

JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY SENATE
The University of Oklahoma (Norman campus)
Regular session – September 14, 2020 – 3:30 p.m. – via Zoom

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Note: The remarks of the Senators and others are summarized and not verbatim. A recording of this meeting is available by appointment in the Faculty Senate office.

The Faculty Senate was called to order by Professor Amy Bradshaw, Chair.

PRESENT: Allen, Anderson, Benjamin, Bergey, Bradshaw, Burns, Butler, Cline, Cryer, Cuccia, Dee, Dunn, Edwards, Fuenzalida, Hambright, Hoagland, Hougen, Hsieh, Jervis, Jiran, Kornelson, Lai, Lifset, Lyst, McCarthy, Miller, Moore-Russo, Mortimer, Muller, Natale, Nollert, Olufowote, Randall, Raymond, Riggs, Rubenstein, Schmeltzer, Schwartz, Shehata, Sikavitsas, Steele, Stetson, Teodoriu, Tepker, Wang, Weaver, Worley, Zhu

Provost's Representative: Jill Irvine
ISA representative(s): Christopher Cook
SGA Representative(s): ---
Guests: Lee Camargo-Quinn, Colin Fonda

ABSENT: Parsons, Remling, Stock

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APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

The Faculty Senate Journal for the regular session of May 4, 2020 was approved without revisions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A list of the Faculty Senate members is attached. The new members were introduced at the meeting.

The regular meetings of the Faculty Senate for 2020-21 will be held at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom on the following Mondays: September 14, October 12, November 9, December 14, January 25 (tentative), February 8, March 8, April 12, and May 10.

The Senate Executive Committee elected Rick Tepker (Law) as Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate and Regular Faculty.

The Faculty Senate invites faculty to attend the State of the University Address with President Joseph Harroz, Jr. on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. Join Zoom Meeting at <https://oklahoma.zoom.us/j/92635308367?pwd=aDIMNGRRUzh6K3VHay9FbEFHbGt4dz09>, Passcode: G#0i&s7Y

The summary record of the disposition by the administration of Faculty Senate actions for September 2019 to August 2020 is attached.

The 2020-21 list of faculty appointments to committees is available on the Faculty Senate website at <http://facultysenate.ou.edu/commem20.html>.

The Faculty Senate is sad to report the death of retired faculty member Jim Artman (Modern Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics) on July 19, 2020.

SENATE CHAIR'S REPORT, by Prof. Amy Bradshaw

The Senate Chair's Report was distributed to all regular faculty members prior to this meeting along with the meeting agenda; it is attached. Prof. Bradshaw asked if there were questions or comments about any of the items in the report. There were none.

REMARKS BY HUMAN RESOURCES STAFF CONCERNING 2021 BENEFITS

Prof. Bradshaw introduced Lee Camargo-Quinn, Assistant Director for Benefits and Colin Fonda, Associate Director of Total Rewards, from Human Resources. Ms. Camargo-Quinn addressed the Senate about the 2021 Benefits plan for the Norman Campus.

Ms. Camargo-Quinn said that we are in the midst of the ever-evolving COVID climate, and yet, even before that, higher education was already seeing fundamental, disruptive change. She noted that at OU, we have kept tuition and fees flat for three straight years while state appropriations have fallen, and our fixed costs have increased. Given the current state, the OU Board of Regents gave Human Resources a charge to ensure that benefits provided to faculty and staff are not materially outside our market peers. The Regents asked Human Resources to evaluate all benefit groups, active and retiree, to identify above-market gaps, and to propose solutions which will align OU with the market. The Regents also requested that the proposed medical plan design and contribution structure be consistent across the three campuses.

Ms. Camargo-Quinn said that the first step was to determine whether we were materially above market or out of market on our active employee benefits amounts or structure. HR determined that our current health plan design is well within the market range. However, OU is an outlier in terms of OU expense

and employee cost structure. They found that employees with employee-only coverage pay a much lower portion of health insurance premiums than peers, employees with family coverage pay a much higher portion of healthcare premiums than peers, and that of the peer institutions surveyed, OU is one of the only employers with more than one contribution ‘tier’. The Norman Campus currently has a six-tier salary-stratified medical premium contribution structure while the Health Science Center has a three-tier structure.

Pending Regents approval, the highlights of the 2021 Benefits plan are:

- Both NC and HSC will continue with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma (BCBS) as the health plan administrator.
- There will be changes to the Plan Design in terms of deductibles, out-of-pocket maxima, co-payments, and co-insurance.
- All campuses will move to a one-plan design and to a common three-tier medical insurance premium contribution structure for 2021, and subsequently to a one-tier structure in 2022. Rates will be released soon.
- Change of dental plan administrator from Delta Dental to Blue Cross Blue Shield.
- Change of vision plan to MetLife.

Ms. Camargo-Quinn said that by aligning the plan design, OU is promoting uniformity and consistency across our campuses as well as leveraging economies of scale. If we did nothing, our medical insurance costs would increase 11.1%, but by moving to a common plan the increase will only be 6.3%.

2021 MEDICAL PLAN DESIGN CHANGES

NORMAN 2020 TIER STRUCTURE		ALL CAMPUS 2021 TIER STRUCTURE	
Tier 1 - \$30,000 or Below		Tier 1 = \$41,999.99 or below	
Tier 2 - \$30,000.01 to \$41,999.99		Tier 2 = \$42,000 - \$64,999.99	
Tier 3 - \$42,000 to \$59,999.99		Tier 3 = \$65,000 or above	
Tier 4 - \$60,000 to \$99,999.99			
Tier 5 - \$100,000 to \$184,999.99			
Tier 6 - \$185,000 and above			

HSC 2020 TIER STRUCTURE		ALL CAMPUS 2021 TIER STRUCTURE	
Tier 1 = \$50,000 or below		Tier 1 = \$41,999.99 or below	
Tier 2 = \$50,000.01 - \$100,000.00		Tier 2 = \$42,000 - \$64,999.99	
Tier 3 = \$100,000.01 and Up		Tier 3 = \$65,000 or above	

2021 MEDICAL PLAN DESIGN CHANGES

PLAN PROVISIONS	CURRENT NORMAN PLAN DESIGN		2021 ALL CAMPUS PLAN DESIGN		
	PPO PLAN	HDHP	PPO PLAN		HDHP
	BLUE CHOICE NETWORK	BLUE CHOICE NETWORK	BLUE PREFERRED NETWORK	BLUE CHOICE NETWORK	BLUE CHOICE NETWORK
	IN-NETWORK	IN-NETWORK	IN-NETWORK	IN-NETWORK	IN-NETWORK
Annual Deductible Individual / Family	\$750 / \$1,500	\$1,750 / \$3,500	\$1,000 / \$2,000	\$2,000 / \$4,000	\$3,000 / \$6,000
Copays Primary Care Physician / Specialist	\$25 / \$35	15% after deductible	\$20 / \$30	\$30 / \$40	15% after deductible
Coinsurance OU / Member	80% / 20%	85% / 15%	90% / 10%	70% / 30%	85% / 15%
Out-of-Pocket Maximum Individual / Family	\$5,000 / \$10,000	\$3,500 / \$7,000	\$5,000 / \$10,000	\$6,000 / \$12,000	\$6,750 / \$13,500
Prescriptions	\$10/\$30/\$60	15% after deductible Some maintenance	\$10/\$30/\$60	\$10/\$30/\$60	15% after

The University issued an RFP on a dental plan administrator and a committee comprised of faculty and staff from both campuses, plus members of the Employee Benefits Committee and HR recommended switching to Blue Cross Blue Shield.

NEW DENTAL RATES						
2020 DENTAL RATES						
Plan	Delta Basic Plan			Delta Alternate Plan		
	Employee Share	OU Share	Total Premium	Employee Share	OU Share	Total Premium
Employee Only	\$5.82	\$15.32	\$21.14	\$47.98	\$15.32	\$63.30
Employee + Spouse	\$54.14	\$15.32	\$69.46	\$108.36	\$15.32	\$123.68
Employee + Child(ren)	\$67.94	\$15.32	\$83.26	\$132.04	\$15.32	\$147.36
Employee + Family	\$123.96	\$15.32	\$139.28	\$183.18	\$15.32	\$198.50

2021 DENTAL RATES						
Plan	BCBS Basic Plan			BCBS Alternate Plan		
	Employee Share	OU Share	Total Premium	Employee Share	OU Share	Total Premium
Employee Only	\$14.54	\$15.32	\$29.86	\$33.98	\$15.32	\$49.30
Employee + Spouse	\$42.21	\$15.32	\$57.53	\$79.97	\$15.32	\$95.29
Employee + Child(ren)	\$40.08	\$15.32	\$55.40	\$76.13	\$15.32	\$91.45
Employee + Family	\$70.38	\$15.32	\$85.70	\$126.17	\$15.32	\$141.49

The University also issued an RFP on a vision plan provider and the committee recommended switching to MetLife. This plan will allow retirees to enroll, is less expensive for employees, and provides access to a larger network of vision providers.

In terms of life insurance, OU will continue to pay for 1.5 times the salary for employees' basic life insurance, while eliminating the \$50,000 plan. The new plan will separate the ties between basic, supplemental, and spousal life insurance. For supplemental (employee-paid) life insurance, OU will offer it in \$10,000 increments, instead of as a multiple of salary.

For retirees, there will be a transition from BCBS to the United Healthcare Medicare Advantage program. Impacts are generally positive: copay-based, rather than co-insurance-based; lower out-of-pocket costs; minimal network provider disruption; minimal pharmacy disruption; value-added services include house calls, post-discharge meal delivery, silver sneakers, and up to six podiatry visits.

Ms. Camargo-Quinn announced that Open Enrollment will be from October 19 to November 6, 2020.

The floor was opened to questions. Prof. Natale as Chair of the Faculty Senate's Faculty Compensation Committee, which also reviews benefits, is concerned about the equity of initially collapsing and then ending the six-tier system. He is concerned that under the 2022 system, employees who earn less than \$20,000 (such as custodial and food service employees) will be paying the same amount for their health insurance as the highest paid administrators and coaches. Ms. Camargo-Quinn said that health insurance costs continue to rise and that if we continue to discount the lower-paid employees costs, the upper tiers will have to pay much more. She added that this may be a deterrent in recruitment.

Prof. Bradshaw read a comment in the chat from FS Executive Committee member Prof. Mary Sue Backus. Prof. Backus stated that there does not seem to be a cost savings from simply collapsing the tiers. It is just a difference in the distribution of the costs, but it does not actually cost more to have more tiers.

Prof. Kornelson agreed with Prof. Natale's concerns about equity in collapsing the premium tiers. She also asked where faculty and staff can find a list of doctors in the Blue Preferred and Blue Choice networks. Ms. Camargo-Quinn said that there are very few providers that OU employees have seen that

are not in network and that one can go to the BCBS website and look in which networks each provider participates.

Prof. Riggs expressed concern that the deductibles are increasing significantly under the Blue Choice and high-deductible plans. He also agreed with Prof. Natale's concerns about equity for the lowest -paid OU employees if we merge the salary-based tiers. Prof. Riggs also questioned how we are saving so much on the retiree plan without losing benefits.

Prof. Jervis asked why HR was given the direction to remove our tier system for health insurance premiums. Ms. Camargo-Quinn said that the Regents included in their charge to go to a more market-based benefits structure. Mr. Fonda said that it is beneficial in recruitment and retention to be similar to our peers in terms of benefits. He highlighted the relatively high cost of our family coverage.

Prof. Hambright asked who were the peer institutions against who we were compared and who were the faculty members on the committee. Ms. Camargo-Quinn said that the peer institutions were the Big 12 and that Prof. Susan Hahn, the 2019-20 FCC Chair was on the committee, as well as a representative from the OUHSC Faculty Senate. In addition, Prof. Amy Pepper, who is on the Employee Benefits Committee served.

Prof. Raymond asked for real examples of costs of the proposed plans relative to today's plan only to learn that no actual rates or real costs are yet available. Ms. Camargo-Quinn said we should have rates in the next few weeks and HR will send those out to employees.

Prof. Muller asked if the OU Board of Regents mandated eliminating the tiered structure of the OU benefits plan. Prof. Bradshaw expressed Prof. Hsieh's comments in the chat pushing deeper into the comparison data from peer institutions, e.g., in the Big 10 and Big 12, in addition to the OSU data shown. Importantly, Prof. Hsieh asked for additional information on mechanisms that single-tier peer institutions use to address the equity issue. Ms. Camargo-Quinn said of the ten members of the Big 12, two other schools also had a tiered structure, Baylor, with fewer than us and West Virginia, with more than us. The remaining eight schools all have a single-tier structure and all employees pay the same amount, regardless of salary.

Prof. Butler doesn't see how removing the tiers will improve recruitment and retention and asks for an explanation. Prof. Miller asked if calculations were made about how much the costs would go up for Tier 1 employees under the new structure. Ms. Camargo-Quinn said that the committee did a variety of analyses. Prof. Miller would like to know the relative differences between the increases in each tier. Ms. Camargo-Quinn said that information will be more readily available once the rates are available.

There were no further questions and Prof. Bradshaw thanked Ms. Camargo-Quinn and Mr. Fonda for sharing information about the 2021 Benefits Plan with the Senate.

Prof. Shehata suggested that the Faculty Senate consider a resolution voicing our concerns or opposing the proposed changes to benefits based on the equity concerns raised. Prof. Bradshaw said that based on the Regents upcoming meeting being before our next Faculty Senate meeting, this would qualify as an issue we could address prior to our next Faculty Senate meeting. She suggested that Prof. Shehata make a motion to that effect during the New Business section of today's meeting. Prof. Edwards questioned how other institutions are addressing the equity issue if they are going from a multi-tier to a single-tier structure.

Prof. Bradshaw read Prof. Natale's statement in the chat, "We are drafting a resolution in the Benefits and Compensation committee to address this. It will make its way to the Execute Committee, then the full Senate."

FACULTY SENATE PRIORITIES FOR 2020-21

Prof. Bradshaw said that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) would like input from the members of the Faculty Senate on a list of priorities for the Faculty Senate for 2020-21. She then opened the floor to discussion.

Prof. Schwartz said that in the School of Music they are a little confused about some of the changes being made to Title IX. He asked whether there was a mechanism in place for when a faculty search fails at the Title IX level.

Prof. Raymond suggested adding transparency, equity, and responsiveness around issues of the university strategic plan and initiatives out of the VPRP's office.

NEW BUSINESS

Prof. Bradshaw said she would entertain any new business. Prof. Shehata proposed a resolution voicing strong objection based on equity concerns to the proposed changes to faculty and staff benefits. He stated that the proposed move to a one-tier system in 2021 adversely impacts those making the least at OU. The motion was seconded by Prof. Schwartz. Prof. Butler asked for clarification when the single-tier system would go into effect and senators agreed to change the resolution to make the year 2022. Prof. Natale asked to add "we request that the administration reconsider this change." Prof. Shehata accepted that as a friendly amendment. Prof. Raymond suggested that we raise objections about both moving to the three-tier structure in 2021 and the single-tier structure in 2022.

Prof. Shehata agreed to the revisions to his resolution. Prof. Riggs said he would be more averse to the single-tier system than to the three-tier system. Prof. Hsieh would like to add more about our equity concerns in the resolution.

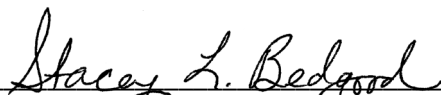
The Senate approved the following draft statement, but would like the FCC to review the statement:

The OU-NC Faculty Senate strongly objects, based on equity concerns, the proposed changes to faculty and staff benefits that ultimately would result in a one-tier system by 2022. The abandonment of the six-tier system adversely impacts those making the least at OU. We ask the administration to reconsider these changes and seek wider input from the OU community.

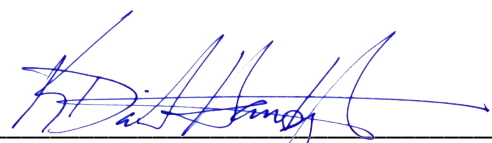
Prof. Natale, as Faculty Compensation Committee (FCC) Chair recommended that we send the statement approved above to the administration and use it as an opportunity for the FCC and FSEC to meet with administration to discuss the issue.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m. The next regular session of the Faculty Senate will be held at 3:30 p.m. on Monday, October 12, 2020, via Zoom.



 Stacey L. Bedgood, Administrative Coordinator



 K. David Hambright, Faculty Senate Secretary

The University of Oklahoma - FACULTY SENATE 2020-21

Senators	Dept	E-Mail(@ou.edu)	Representing	Term
Fithian, Lee	Architecture	leefithian	Architecture	2020-23 *
Benjamin, Andrea	African & African American Studies	andrea.benjamin	Arts & Sciences	2020-23 *
Jervis, Lori	Anthropology	lori.jervis	Arts & Sciences	2020-23 *
Randall, Asa	Anthropology	ar	Arts & Sciences	2019-22
Bergey, Liz	Biology	lbergey	Arts & Sciences	2020-23 *
Hambright, Dave	Biology	dhambright	Secretary/non-voting	2020-21
Hsieh, Elaine	Communication	ehsieh	Arts & Sciences	2020-23 *
Miller, Claude	Communication	cm	Arts & Sciences	2020-22 **
Allen, Katie	Human Relations / Health & Exercise Sci.	kallen	Arts & Sciences	2018-21
Worley, Jody	Human Relations - Tulsa	jworley	Arts & Sciences	2018-21
Rubenstein, Ellen	Library & Information Studies	erubenstein	Arts & Sciences	2019-22
Kornelson, Keri	Mathematics	kkornelson	Arts & Sciences/Chair-elect	2019-22
Moore-Russo, Deborah	Mathematics	dmr	Arts & Sciences	2019-22
Muller, Greg	Mathematics	gmuller	Arts & Sciences	2019-22
Remling, Christian	Mathematics	christian.remling	Arts & Sciences	2019-22
Wang, Ying	Mathematics	wang	Arts & Sciences	2020-23 *
Dunn, Anne	Microbiology & Plant Biology	akdunn	Arts & Sciences	2018-21
McCarthy, Heather	Microbiology & Plant Biology	heather.mccarthy	Arts & Sciences	2020-23 *
Zhu, Ping	Modern Lang, Lit, & Ling. / WGS	pingzhu	Arts & Sciences	2020-21 *
Riggs, Wayne	Philosophy	wriggs	Arts & Sciences	2019-22
Fuenzalida, Luz-Eugenia	Psychology	fuenzalida	Arts & Sciences	2018-21
Cline, Rangar	Religious Studies	rangar.cline	Arts & Sciences	2020-21 *
Natale, Anthony	Social Work	anatale	Arts & Sciences	2020-23 **
Olufowote, James	Social Work	olu	Arts & Sciences	2020-21 *
Burns, Tom	Sociology	tburns	Arts & Sciences	2019-22
Hoagland, Bruce	Geography & Env. Sustainability	bhoagland	Atmos. & Geog. Sciences	2018-21
Parsons, Dave	Meteorology	dparsons	Atmos. & Geog. Sciences	2020-22
Cuccia, Andrew	Accounting	cuccia	Business	2018-21
Stetson, Beth	Accounting	bstetson	Business	2019-22
Stock, Duane	Finance	dstock	Business	2020-23 **
Dee, Kato	Geosciences	kdee	Earth & Energy	2020-21 *
Teodoriu, Catalin	Petroleum & Geological Engr.	cteodoriu	Earth & Energy	2019-22
Bradshaw, Amy	Educational Psychology	bradshaw	Chair/non-voting	2020-21
Edwards, Kirsten	Educ. Lead. & Poli. Studies	kirsten.t.edwards	Education	2020-21 *
Raymond, Kate	Instructional Lead. & Acad. Curr.	kate.m.raymond	Education	2020-23 **
Lai, Feng	Aerospace & Mechanical Engr.	flai	Engineering	2020-23 **
Nollert, Ulli	Chemical, Biological, & Materials Engr.	nollert	Engineering	2019-22
Sikavitsas, Vassilios	Chemical, Biological, & Materials Engr.	vis	Engineering	2019-22
Butler, Liz	Civil Engr. & Environ. Science	ecbutler	Engineering	2018-21
Hougen, Dean	Computer Science	hougen	Engineering	2020-22 *
Weaver, Chris	Computer Science	cweaver	Engineering	2020-23 **
Lyst, Roxanne	Dance	rlyst	Fine Arts	2018-21
Mortimer, Alissa	Drama	alissamortimer	Fine Arts	2019-22
Schwartz, Dan	Music	dan.schwartz	Fine Arts	2020-22 *
Jiran, Amanda	Musical Theatre	mjiran	Fine Arts	2019-22
Anderson, Eric	Visual Arts	eric	Fine Arts	2018-21
Kornelson, Keri	Mathematics	kkornelson	Graduate College/non-voting	2019-22
Shehata, Samer	International & Area Studies	shehata	International Studies	2019-22
Schmeltzer, John	Journalism	j.schmeltzer	Journalism & Mass Comm.	2019-22
Tepker, Rick	Law	rtepker	Law / Parliamentarian	2020-21 *
Cryer, Ryan	Military Science	Ryan.A.Cryer-1	Non-degree-recommending	2020-21 *
Steele, Tom	University Libraries	Thomas.D.Steele-1	Non-degree-recommending	2020-23 *
Lifset, Robert	Honors College	robertlifset	Pooled--Liberal Studies	2020-23 **

* New member

** Re-elected member

**RECORD OF DISPOSITION BY ADMINISTRATION OF FACULTY SENATE ACTIONS
(September 2019-August 2020)**

	Meeting Date	Item*	Origin	Disposition by administration
1	10-14-2019 & 8-26-2019 FSEC	Faculty appointment to the Faculty Senate's Committee on Committees	Faculty Senate Committee on Committees	Informational Only
2	10-14-2019	Faculty appointments to vacancies on university councils, committees, and boards	Faculty Senate Executive Committee	Approved
3	10-14-2019	Faculty appointments to the Faculty Senate's Faculty Compensation Committee	Faculty Senate Committee on Committees	Informational Only
4	10-14-2019	Election, Faculty Senate Executive Committee at large-member mid-year vacancy	Faculty Senate Executive Committee	Informational Only
5	10-14-2019	Changes to OU's Conflict of Interest Policy	OU Legal Counsel	Acknowledged
6	3-09-2020	Pathways to Leadership Resolution	Faculty Senate Faculty Welfare Committee	Acknowledged
7	4-13-2020	Electronic Voting for Faculty Senate Executive Committee members in May 2020	Faculty Senate Executive Committee	Informational Only
8	5-04-2020	Election, Faculty Senate Executive Officers	Faculty Senate Executive Committee	Informational Only
9	5-04-2020	Election, Faculty Senate Executive Committee at large-members	Faculty Senate Committee on Committees	Informational Only
10	5-04-2020	Faculty appointments for end-of-the-year vacancies on university and campus councils/committees/boards	Faculty Senate Committee on Committees	Approved
11	5-04-2020	Faculty appointments for end-of-the-year vacancies on Faculty Senate standing committees	Faculty Senate Committee on Committees	Informational Only
12	5-04-2020	Changes to the Faculty Senate Charter & Bylaws	Faculty Senate Executive Committee	Informational Only

*Full text of recommendation can be found in Faculty Senate Journal for date indicated at left

Faculty Senate Chair's Report

Amy C. Bradshaw

Summer, 2020

I became Chair of the Faculty Senate on Monday, May 4, while OU campus remained closed following spring break. That same day I received a **preview of communication regarding phased reopening of campus for research**, to which I provided feedback after consulting with FS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Chair Heather Shotton. On Wednesday, **May 6, I attended the monthly Deans and Directors mtg** via Zoom. On Thursday **May 7, Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) held our first meeting**. We learned the Regents were considering removing the “Interim” from the President’s title. FSEC discussed the related topics of interim appointments, open and transparent searches, best practices for searches at multiple levels, and pathways to leadership, generally. We also considered Committee on Committee recommendations for the FSEC appointee to the search committee for the next Title IX Officer, and we recommended Siduri Haslerig. We also discussed chairships of various committees. Although FSEC members are not paid for FS-related work during the summer months, for the last few years, it has become urgently necessary that FS chairs, officers, and other EC members remain active and engaged during the summer. By my first week as FS Chair it was already clear this would be another such summer, so I invited both outgoing and incoming FSEC members to overlap and stay involved as much as feasible during the summer. All members of both outgoing and incoming executive committees affirmed their willingness. We also agreed to request the monthly meetings with the President continue through the summer. I directed the Committee on Committees to generate and consider names for recommendation to the Provosts Advisory Committee for Women’s Issues. On Friday, **May 8, I responded to a request from Marketing and Communication for a statement** on the possible removal of the word interim from the President’s title, and watched that day’s session of the livestreamed Regents meeting. I also watched the livestream on Saturday, **May 9, as the Regents announced the change to President Harroz’s title**. Later the same day, **I met with several recent past Faculty Senate Chairs as well as the new Chair-elect** to discuss transitions, the OU budget outlook including potential impacts on graduate students, and other issues on our collective radar.

On Tuesday, **May 12, I met via Zoom with Provost Kyle Harper and Vice Provost Mark Morvant** to discuss the Fall campus reopening. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) had previously provided lengthy and detailed feedback on a draft of the Safe and Resilient Fall Reopening plan, and this meeting was a response to that feedback. Provost Harper reiterated that the number one priority of Fall reopening considerations is Health and Safety of the faculty and community. The number two priority is Instructional Excellence, which means back in person as much as possible, but “possible” will be defined by what is safe. They reported that they were considering where and how to include our specific recommendations in the plan, and were exploring answers to our questions. They said there’s not a model robust enough to accurately predict what will happen months from now, but that they were preparing for all options. They reiterated that decisions regarding fall scheduling including teaching modes would be determined through three stages, and reiterated that they would like first- and second-year students to have majority in-person classes, but that they would not have a heavy hand on unit decisions. He added they did not want Deans and supervisors to ask or know private information as part of the decision making process. One idea had to do with HR and accommodations, another would be to work with Deans and units and if they determine online or F2F, especially at grad level, there will not likely be pushback. At undergrad level, the main pushback will be at first- and second-year levels, where they want to be able to provide a strong face-to-face experience. They also indicated they would explore how to address appeals if faculty wanted to teach online but their units or Dean say no. On Thursday,

May 14, I met via Zoom with Senior Vice Provost Jill Irvine. Later the same day, **I spoke by phone with Vice Provost Mark Morvant** regarding proposed changes to general education requirements to accommodate the new DEI course that will be added as a general ed requirement. I asked whether he would be willing to participate in a town hall on the topic so faculty on summer break would be both informed and have a chance to provide input regarding the plan before it was implemented. He agreed and **FSEC and I began working on scheduling and formatting of the townhall sessions.**

On Monday, **May 18, FSEC met for our second meeting of the summer.** The Draft Journal of the Faculty Senate is typically not available until a few days prior to the next FS meeting. I proposed that in 2020-21, the FS Secretary provide an informal “Meeting Recap” that could be distributed to senators for use along with their own notes in keeping their units informed of senate actions and happenings in a more consistent and timely way. FS Secretary Dave Hambright agreed to begin this starting with the September 2020 FS meeting, with assistance from Administrative Coordinator Stacey Bedgood. We discussed several issues on the radar, including disruptions to spring sabbaticals, and particularly noting the need to stay alert to what’s happening with OU’s contingent faculty. Concerns also were raised about cheating on online tests during finals in Spring after courses were shifted fully online, and we acknowledged the need for trouble-shooting and brainstorming about how to deal with it if we are online again in fall. We were pleased to hear that *Gradescope* would likely be retained for at least the Fall 2020 semester. We discussed concerns regarding the Safe and Resilient Fall reopening plan, acknowledging the necessity that many of our recommendations were not yet being rejected nor fully committed to, but would be explored and kept on the table as the situation developed. We briefly discussed ongoing concerns about the OU IT policy, specifically related to computer standardization and the one-computer policy and related appeals process. We continued our discussion of the proposed changes to the General Ed requirements. In the spring 2020 semester, two separate task forces had been convened, one focused on planning toward the course curriculum and another focused on determining how to accommodate the new course among the general education requirements. FSEC discussed at length our concerns about a change of this nature being made during summer while most faculty are off contract, as well as ramifications of the changes for different programs, particularly related to capstone requirements at program and department levels (as opposed to the university / general education level). During the later portion of this meeting **Vice Provost Mark Morvant joined us** by invitation so we could provide feedback on the Gen Ed changes proposal, ask further questions, and discuss the developing plan for the townhall sessions on the subject. Vice Provost Morvant also provided FSEC with a preview of the Clean and Green plan. On Monday, **May 25, I requested information slides for the upcoming Proposal for Changes to the General Education Requirements Townhall** from Vice Provost Mark Morvant on behalf of FSEC.

On Wednesday, **May 27, FSEC met with President Harroz and Chief of Staff Sean Burrage.** We discussed COVID-19 and the Fall return to Instruction plan, and FSEC expressed concerns related to optional mask use, air-handling systems, internships and practica, mid-semester impacts and disruptions, and faculty determining whether their classes could be appropriately conducted online. We suggested administration conduct a survey of faculty preferences and needs to go online. We also discussed the Pathways to Leadership resolution approved by the Faculty Senate on March 19, 2020. President Harroz said he agreed with the resolution and favored putting it into practice. President Harroz provided updates regarding exceptions for IT purchases to support online teaching, and regarding searches. He said the big elements of the budget for the upcoming year were in place. We asked whether an ombudsperson was included in the budget for the coming year and strongly communicated the need for it. President Harroz indicated that from this conversation he understood how important this issue is to FSEC and the faculty broadly, and that he would have a response to the question at our next meeting

with him. He cautioned that there would need to be cuts to help administrative efficiency and that while they would not be popular, they would not be cuts to teaching positions. Later that day, I reviewed the slides that would be presented during the Gen Ed Q&A Session on 28th and asked Committee on Committees Chair Keri Kornelson to have her committee generate names for the FSEC appointment to the search committee for the Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence.

On Thursday, **May 28, FSEC hosted the Proposed Changes to General Education Townhall** with Vice Provost Mark Morvant. Afterward, we sent him a list of questions collected from the chat of session, and again requested a FAQ be made available to faculty. The night of Wednesday, **June 3, I requested a conversation with Sean Burrage** regarding concerns about the perceived role of HR in determining faculty fall course teaching modes, and on Thursday, **June 4, we spoke by phone about these concerns**. On Friday, **June 5, I discussed these concerns by phone with Provost Kyle Harper**. He acknowledged the need for clearer communication.

On Monday, **June 8, we held our Monthly FSEC Meeting**. Guests included David Horton, Nick Key, Chris Kobza, and Andy Fagg. We discussed the computer standardization policy and the appeals process. We also spoke with Provost Kyle Harper, who mentioned the new COVID officer, Dr. Dale Brazler. We discussed masking, as well as the high level of frustration we were hearing from faculty regarding accommodations and the perceived role of HR in determining course mode. Provost Harper said it was very important to determine how many faculty wanted to move their courses online and that if only one percent wanted to it would not be a problem but if it's 10% it would be. We noted that a fairly high proportion of faculty are in an age group identified as highly vulnerable. Questions also were raised about programs with in-person practica or fieldwork. **FSEC was joined by Chief of Operations Eric Conrad**, who provided a presentation and discussion regarding facilities preparation, cleaning, increased custodial staff, reduced population density on elevators and in stairwells, and modification of air handling equipment and upgrading air filters in many buildings from MERV8 to MERV13. He said faculty would receive welcome back bags with 2 cloth masks, 5 disposable surgical masks, a bottle of hand sanitizer, and instructions for ordering more supplies through facilities. He said the goal was to have 350,000 masks by August to provide students, faculty, and staff with a mask to use every week of the semester.

On Wednesday, **June 10, FSEC met with Interim Pres Harroz**, who provided updates regarding enrollment and financial projections for Fall and told us that the FY21 budget included funding for an Ombudsperson and that the FS Chair would be included in discussion regarding reporting structure for that role. The Provost and his staff were still working on the strategic plan, which he hoped would be approved at the July Regents meeting. President Harroz also updated FSEC on dean searches. We asked about the status of the Task forces we'd named members for and were told that they were formed to look at possible cuts but were not needed as much as had been expected. President Harroz said at this point they were not expecting any furloughs to be needed before the end of the fiscal year. He also indicated that they were looking at possible changes to benefits. I requested that as we look at possible changes to benefits, that we protect the most vulnerable (lowest paid) employees. We also had an extended discussion of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues and discussed the need for appropriate responses to racist incidents as well as the need to be proactive.

On Thursday, **June 11, available members of the FSEC participated in a Title IX listening session** with Associate Provost for Faculty and Student Affairs, Chris Walker, and Gender and Equality Center Director, Erin Simpson. On Wednesday, **June 17, FSEC hosted the second townhall on Proposed Changes to General Ed Requirements** and, later that same day, **I met with Senior Vice Provost Jill Irvine**.

On Monday, **July 6**, **FS DEI Chair Heather Shotton led a meeting with FSEC** members for an extended conversation on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Afterward, **I met with Interim Provost Jill Irvine** and, later the same day, **FSEC met for our July Monthly Mtg.** We discussed faculty flexibility in teaching delivery mode, the Return to Campus Plan, contact tracing, issues for discussion during our next meeting with President Harroz, and other priorities and concerns. At 4:00 p.m., **Interim Provost Irvine joined us** in her new role (as of July 1), and we discussed fall course delivery modes.

On Tuesday, **July 7**, **I met with President Harroz** via *Zoom* to revisit and extend our previous conversations regarding FSEC's requests for an Ombudsperson. We also discussed the need for clear and direct communication between faculty and administration, and we discussed ways to ensure we continue working toward ideals of shared governance. We also discussed the high levels of anxiety and concern among faculty, and the need to respond to those increasingly urgent concerns.

On Wednesday, **July 8**, **FSEC met with President Harroz.** We discussed Fall teaching issues including keeping faculty, staff, and students safe and prioritizing health and safety over economic concerns, possible triggers for shifting online, allowing faculty to shift courses without revealing private health information, pedagogical concerns about teaching in masks, economic concerns and student preferences, COVID testing, quarantines, and screening tools. We again discussed the increasing anxiety among faculty. We also discussed issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly related to valuing the heavy service burdens on BIPOC faculty and others committed to mitigating and transforming unjust structures.

On Monday, **July 13**, **FSEC was updated regarding Federal Department of Education changes to Title IX at OU** in a meeting with Associate Provost for Faculty and Student Affairs, Chris Walker, Gender and Equality Center Director, Erin Simpson, and Interim Institutional Equity Officer and Title IX Coordinator, Faustina Layne. Afterward, **FSEC met for further discussion regarding the return to campus plan and to discuss releasing a formal statement.**

The morning of Wednesday, **July 15**, **I spoke by phone with Pres Harroz** about our concerns regarding fall scheduling and class modes and the high anxiety and growing anger among faculty. I acknowledged the competing pressures of health and safety, pedagogical soundness, and economic realities, and reiterated that health and safety must be the top priority. I acknowledged the effort the administration is putting into making the campus as safe as possible, and the serious financial ramifications related to decisions to go fully online, and also shared the high level of faculty frustration and concerns regarding concerns for health and safety, lack of clarity and cohesiveness in communication from administration, the need to prepare faculty to be ready to shift online if it becomes necessary, and pedagogical concerns about forced face-to-face or forced online classes, reiterating that decisions regarding curriculum and delivery mode are best made at faculty and units levels.

Later that day, FSEC released the [FSEC Statement on Fall 2020 Safe and Resilient \(SAR\) Instruction Plan](#). (I note here that three of the four requests in that statement were integrated into policy. The one that wasn't formally reflected in policy was the request that departments be given freedom to allow all faculty to move the delivery method of their course for pedagogical reasons.)

On Thursday, **July 16**, **I worked toward a plan and a date for a Townhall with President Harroz and Administrative Team members** for Monday. Each member of the admin team would build responses to some questions into their brief presentations and I will follow up with more questions drawn from the many anonymized ones I sent to Jill Irvine and Lori Snyder.

On Friday, **July 24**, having been **asked to recommend a faculty member for the Flexible Teaching Appeals Board, FSEC named Mary Sue Backus (Law)**.

The same day, **I sent feedback regarding the Research Strategy DRAFT to Vice President for Research Tomás Díaz de la Rubia** from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

The OU Board of Regents met on July 7-8. On Tuesday, **July 8, I attended in person the public session** where the Strategic Plan and Changes to the General Education Requirements were approved.

On Tuesday, **August 4, FS Executive Committee members met with Interim Provost Jill Irvine and Chief of Staff Sean Burrage**, to discuss considerations regarding potential shift(s) to fully online.

On Friday, **August 7, FS Officers Bradshaw, Kornelson, and Hambright met to discuss ongoing concerns among faculty**. Later that day **I met with Interim Provost Jill Irvine** and we discussed anxieties and concerns persisting among faculty about returning to in-person instruction. I asked about contact tracing and requested further clarification for faculty regarding what that would look like in practice for various scenarios. I asked whether faculty would be informed if any of their students were infected with COVID-19. Interim Provost Irvine indicated that the CDC guidelines would be followed. As long as people were 6 feet apart and masked, instructors will not be informed. She also pointed out that anyone can be tested for COVID as often as preferred, free at Goddard.

On Monday, **August 10, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee Monthly Meeting** was held. We discussed issues on the radar including the strategic plan, questions about OU Online, shared governance rights and responsibilities, possible changes to the FS Bylaws to increase clarity regarding committee functions and FSEC elections scheduling, as well as the State of the University Event to be scheduled in September. **Interim Provost Jill Irvine joined the meeting** and we discussed childcare related needs of faculty and staff, and other issues and concerns, and we requested OU develop an online COVID Dashboard.

On Friday, **August 14, I met with Interim Assoc Vice Provost Lori Snyder** to discuss developing support for faculty and staff related to challenges of childcare, home-based schooling, and working from home, including access to necessary equipment and faster / more reliable Internet access.

On Wednesday, **August 19, FSEC met with President Harroz**. We discussed COVID-19, our request for an OU COVID Dashboard, Fall 2020 updates and concerns; diversity and racial equity issues in leadership, recruitment and retention, faculty development, and service expectations; structural concerns regarding Research Support Services; continuing OU-IT concerns related to uniformity and other limitations counter to a healthy academic context; and OU Online.

On Wednesday, **August 26, we held the Faculty Senate Orientation for New Senators**, during which we provided background information regarding Senate roles, charge, structure, and best practices, and participants discussed issues of concern and priorities for the coming year.

On Friday, **August 28, I met with Interim Provost Jill Irvine**. We discussed efforts underway for increased testing, and I expressed our continuing concerns for faculty – particularly related to contingent faculty and faculty who are now in different circumstance than when the flexibility requests were initially submitted. On Monday, **August 31, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee held its monthly meeting**. **Guests Interim Provost Jill Irvine and Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer Belinda Hyppolite joined us** to discuss developments related to the new DEI course. Later,

Vice President for Research Tomás Díaz de la Rubia joined us to discuss issues, concerns, and opportunities related to research at OU, the research strategic plan, and the VPR's evolving perspectives now that he has been here for several months.

On Wednesday, **September 2**, I attended the **monthly Deans Council Meeting**.

On Thursday, **September 10**, I met with **Chief of Staff Sean Burrage and Senior Associate Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer Angela Church** to develop plans regarding job description and search committee composition for an Ombudsperson. Later that day, **FS Officers Bradshaw, Kornelson, and Hambright** met to discuss concerns and issues on the radar.

On Friday, **September 11**, **FSEC met with HR** for a preview of information to be shared with the full Faculty Senate at the September 14 meeting. This was **followed by the FSEC monthly meeting with President Harroz**, during which we discussed proposed changes to benefits and expressed our strong concerns and objections to eliminating the tier structure. We also discussed faculty climate and concerns, metrics and triggers for shifting courses online, concerns about students not reporting positive tests, and persistent salary inequities. We also discussed logistics for the upcoming State of the University event, and received updates regarding searches.