

Minutes for the Faculty Affairs Committee Meeting  
Hofstra University Senate  
April 22nd, 2020

1. The meeting began with Bill Caniano announcing to the committee that Michael Heiss was taking over as interim chair while Rina Hirsch was on maternity leave.
2. The committee's primary order of business was to discuss the University's contingency plans regarding the effects of Covid-19 on university operations and faculty impact.
3. It was noted that adjunct faculty from some departments had not received communications from the provost's office, and other adjunct faculty acknowledged that those communications have been directed to clutter files.
4. There was a request for follow up with the deans of the individual colleges to inform instructors formally about summer courses and if all summer courses would be instructed on line or if there were still expectations for in-person classes?
  - a. A question was raised about how could summer classes be taught in-person but then possibly return to online in the fall?
5. Suggestions for the SEC and the Faculty Leadership Team to consider for the university's contingency plan:
  - a. An Online "Gap Year" - Prospective students would take a "gap year" and begin/resume courses in Fall 2021, but during the 2020-2021 academic year, students would be able to engage with faculty and the university remotely.
    - i. Suggestions included having a "pre-university 101" style structure where students would participate in online discourse regarding common readings, introduction to college life, research methods, and other preparations that often happen during the first year's acclimation.
    - ii. Blackboard and other online resources would be employed to maintain engagement with prospective/incoming students.
  - b. The University should use the online university experience/atmosphere to cater to older students/adults who might be interested in "continuing education."
    - i. With the emphasis on "self-improvement" happening during social isolation/quarantine, catering to adults who might wish to further their education/gain a new degree/use institutional-provided education credits would be a potential market to engage actively.
    - ii. Adults are less likely to be grade-paranoid/conscious because many are already established in careers and/or are looking for skills and education more than maintaining a GPA for graduate school or seeking primary employment.
  - c. Team Teaching with larger classes
    - i. Considering the C & E model, some courses could be created/instructed with a multitude of faculty creating lecture modules for larger lecture groups and then instructors/faculty take responsibility for small recitation groups.
  - d. Splitting the semester into micro-sessions:
    - i. Splitting the semester into two sessions, a Fall 1 and Fall 2, could allow students to take classes in smaller blocks, easing the online education burden.

1. This could also provide for online instruction that then transitions to in-person and vice-versa.
6. Questions raised during the committee meeting for future consideration:
- a. What are the timetables administration is considering for formal announcements for summer courses and fall courses?
  - b. How will Hofstra address the issue of possibly returning to a regional school? Do we advertise to the local communities, whose students are returning from being away at school, or do we continue to be a national school that uses online to advertise to out-of-state students?
  - c. How do we address the challenges of losing international students who will no longer be able to attend?
  - d. Faculty who will be expected to teach online in the fall are looking for maximum notice so they can plan courses accordingly.
    - i. It was acknowledged that the two-week shift to online courses was an act of triage, however online courses for the fall would be seen not as triage but as proper distance-learning courses and would come with the expectations of a proper online course.
    - ii. Will online courses be larger sections than in-person sections?
      1. If so, would team teaching be considered an option?
      2. Could team teaching help address the challenges of underenrollment?
  - e. Questions specifically regarding Health studies students:
    1. How will the university address the in-person clinical hours that students in health studies are required to have before they can sit for certifications?
    2. Students have expressed a disinterest in shadowing healthcare professionals in-person during the pandemic, and likewise healthcare professionals have expressed a disinterest in being shadowed, considering the lack of PPE and other constraints.
    3. Who will oversee health students' usage of telehealth consults?
  - f. What are the pros and cons of these initiatives/options? Will faculty see the cost/benefit or pros/cons of the decisions the university makes?
  - g. How will the Late Fall / Winter be affected if we are in-person instructing in the beginning of the Fall semester and then are forced to transition back online due to resurgence of infection?
  - h. How will the university employ social distancing measures in classroom spaces that are small and cannot accommodate spacing guidelines?
    1. How can we offer face to face classes with social distancing protocols?
  - i. How will the university address the housing and social aspects of the university according to social distancing guidelines?
  - j. Does it make sense to even hope for face to face instruction if the semester is forced to transition back to online OR if the semester begins online, then transitions to in-person and then is forced back to online? (bookending)
  - k. Questions about faculty compensation arose - they were deferred to Elisabeth Ploran and the union.

- l. What is the legal exposure of the university regarding students requesting refunds/discounts for online classes? Has the university discussed the lawsuits currently being faced by other universities across the nation?
  - m. How will the university address the rampant cheating and academic dishonesty occurring in online classes?
7. Contingency Plans of other Universities across the United States:
- a. Boston University - announced the near certainty of having its Fall 2020 semester online completely
    - i. The university has created 5 works groups to address the online concerns of specific areas, with each working group made up of subject matter experts:
      - 1. Remote learning
      - 2. Graduate programs
      - 3. Undergraduate programs
      - 4. Research
      - 5. Residential Life
  - b. NYIT - Expanding their online resources with plans to be online for the Fall 2020 semester
  - c. Johns Hopkins University - Planning to begin online with a planned move to in-person if the health landscape is safe. Recognizes that some students will not be able to return to campus, and will offer hybrid/online options for students that cannot attend in-person
    - i. Offered incoming 2020 students a deferment to the Spring 2021 semester, potentially foregoing an incoming Fall class.
    - ii. Recognizes a large % of students attend from overseas and will not be able to attend in person, and does not want to begin instruction online.
    - iii. Johns Hopkins University employs a “veiled” grading policy for first-year students who are taking core curriculum courses. Students receive a “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory” for credit but do not earn a GPA grade, allowing students to adjust to the rigors of university education without grade pressure.
      - 1. It was mentioned that this could be a good selling point for Hofstra and something to consider.
  - d. San Diego Community College system - Completely online. The system will be reducing faculty to Tenured and Tenure-Track faculty only.
  - e. Fairleigh Dickinson University - All Fall 2020 Courses will be online
  - f. Purdue University - Expects Fall 2020 to be completely online
  - g. University of Louisville - Online primarily with a Face-to-Face option for graduate coursework in lab/clinical environments
  - h. Michigan State University - Announced a beginning online with a potential return to Face to Face at 7 weeks based on the health landscape.

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