**UFS Minutes**

**Meeting: Dec 8, 2021**

**Attendees:** Mike Kiel **(**Senate President), Aaron Wachhaus (Senate Vice President), Al Gourrier, Alan Weisman, Allison Jennings-Roche, Andrea Cantora, Anthony Butler, Antieris, Barbara Aughenbaugh, Beth Amyot, Bill Carter, Bill Schnirel, Bridget Blodgett, Candace Caraco, Catherine Andersen, Christine Spencer, Cindy McGowan, Claudette Booth, Danielle Giles, David Bobar, David Lingelbach

Duka Donaghy, Gabriela Wasileski, Ian Power, Ivan Sascha Sheehan, J.C. Weiss, Jeffrey Hutson, Jeffrey Ian Ross, Jim Campbell, John Burns, John Chapin, Karen Karmiol, Karyn Schulz, Kate Demarest, Kathea SmitH, Kristen Eyssell, President Kurt Schmoke, Lakeisha Mathews, Laura Wilson-Gentry , Llatetra Esters, Lore Naylor, Magui Cardona, Marilyn Oblak, Mary Beth Waak, Matt Mazick, Megan Manley, Michael Frederick, Michael Hayes, Michele Cotton, Murray Dalziel, Nicole Marano, Paul Moniodis, Pavan Purswani, Rodger Hartley, Richard (Tony) DuLaney, Ron Castanzo, Ron Weich, Sally Farley, Seyed Mohammadi, Sharon Glazer, Suzanne Tabor, Terese Thonus, Tina DiFranco, Vicki Schultz, Vineda Myers, Wabei Chitambala, Wolf Pecher

The Meeting was called to order at noon

**Logistical Items**

The agenda and Minutes (Meeting on November) were approved.

**Information Items and Announcements**

* ***Funding update for Predominantly Black Institutions*:**  
  Magui Cardona (Assistant Provost, Sponsored Research): UBalt was awarded $250,000 from the Department of Education through the Predominantly Black Institutions (PBI) grant program.   
  President Schmoke: UBalt is part of a 25 institutions coalition to seek ongoing federal funding for PBIs. There are about the same number of PBIs and HBCUs. However, federal appropriation to PBIs is not available. The coalition is pushing to include appropriation for PBIs in the current budget cycle.
* ***Workload Policy update:***  
  Senate President Mike Kiel reminded the senate that the workload policy is currently updated
* ***Transition from People Soft to Workday:***  
  The workgroup for the transition from People Soft to Workday is seeking a faculty representative. President Schmoke reminded the senate that this committee requires a serious time commitment.
* ***CUSF:***  
  Lore Naylor: CUSF is rolling out 3 surveys on COVID – moving forward, Technology, and Academic integrity (student perception vs. faculty perception)

**Action Items**

***Academic Support Committee***

* ***Merge Academic Support Committee and Online Advisory Board***  
  Kathryn Demarest: The Academic Support Committee proposed to merge the Online Advisory Board (OAB) with the Academic Support Committee (ASC) and change the membership. The new structure increases feedback from all stakeholders, including students who will have a non-voting member on the committee. The merger will increase the efficiency of the committee since overlap between the two groups is eliminated.

*Discussion/Comment*  
The senate discussed possible downsides of the merger which include the perception that the OAB’s role was providing guidance to the administration. The ASC does not have this role.

The merger was approved by 10 votes and no abstentions.

***University Faculty Senate By-Laws***

* ***Create an ad Hoc committee to explore possible changes to the By-Laws and Constitution***
  + By-Law VI (Bringing Items to UFS) could be clearer
  + By-Law VII (Procedure for Review of the University, College and School Organizational Structures) appears to give power to the UFS over the President to determine the structure of the University which the UFS does not have.
  + Explore changes to the structure of the UFS, including term limits of officers, how officers are elected, clarify responsibilities of senators.

The Senate approved the creation of an ad Hoc committee (10 votes in favor, no abstentions). Members of the ad Hoc committee are Senators Kristen Eyssell, David Lingelbach, Mike Kiel, and Aaron Wachhaus.

**Discussion Items**

***COVID 19 update***

* Nicole Marano (Associate Vice President, Student Success & Support Services) and President Schmoke informed the Senate that USM did not change their policies and mandates regarding COVID-19, and do not mandate booster shots.
* The downtown state testing center moved to 300 W. Preston Street (on the UMD Midtown Campus). Services include testing, as well as vaccination. The services are free of charge for any student.

*Comments/Questions*

* President Schmoke asked to make a map and directions available online.
* The senate inquired if the administration has a contingency plan for the Spring term. President Schmoke indicated that the class schedule is currently finalized to determine on-campus activity. The other units remain flexible regarding campus presence.
* It was suggested to spread information about the relocation of the testing sites to the members of the UBalt community.
* It was inquired whether the testing frequency for vaccine exempt members of the UBalt community could be increased to weekly testing, and possibly mandate testing for all members who need to be on campus.
* Nicole Marano pointed out that based on feedback students appreciate and applaud UBalt’s effort to keep the campus safe

***Retention, Course Offerings, and Academic Planning***

* ***Course Modality Survey***  
  Catherine Andersen (Interim Provost) summarized a student survey on modality of classes conducted by MSB. The responses are similar across schools and colleges. Synchronous and asynchronous online instruction were overall favored by students. It was pointed out that UBalt is not planning to go completely online, however needs to be flexible in the modality of offering courses.  
    
  *Comments/Questions*  
  Concern was raised that students may have moved out of state due to the pandemic. If not accommodated, these students might not return to UBalt.
* ***Retention Efforts***  
  Interim Provost Andersen and her team discussed the efforts of UBalt to increase retention. These efforts are across all divisions. Institutional practices need to be aligned with student’s experiences. Retention efforts are based on 4 categories, (1) student data, (2) improvement of educational experiences (through high impact practices, culturally responsive teaching, (3) integration of academic support, and (4) focus on students’ well-being. Evidence gathering includes assessing progress by programs, CFW/DFW rates in gateway courses, achievement gap analysis, and data from student services.   
  Data analysis suggests that retention is stable, however pockets of instability exist. The data suggests that retention is less than optimal for transfer students.   
  Interim Provost Andersen and her team further highlighted university wide initiatives such as the strategic retention and student success plan, mandatory milestone advising, addressing CFW/DFW rates, and initiatives of different units (Career and Internship Center (CIC), Office of student support (OSS), Rosenberg Center for Student Engagement and Inclusion, the Bob Parsons Veterans Center, and the Diversity & International Services), and the different colleges. Furthermore, policy and procedural changes to increase retention were presented that are currently reviewed (i.e., changes of credit requirements for full-time student status for doctoral programs) and that have already been implemented (i.e., expanded prior learning, changes to incomplete grade procedure, among others). Future directions include assessing the impact of the initiatives, looking at enrollment barriers and strategies of recruitment and retention, aligning academic plans that include recruitment and retention plans with enrollment and strategic plans, enhancement of high impact practices with emphasis on community engagement, as well as better collaboration of course scheduling across the different academic units, identifying needed resources, identify PBI funding that focusses on student success at the undergraduate level.  
    
  *Discussion and Comments*  
  Interim Provost Andersen and her team were commended for their effort. The question was raised as to how the different units work together and how the impact of the different initiatives was measured. Interim Provost Anderson acknowledged that the team is very resource thin and, while the initiatives are data driven, data analysis is the weakest point. Many initiatives have been implemented at the same time, and it is challenging to identify what works best. Practices that worked include initiatives to reduce CWP/DWP rates, and initiatives focusing on freshmen as retention rate of freshmen went up until the pandemic hit.   
  It was acknowledged that concern were students that left UBalt to enroll at a different institution. What patterns can be identified in students that are leaving? Furthermore, looking at data and trends, the university seems to fare well, thus is the real problem getting students into UBalt?   
  It was suggested that a comparative analysis might be useful to size UBalt’s retention effort. However, while a comparative analysis was welcomed, concern was raised about the sharing of the data. The senate was informed that data is made available on the institutional effectiveness web pages.   
  A concern was raised that, due to the pandemic, the situation of many students may have changed making it difficult for a variety of reasons to attend face to face classes.

Meeting adjourned at 2 PM