert Hall, first, and then perhaps re-opening offices of cabinet members, Deans, and Department Chairs, with an initially limited number of individuals present in each office.

-Announcements are expected tomorrow from both UF Health and UF COO Charlie Lane.

-VP of Research, David Norton, is working on a plan to re-open the research portion of the university.

-One third of Florida's testing capacity, in terms of people, machinery, and test kits, is at UF.

-UFHealth intends to conduct roughly 5,000 tests per day. It is currently at about a 3,000 per day testing level and is making every effort to ramp up to these numbers.

-The decision of fall re-opening will be a SUS announcement and all SUS schools will proceed uniformly together with following the SUS directive. Decisions regarding the fall semester may not take place until early July, allowing time for more information gathering, although the disadvantage is that delayed decision-making allows for less faculty and student preparation and planning time.

- **Provost's Report**

Joe Glover, Provost

-Yesterday the Provost hosted a day-long retreat via Zoom on the topic of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and initiatives between UF and [NVIDIA](#), which makes AI equipment and computer chips. Approximately 550 participants tuned in to hear speakers from the Dept. of Defense, the Dept. of Energy, and others discuss all aspects of AI and its uses, including its applications in medicine and fighting the corona virus. The CEO of NVIDIA gave a visionary talk about futuristic applications of AI such as tele-presence, the ability to meet as a group in virtual reality and described AI as programs that write programs. Participants commented that it was a true Silicon Valley stream of consciousness.

-Breakout sessions discussed how UF will propagate AI in teaching and classrooms.

-This initiative is expected to supercharge research across campus.

-Next month, UF will be the first in the world and anywhere (among universities, private and public holdings, etc.) to receive the latest AI technology, making it the launchpad and center of AI.

-As UF prepares to get this initiative up and running over the next six months, it has committed to 100 AI-hires.

-The Steering Committee discussed the initiative's potential for major advances in healthcare and inquired about distributing the retreat's webcast link. They also recognized lead retreat moderators Erik Deumens, Director of UF Research Computing, and David Reed, Associate Provost for External Faculty Honors and Awards, who will be contacted to access the recording link.

Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) Awards

**Chris Hass, Associate Provost for
Academic and Faculty Affairs**

-The presentation will name the internal awards supported by the Office of the Provost as well as university and college level awards in the areas of teaching, scholarship, advising, and mentoring, and will highlight other professional development, research, and travel awards.

-Associate Provost Hass has also been addressing concerns about the availability, delays, and suspensions of sabbatical, travel, and other awards affected by COVID-19. The university is flexible and has allowed suspension/delay without issue; however, faculty are asked to be cognizant that there may be some economic or other unforeseen risks in such delays/action.

-Dr. Hass also expressed appreciation to the faculty who continue to be committed to Faculty Senate and successful shared governance during this difficult period. Faculty Senators, committee and council members have responded positively to requests for a number of previously unscheduled meetings, many on short notice; faculty feedback and input on policy and planning is greatly appreciated.

University Press of Florida

Romi Gutierrez, Director
University Press of Florida

-It is the 75th anniversary of the scholarly arm of the University Press of Florida. Celebrations slated for the last week of February were transitioned to online alternatives and will continue into fall. A brief historical overview of the press will be presented at Senate, including: the mission of the program; its participation in a competitive manuscripts process and rigorous peer review of scholarly publications; how the press continues to share knowledge on campus and connects to state residents; and a highlight of the journals publishing program which is five years old and very strong.

-Faculty may contact the press to request a title be made digitally available.

Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (IAC) Report

Mike Sagas, Professor and Chair
Tourism, Recreation & Sport Mgmt. Dept.

-The IAC report will include metrics on the success of the university's student athletes, including GPA's, Academic Progress Rates (APR's), and graduation rates, all of which are trending in a positive direction. The IAC spring agenda has essentially been cancelled. The Steering Committee requested that one slide on expected forthcoming NCAA rule changes be presented to make faculty aware. Anticipated changes which will significantly affect UF and its athletes include transfer rules changes and athletes' ability to profit from/own their images, likeness, and name, resulting in athletes becoming social media influencers and participating in peer advertising. The committee is also interested in hearing feedback from student athletes.

University Curriculum Committee

Angela Lindner, Associate Provost
for Undergraduate Affairs

- [Sustainability and the Built Environment](#)

-This was approved last month by UCC. Every two years the Office of Undergraduate Affairs performs an audit to count the total credit hours of each major, as listed in the catalog, and then reconciles it with what the BOG approves. This addresses such a discrepancy and the request is to remove MAC 1140 as an option in its semester one plan.

-The item was approved.

-In response to an inquiry regarding the later start date of the fall semester (due to COVID-19) and possible conflicts with the state-mandated 220 days of instruction should hurricane days also need to be accommodated this fall, it was re-confirmed that UF has a few buffers. In a worst-case scenario, an exemption could be requested from the Board of Governors while another option is to utilize Saturdays as teaching days.

Council Reports

Welfare Council

Suzan Alteri, Chair

-Much of Monday's meeting was spent discussing the Compensation Committee's proposed faculty titles resolution. Council will meet in May and will forward its resolution feedback to the Steering Committee in the Fall. Council anticipates this resolution will arrive at Senate by October.

-With daycare and schools still closed, the need for re-purposing campus facilities not being used for classroom and use for childcare facilities was discussed at council. This would need to be done while

the university planners familiarize itself with guidance and directives from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and other local, state, and federal regulatory agencies. Council recognizes this need as Governor DeSantis has said that schools are still to remain closed. Summer camps and daycare also appear to be impacted as no re—opening plans for such entities have been announced.

-Council Chair and Associate Provost Hass will contact VP of Human Resources, Jodi Gentry, to inquire how faculty can participate on a task force she is spear-heading to address these childcare issues.

Infrastructure Council

Richard Scholtz, Chair

-Council was to hear from Vice President for Planning, Design, and Construction, Carlos Dougnac, about the campus master plan timelines but the meeting was postponed until the fall.

Budget Council

Ashley Ghiaseddin, Chair

-Council talked about the COVID-19 pandemic and what considerations could be made by each college in preparation for any possible budgetary shortfalls. Council will further discuss this in the fall when the university has a clearer idea of budget parameters.

-Council also discussed divesting as a university and what that actually means (i.e. what companies state through their Public Relations teams vs. through their legal depts.) and may ask Andrew Winden, UF Associate Professor of Law, to provide an overview of his corporate securities lecture recently given at the law school conference.

Academic Policy Council

Hans van Oostrom, Chair

-Council has met twice, with one additional meeting held on April 6 to discuss S/U grading and drop policy clarifications. On April 17, council met to discuss moving the start of fall semester forward one week. Council agreed with moving the first day of Fall instruction from August 24, 2020 to August 31, 2020.

-Council has another meeting scheduled next week to discuss faculty use of Canvas and a combination, joint & dual degree policy. Council appreciates the opportunity for faculty input.

-Dr. van Oostrom will chair council next year as well.

-Dr. Hass thanked the willingness of this council to meet frequently and on such late notice.

Research and Scholarship Council

Hannah Norton, Chair

-Council will have its final meeting of the academic year on May 12.

-VP of Research, David Norton, updated council on the state of affairs under COVID-19 in the university's research realm.

-Duane Mitchell, the new UF Assistant Vice President for Research and Director of the UF Clinical and Translational Science Institute, shared pilot translational research award information and COVID-19 task force information with council. Over 30 applications have been received thus far for COVID-19-related research awards.

-The IRB, online Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC) submissions system all are continuing on a regular schedule in a primarily remote fashion.

-At the next meeting, UF Research Integrity Officer Cassandra Farley will be presenting the new research integrity policy, which is an existing regulation. Council will review the policy which is being re-worked to better align with peer institutions. The related regulation was reviewed at the last University Constitution & Regulations Committee (UCRC) meeting. The Faculty Senate Parliamentarian requested that 'BOT Regulation' be added to the Senate agenda so that these details may be provided to Senators. It was agreed that the UCRC chair will be contacted to present this item to Senate next week.

Approve [May 7, 2020 Faculty Senate Agenda](#)

Ray G. Thomas, Chair

-The agenda was approved with the addition of the BOT regulation as an Information Item.

Adjournment

-The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Ray G. Thomas, Chair