Washington University in St. Louis
Minutes of Faculty Senate Council Meeting
September 22, 2020


Guests: -- Erin McGlothlin, Michael Kinch, Sheryl Mauricio

The meeting was called to order at 2:32 pm.

1. Approval of Minutes

Meeting minutes from June 18 were approved.

2. Chancellor’s Report—Andrew Martin, Chancellor

The Chancellor started by expressing gratitude. Last Monday resumed all education programs. He recalled the Founders Days speech by Thomas Eliot, 1970: “The University still stands: and, as it always has, it stands for the unterrified and unconfined search for truth.”

The Chancellor remarked that in this moment in time, in the midst of this global pandemic and a turbulent moment in our nation’s history, I am confident that our university will continue with great success, because we stand for truth, for science, for rigor, and for public service.

Some additional updates from the Chancellor: Things are going well. The biggest risk we face now is off campus. Our students are generally reinforcing messages. Testing has been going well, using a saliva test. We have tested roughly 600-800 students. Our positivity rate is roughly .02%.

We have two administrative searches ongoing: the next Vice Chancellor, and the Vice Chancellor of Public Affairs. We are delaying the search for the Vice Chancellor and Chief Information Officer, given the significant changes in IT and the Myday project. We will brief the FSC more on that next time.

Questions and Answers:

Q: Where are we on enrollment?
A: We are not certain. UG tuition deposits are not due until the end of the month; so this is somewhat dynamic. It looks good. Can we say it is not catastrophic? Yes. For some of our programs it has been near catastrophic. For our undergraduate programs, we are Scenario B. For some graduate programs we are in worse shape.

Q: How does the COVID dashboard look?
A: We have done entry testing and produced highly aggregated data. Next week we will be publishing it in a disaggregated way, displaying day by day data. Our students did what we asked them to do. We have been grateful for all the planning we did. We tried really hard. Marion and
Beverly produced extraordinary leadership, leading a 150-200 people group, leveraging the expertise of faculty, staff.

Q: Is there some misbehavior in the campus residential living arrangements?
A: Yes, but we are trying to walk a line here and it seems to be working well.

Q: For the cleaning staff, what is the testing protocol?
A: We are not performing regular testing for employees. We are poised to step in at any point when exposure happens.

Q: A comment on the medical faculty and WashU employees, dealing with the public, youth sports, some have gotten sick, mental health is tenuous.
A: Chancellor could not agree more. Faculty have come together. Point well taken.

Q: Are there issues with the potential mental health of students?
A: Provost: Student Affairs team is working on this, concerned about students. There is a telephone call system, any time direct counseling. There is regular discussion of this with the Deans. There are some challenges: 15-25% depending on academic not in State of MO, because of licensing requirement; we are advocating for changes

3. Chair’s Report -- Vijay Ramani, Chair

Chair Ramani welcomed the new Senators. He reviewed the busy summer the FSC had, including reviewing Title X regulations changes, budget changes, COVID-19, and other works. In the Chronicle of Higher Education, there is much angst about higher education; here we have broadly good engagement and a good partner with the Provost and Chancellor. This year we will launch a Gender Pay Equity and Racial Pay Equity study; to be launched as soon as the FSC makes the request. A lingering issue is what the Faculty should do with Faculty Awards; reimagining how this goes forward.

4. Student Vote 2020 -- Erin McGlothlin, Chair of Germanic Languages & Literatures and Professor of German and Jewish Studies

Professor McGlothlin presented “Student Vote 2020” with students and staff from Danforth Center staff. The initiative exists because it is difficult to encourage students to vote. Joint with the Gephardt Institute, the initiative is designed to increase registration and turnout. The website will be shared with the FSC. The students encourage the FSC to share this with faculty colleagues, and the “Help Students vote at WashU” document. Also discussed was the idea of making alternative arrangements for classes; asking any faculty to move to asynchronous on election day. Many faculty have pledged support already. In addition, there is a necessity for poll workers – the initiative is encouraging students to be poll workers.

5. COVID 19 Vaccine Presentation -- Michael Kinch Associate Vice Chancellor and Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics and Director, Centers for Research Innovation in Biotechnology & Drug Discovery

Professor Kinch presented the progress on vaccines. In a nutshell, we are at phase 3 of clinical trials, done about 10 years of work in last 6 months; the progress is amazing. In general, 8-9 of the trials are in phase 3, being monitored for safety, on track for 26 months.
Q: Will immunity wane after 3 months?
A: We don’t know how long immunity will last – how durable. We need to prepare for worst case scenario... do we have back up plan? We need to make sure vaccine is safe, effective and durable. The logistics are difficult: make 7.5 billion vials.

Q: Will it be ready end of 2021 or early 2022?
Q: It will be similar to SARS. We need to know what to communicate. Public wants an answer; but we do a terrible job communicating to them. Need to be transparent including I don’t know.

6. Student Code Update -- Sheryl Mauricio, Interim Executive Director, Residential Life

A PowerPoint was presented (available on the website).

Q: Have there been any expulsions or suspensions yet?
A: No expulsions, suspensions yet

Q: Can we rely on honors reporting?
A: It is informal at first, have a conversation first, immediate to HR.

Q: The students feeling isolated, depressed. Mental health is an issue. What is being done?
A: We continue to try to support our students.

Q: Given the election results, are we concerned?
A: This summer has been active... WashU Acknowledgement and Pledge: https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/sites.wustl.edu/dist/d/2605/files/2020/07/Community-Pledge-and-Policy-Acknowledgment-for-Students-2.pdf

COVID-19 Concerns Portal

7. Other Business

None.

8. Executive Session -- Vijay Ramani

An executive session started at 4:23 pm.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm
Respectfully submitted,
Timothy McBride, Secretary