

Secretary of the University Advisory Committee

Minutes of November 10, 2020

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Present: Karen Fournier (Chair), Janelle Stewart, Rashmi Rama, Jenny Rickard, , Nadeem Aslam, Kincaid Brown, Elena Gallo (SACUA Liaison), Lakshmi Ganesan, Sally Churchill

Absent: Grace Wu, Satish Narayanaswamy Jeremy Neal-Mann, Essie Li, Emily Campbell (Excused)

8:09: Chair Fournier called the meeting to order.

Chair Fournier provided a brief overview of the agenda.

Chair Fournier acknowledged the challenges to student mental health and physical well-being with the absence of spring break.

There have also been letters from parents who are disappointed about the de-densification of the dorms. The decision was made to reduce dorms to single occupancy, and to only permit students to live there with an identified need.

Participating in courses remotely has been difficult for some students in the School of Music, Theatre and Dance.

Asynchronous options were discussed.

A couple of free days have been incorporated into the academic calendar mid-week so that travel would be discouraged.

Faculty challenges were also acknowledged. This makes it challenging for faculty to be able to help students. Faculty are also needing to power through the situation. The length of the situation without an end in sight really weighs on people.

It was acknowledged that the experience at Michigan is more than just education, but is also the experience of engaging with each other and with everything campus has to offer.

A member indicated that connecting with other students virtually is socially riskier than in-person interactions.

Faculty have been adding assignments in between classes. It would be helpful for students to have a more predictable schedule.

8:28 Preparedness for Spring, Summer, and Fall 2021

Planning is handled a semester at a time.

Parents have been complaining about their kids needing to come home, and some kids don't want to go home.

Some classes really need to be taught in person, and some people really need to be here.

There was a suggestion about humanizing what faculty are doing to manage their work – “a day in the life” to show how faculty are giving it their all. Faculty are here whether the students are in person or not.

A lot of time and energy went into the Winter 2021 decision. The decision was made in the midst of changing circumstances.

Sally reported on the change in the Board of Regents including the defeat of Shauna Ryder Diggs and the election of Sarah Hubbard. The Regents have lost a medical doctor from the Board. The Board will have 6 Democrats and 2 Republicans. Most decisions are not partisan.

Sally gave an update on the Regents' hiring of a consulting firm to address WilmerHale recommendations.

This could be an agenda item for the December meeting.

It may be possible to report on improvements to process.

9:00 Vaccine

Distribution plans are unknown at this time. The thought is that front line workers in the health system will have priority. It will likely be a long time before a vaccine is broadly available.

Matters Arising: Update on the Regents; Update on WilmerHale consultancy activities

9:07: Chair Fournier adjourned the meeting.