

UW Staff Senate Full Meeting

Agenda

February 3, 2021 1:15 p.m.

Zoom



- I) Roll Call
- II) Approve January minutes
 - A) Minutes approved as circulated.
- III) Approve February agenda
 - A) Add Will Laegreid to agenda under Special Business
 - B) February agenda as amended.
- IV) Special Business
 - A) Dr. Will Laegreid, Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory/COVID-19 testing
 - i) Three kinds of COVID-19 testing – testing method is the same (RT-PCR)
 - (1) Surveillance
 - (a) Faculty/staff once a week, students twice a week
 - (b) 4 samples pooled together, partly due to supply chain issues as well as epidemiological data
 - (2) Confirmatory
 - (a) Those part of a positive pool from Surveillance testing
 - (b) Run individually
 - (c) Requires regulatory (CLIA) approval
 - (3) Public testing
 - (a) Requires regulatory (CLIA) approval
 - ii) Testing looks for three viral targets (N gene, ORF1ab, and S gene), requires two of three targets detected to be considered a positive test
 - iii) Albany County Public Health said that UW faculty and staff in general are now considered to be eligible for vaccination under Tier IC, group 3. He's not sure when they will be on that tier, but vaccination rate is increasing and is optimistic that most people should be able to get a vaccine by summer.
 - iv) Questions
 - (1) TodS (per Zoom ID) Would it be possible to increase the size of the sample given (like what was done with Vault testing) so some could be used to pool the samples, and if the pool is positive use the rest of the individual sample to test and see which one is positive and not have to do the confirmation testing?
 - (a) The biggest problem there is sample volume – finding a few tubes out of a couple of thousand is very time consuming. Also, to have confidence in a true positive sample, we prefer to get a new/second sample that hasn't been sitting around for quite some time. It cuts down on false positives.
 - (2) Senator Moen - At what point can we stop testing?
 - (a) There isn't a clear answer, but we would have to see widespread vaccine coverage. The vaccines protect against disease, but not necessary against infection. You may still be able to test positive for COVID-19 or transmit the virus to others. There's not enough information on transmission yet. He hopes we stop this year.

- (3) Senator Casey - I'm sorry if you went over this and I missed it--could you speak to the tests being offered to the broader Laramie community? Has that process started, or does it wait for CLEA certification? How many tests are being offered to the community at large?
 - (a) Yes, it's started. We are limiting it to 375 per week, to limit impact on campus testing.
- (4) Senator Maki - Are we able to test and identify the variants?
 - (a) Yes, in a way. The British variant impacts the S gene target in the PCR test. With our test, we will see the other two genes, but not S. We will be sequencing all positives from here on out.
- (5) Senator Kuster – Are we doing confirmatory testing now? At Rendezvous? Was there a request from the public for us to test?
 - (a) Yes, and yes. There was an interest from the school district and local businesses, and we could accommodate that, so we did.
- (6) Senator Norris - I am not understanding the groups that get the shots first.
 - (a) UW doesn't control that – the state and county make those decisions.
- (7) Senator Maki - Do we know how the vaccines will affect reopening in the fall?
 - (a) We do not as of now. There just isn't enough information yet.

V) Administration reports

A) Division of Administration- Senior Vice President Neil Theobald

i) Budget

- (1) Governor Gordon proposed a supplemental budget for UW to reduce its ongoing budget by \$8.3 million
 - (a) Goes to House and Senate in March
- (2) We also have substantially less tuition, housing, dining, and athletics revenues
 - (a) The Board has been saving for a rainy day to help address these shortfalls
- (3) We need to increase enrollment next year
 - (a) Down ~700 students this semester

ii) Construction projects

- (a) West Side Energy Plant and Science Initiative Building both on schedule and on budget

iii) Questions

- (1) Senator Traver – What percentage is \$8.3 million?
 - (a) About 5%, in addition to the 10% cut we already absorbed. When Dr. Nichols arrived, our state appropriation was \$100 million more than it is today (currently \$300 million).
- (2) Senator Norris - Is it possible that the students will continue to do on line classes instead of coming back to face to face classes?
 - (a) Academic Affairs will need to address that.
- (3) Senator Casey – How many layoffs have happened or will happen? Is there communication to campus planned about that?
 - (a) Yes, step 2 cuts were approved in November. As of February 3rd, our budget is balanced, so it will depend on that supplemental budget.
 - (b) Associate Vice President Koczara – We've had 6 positions so far. Four were with Enhanced Oil Recovery Institute, which is budgeted separately. There are 2-3 more cuts remaining that will get us to the end of the fiscal year. As for communications, we haven't talked about providing specifics department by department or campus-wide, but they can discuss that.
- (4) Senator Kuster – Regarding the timeline mentioned this spring, has there been research done at other institutions regarding fall plans?

(a) Right now, our application numbers are up year-to-year. As for enrollment numbers, they're down across the country.

B) Human Resources – Associate Vice President Tom Koczara

- i) Regarding COVID-19 vaccination availability, Human Resources previously rolled out a tool for employees to self-identify as high risk. They are revamping that to align with revised guidance from the Wyoming Department of Health and will add the CDC's list of potential high-risk groups to help employees identify themselves appropriately.
- ii) Performance evaluations are due at the end of March. There is a help site on the main Human Resources page.

(1) He encourages everyone to start thinking about your goals for next year.

C) Academic Affairs - Associate Vice Provost Steve Barrett

- i) Tobin-Spitaleri Award for Outstanding UW Graduates nominations are due Thursday.
- ii) UW Food Pantry
 - (1) In Knight Hall 106
 - (2) Run by Dean of Students Office
 - (3) Always looking for food or financial donations
 - (4) ASUW created a meal swipe program for students to donate or receive meals at Washakie
- iii) All academic programs are undergoing reviews as well as any staff groups in Academic Affairs
 - (1) Will provide recommendations to the Provost Friday regarding programs identified by Board of Trustees for review
- iv) Fall planning
 - (1) Provost and Vice-Provost Alexander and working with President Seidel to figure out what the fall will look like, but it's a tough situation to sort out.
 - (2) Other schools that he's met with are having similar issues.
 - (3) We'd like to be able to pivot to online or in-person classes depending on the situation at any given point. He's optimistic, given the testing and vaccine progress, but we'll have to be flexible.
- v) Questions
 - (1) Senator Casey - Is there any consideration for moving registration to a later point in the spring semester or moving freshman orientation to July in order to give more time to create an accurate fall schedule?
 - (a) They are working on that. Registration needs to occur, but we may be able to wait a couple of weeks to allow for time for decisions about class delivery.

VI) Old Business

VII) Liaison Reports

A) ASUW – Chief of Legislative Affairs Hunter Swilling

- i) ASUW scholarships are open now – closing February 28th
 - (1) 6-7 given out per year from endowed funds
- ii) Program reviews and strategic planning listening sessions
- iii) ASUW working on bringing in a speaker to talk on civil discourse
- iv) ASUW elections open now

B) Faculty Senate - Dr. Rudi Michalak

- i) Started to work on unfinished UniRegs, hope to finish by the end of spring semester
- ii) Working with COVID committees regarding campus communications
- iii) Budget reductions
 - (1) 40-43 faculty positions were not refilled, expect it was similar for staff
 - (2) They are concerned about active positions that will be cut next

- (3) They are expecting a cut of 100-150 professors, based on amount of money needing to be cut in proposed supplemental budget cuts, and would presume it will be similar for staff

iv) Questions

- (1) Senator Traver – Can you clarify why there will be 100-150 positions being cut? Is that whole departments being cut?
 - (a) There are three tiers of cuts - cut one has occurred, cut two is one approved by Board of Trustees, and cut three will be the proposed supplemental budget cuts. With a lack of revenue and looking at the numbers being talked about, \$15 million in academic cuts becomes 100-150 people. On the staff side, you can also close or outsource facilities and other things in addition to positions.
- (2) Senator Moen – Which programs are being cut?
 - (a) There were some that most people wanted to cut anyway as well as a couple nominated by the deans. Faculty Senate wrote a resolution objecting to these cuts as there was not clear information as to why those and not others. Some programs do not include faculty lines so cutting them does not save much. Last time it was a more even cut across the board . Final decisions should be out by early April.
- (3) Senator Vick - That's the 2-13 process going on right now right?
 - (a) Yes, partly. The early one is happening now, and the next one will include reviewing all reviews, and the bottom ones will be cut.
- (4) Senator Kennedy - I would be interested in the number of student employee positions that could be added to both the "cold" and "warm" counts after the FY is over.
 - (a) He doesn't have any insight in that area and cannot say.

C) Advisory Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Melanie Vigil)

- i) Representative not present.

D) Athletics Planning Committee (Cathy Moen)

- i) Has not met since last Senate meeting.

E) Food Security Taskforce (Chris Stratton)

- i) Representative not present.
- ii) Associate Vice Provost Barrett addressed all points from previous meeting.

F) No More Committee (Senator needed)

- i) Let Vice President Traver know if you'd like to serve

G) Public Art Committee (Melanie Vigil)

- i) Representative not present.

H) Student Media Board (Emily Edgar)

- i) No new information.

I) USP Update Working Group (Richard Raridon)

- i) Representative not present.

VIII) Officer Updates

A) President, Chris Stratton

- i) President Stratton not present.
- ii) Strategic Planning group is looking for members. If you are interested, please contact President Stratton.

B) Vice President, Elizabeth Traver

- i) Green Dot training occurring
- ii) Food Drive will occur this spring, for Easter
 - (1) Will put out boxes in various areas – let her know if you can place one in your area
 - (2) Likely deliver boxes before the break before Easter

(3) Will send out nomination survey

IX) New Business

X) Committee Reports

A) Communications Committee – Senator Moen

i) Meeting – February 4, 9:00am, Zoom

B) Credentials and Elections Committee – Senator Vigil

i) Meeting – TBA

C) Finance Committee – Senator Gonzales

i) Meeting – February 17, 8:30am, Zoom

ii) Scholarships distributed

D) Recognition Committee – Senators Vick and Kuster

i) Meeting – February 18, 9:00am, Zoom

ii) Chairs will meet tomorrow and have more information after that.

E) Staff Relations Committee – Senator Czech

i) Meeting – February 16, 2 pm, zoom

ii) Minutes posted in SharePoint

iii) Discussed lack of exit interviews, employees working off campus but taking classes online were put in a testing pool unnecessarily, Employee Handbook changes, HCM supplemental pay issues

iv) Questions

(1) Senator Casey - If someone is leaving their position at UW and feels strongly about completing an exit interview, is there someone they can contact to request an exit interview?

(a) Yes, you can contact Jesse Begin or Renee Ballard.

XI) Open forum

Meeting concluded at 2:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer McKenna

Staff Senator Secretary