

University Faculty Meeting

Held virtually via Blackboard Collaborate

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March 27, 2020

12:00 – 1:00 PM

Agenda:

- 1) Provost update on active conversations re COVID-19 (**Noel Painter**)
- 2) Brown Center for Faculty Innovation and Excellence: planning for 2020-21 (**Noel Painter**)
- 3) Faculty Senate By-Laws: proposed changes (**Sven Smith**)
- 4) Tenure and Promotion policy: proposed changes (**Kimberly Reiter**)
- 5) Panel on the state of university operations in certain areas (**Lua Hancock, VP CLaSS; Joel Bauman, VP Enrollment Management; Jose Bernier, AVP IT; Bob Huth, CFO**)

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 noon

President Libby thanked everyone for efforts they have undertaken to enable students to complete the academic program for this year.

I. State of the University (Painter)

Provost Painter noted the ongoing challenges that everyone is experiencing, those that are not only Stetson related, but those that people are feeling within their families, health stresses, financial stresses, etc. We've all been working through shifting responsibilities, we all are getting used to a new normal. Provost Painter expressed a huge gratitude to professional staff that continue to work to help keep the University operating, including IT staff, student employment, library staff, and others.

A notice was sent out regarding the move to only essential staff reporting to campus, effective March 30, prompted by a shelter-in-place order issued by Pinellas County. Faculty, if providing distance education to your students, or completing your research or creative activity, demands that you have access to Stetson spaces, then you are considered essential personnel and you may come to campus. You should also be mindful of the seriousness of the situation that we currently face; if you are able to complete your teaching and research remotely, you should do so.

Provost Painter announced that all study abroad students have been brought home with the exception of one student whose circumstances are beyond our control. Stetson continues to support that student and their family.

Admissions is no longer doing on-campus tours, they are shifting to virtual tours. Hatter Saturday will be held in a different way, which will be communicated later.

II. Policies and other actions (Painter)

A notification was sent to students regarding a cultural credit waiver for spring/summer graduates in 2020. We will still offer select virtual cultural credits to enable continuing students to advance their requirements toward their graduation, following the same approval process as we have in regular semesters.

It has not yet been communicated, but we will be extending the deadline of pass/fail and course drop to the last regular class day of the semester: April 29. We feel this is important to support our students as they also undergo a radical change to their coursework.

International experiences for summer starting on or before June 30 will be cancelled or postponed. This was not an easy decision, we know it impacts many including faculty who plan for summer grants and summer research. We will communicate more on this shortly.

III. Future considerations (Painter)

There are other policies under consideration for which we don't have concrete answers. For example, altering the pass/fail policy under review, this is not a small decision, we will need the help of others to help define what the best decision is. Additionally, we are considering what happens with international /domestic travel after June 30, on-campus experiences like camps, etc. We are just finding the bandwidth to discuss those decisions. Conversations are ongoing, we hope to have more info soon. We are also discussing the policies around tenure and promotion clocks with the deans. We are aware of how these unusual times can be impacting research, conference presentations, etc. in which you may have planned to participate. Finally, we will be addressing the recommendations made regarding student evaluations for the spring 2020 semester.

IV. Senate by laws (Smith)

Sven Smith, Faculty Senate Parliamentarian discussed four proposed changes to the faculty senate by-laws. These require communication prior to a vote to the faculty at large. The proposed changes were sent to *faculty discuss* and have been approved by the faculty senate, so we are presenting them here. Faculty will vote on these changes at the April 2020 faculty meeting. These changes are attached to the minutes.

V. Tenure and promotion (Reiter)

Kimberly Reiter, Faculty Senate Chair reviewed policy changes that have been sent to faculty regarding tenure and promotion. Two of these three changes were supported by the senate. These changes are attached to the minutes.

VI. Brown Center administrative structure (Painter)

Provost Painter discussed possible plans regarding the future administration of the Brown Center for 2020-21, which will include the appointment of a faculty director and appointments of faculty fellows responsible for different areas of leadership. Those areas could include conferences and colloquia, leadership, new faculty orientation and adjunct development, equity and inclusion, scholarship and publications, and other areas. Provost Painter will send out a form requesting nominations, including self-nominations, for any of the areas discussed. A small group will help identify who the constituents will be.

VII. Panel discussion (Hancock, Huth, Bernier, Bauman)

Lua Hancock thanked everyone for their assistance in this challenging time. She noted that there are approximately 450 students on campus. Those students will be moved into spaces with individual bathrooms and suite-style or single rooms to reduce cross-contamination possibilities. Both the Health and Counseling departments are open and sessions can be conducted over the phone or in person. These resources are not just for students, they can also be used by staff and faculty.

Bob Huth thanked the faculty for their agility, creativity and hard work in keeping the academic program going. This has helped Stetson to not have to refund tuition for all of our students, which would have been a big blow to our finances. Stetson is strong, and can continue on throughout the year. Stetson has refunded dining costs to students. As noted, this is different than our hurricane events, we are still keeping operations running. There are approximately 600 people still working to keep the program going. We want to keep everyone safe, we are using the Department of Labor guidance, we have added sick leave (2 days) if anyone is feeling ill, and 14 days if anyone has COVID-19.

Jose Bernier discussed the IT operations, the helpdesk is increasing their hours of operations, helping faculty recording classes and helping everyone manage the changes. Some teams are working remotely. The teams have resolved more than 1100 tickets over 15 days. It has been all hands on deck to answer questions and engage with students. OOLET will continue to offer training to assist faculty. This has been a rapid transition and learning curve, IT will offer group and one-on-one sessions. A few tips - wired connections work better than WIFI. Also, watch out for phishing and scam emails, scammers are trying to take advantage of people's uncertainty by sending COVID-19 spam emails. IT will send out a 3-question survey regarding technology they provide and support.

Joel Bauman discussed changes to the admissions practices. If faculty would like to help support recruitment in a remote, digital format the faculty admissions committee has volunteered to promote Stetson. Admissions has curtailed visits in the last week, there is a virtual tour available through the website. Synchronous, live, virtual sessions that families can log into are also available; they can host up to 999 people. Enrollment Management is working to identify ways to move Hatter Saturday into the virtual landscape. How do we paint the vision of a robust campus experience when on-campus activities remain seriously curtailed?

Provost Painter took questions via chat and recognized a few faculty for closing remarks on the university committee survey and the faculty satisfaction survey.

Provost Painter noted his desire for faculty to take care of themselves. Try to retain personal connections with your colleagues that you would normally see during the day. We will not always be in this environment or under this umbrella. You are an amazing faculty, support yourselves and do well for yourselves.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10pm