

## Academic Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC) Minutes

April 14, 2021  
8:00 am – 9:30 am  
Zoom

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Approved: June 1, 2021

**Attending:** Kanakadurga Singer (Chair), John Pasquale, Annalisa Manera, Rachel Goldman, Michael Hess, Lola Eniola-Adefeso, Rebekah Modrak, Mark Rosentraub, Priti Shah, William Schultz, Sergio Villalobos, MaryJo Banasik, Elizabeth Devlin

**Absent:** Chitra Subramanian

**Guests:** Provost Susan Collins, Christine Gerdes, Special Counsel to the Provost, Tami Strickman, Associate Vice President for Institutional Equity, Office for Institutional Equity

8:02 Chair Singer called the meeting to order.

### **I. OIE Discussion:**

- A. Provost Collins introduced Tami Strickman, Associate Vice President for Institutional Equity, Office for Institutional Equity.
- B. Umbrella Policy feedback and next steps:
  - i. Received feedback via zoom meetings, presentations, direct email, and the Qualtrics link.
  - ii. Feedback on the interim policy has been split in the areas that are going well and in areas that they would like to see change.
    1. Individuals with reporting obligations, people either feel that everyone should have reporting responsibilities or feel that they should be able to go to faculty and have private conversations without triggering any reporting obligations. The feedback has been a mix of faculty and staff.
    2. The hearing model vs. the single investigator model feedback is split. People either are in favor of a hearing process, or those that do not want to go through the process that is like a judicial hearing and would prefer to follow the single investigator model.
    3. The majority are in favor of an appeal process for both the hearing and single investigator model.
    4. There are advisors for students that are external attorneys engaged by the university, and employee advisors are trained volunteers that are part of the university community that have volunteered to serve as advisors, they are not attorneys.
      - a. The feedback from AAAC was that all university advisors should be trained attorneys.
      - b. Individuals involved in employment hearings that have not used university provided advisors have at times brought their own external attorneys or paralegals.
      - c. The case manager has reported that university provided advisors that have been used have received positive feedback.
    5. Committee questions:
      - a. It was asked whether the gender balance and diversity of the university provided attorneys might influence the decision of individuals to opt out of using these resources because of lack of representation.
        - i. They will investigate the diversity of this group and provide the committee with this information.
      - b. Committee members asked the reason for having attorneys for students and not for employees.
        - i. It was part of a policy that required the university to implement this process.
      - c. Committee members expressed concerns over the single investigator model and one member suggested a hybrid model.
        - i. Ms. Strickman explained although there is a primary investigator that is taking the lead and is the main point of contact for witnesses and advisors, there are review processes in place. The preliminary report is created and available for review by all parties. All parties have an opportunity to review all evidence submitted during the investigation. The preliminary report is reviewed by at least one associate director in OIE and Elizabeth Seeney.

C. Next steps:

- i. Guidepost Solutions has provided OIE some recommendations based on their meetings and feedback with various campus stakeholders.
  - ii. OIE is monitoring potential changes coming from the national administration as it announced plans to engage current national administration members to review current policy/regulations.
  - iii. Once all the feedback has been collected the task team will incorporate some appropriate changes to send to the president for approval.
- D. OIE Advisory Committee
- i. The deadline has been extended for nominations.
  - ii. The Committee will include three sub-groups of students, faculty, and staff that will meet separately and then together quarterly.
  - iii. Chair Singer will compile any additional committee questions and send to Tami Stickman after the meeting.

II. **COVID Vaccination/Return to Campus**

Provost Collins requested the committee's feedback on the pros/cons of UM mandating vaccines for students living in the residence halls or for all students.

- A. Committee members indicated that they agreed with mandating vaccines for students living in the residence halls. Members also indicated that they would agree with mandating vaccines for anyone that will come to campus with the caveat that it was available to everyone who wanted it and considering that exceptions may be made for those with religious or medical reasons.
- B. Provost Collins requested the committee's feedback on how to increase the comfort level of faculty returning to campus.
- C. Recommendations from the committee:
  - i. Communications on contingency plans in place if there are outbreaks and immediate implementation and timeline.
  - ii. Offer opportunities for in-person faculty engagement with their students, colleagues, and staff.
  - iii. Posted information about capacity and air circulation rates and determining the length of time to safely occupy a space.
  - iv. Providing microphones for faculty teaching while wearing a mask.
    1. Provost Collins indicated that fall classes will be primarily conducted in person with safety protocols in place with units planning for distancing of three feet.
    2. Provost Collins responded that plans could be developed to gradually allow for more social opportunities for members of the university community.

**9:02 Provost Collins and Christine Gerdes left the meeting.**

III. **Senate Assembly AAAC Presentation Discussion**

- A. Chair Singer is completing the year end committee report, and the committee discussed future/ongoing topics for the committee to continue to investigate.
- B. The committee recommended researching ways to effectively communicate to the incoming AAAC chair the committee's work to date to move the committee forward and ensure continuity.
- C. Chair Singer requested members that have interest in chairing AAAC to please submit their request to her.
- D. Chair Singer thanked the committee members for their participation and contribution to the work of AAAC.

9:30 The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Elizabeth Devlin  
Faculty Senate Office