

Senate Executive Committee Meeting
Monday, May 4, 2020

In Attendance: Dinesh Pinisetty (Chair), Keir Moorhead (Vice Chair), Sarah Senk (Secretary), Steve Browne, Christine Isakson, Elizabeth McNie, Cynthia Trevisan, Wil Tsai, Provost Michael Mahoney, President Thomas Cropper, Brig Timpson

I. Context

- Provost and President would like to have a chat regarding several decisions they made on Friday regarding Commencement Decision (virtual commencement), cancellation of Summer Cruise (which will create some issues in next school year), also several briefings about return to F2F.
- Pinisetty notes Cruise Committee's presentation was excellent, and the Senate Exec appreciates how the rationale for decisions was made clear.

II. President's Presentation

- Cancellation of cruise will cause upheavals, probably for the next year
- President has asked long-range committee to get back to some sense of normalcy by Fall 2021, but that may be Fall 2022. We're making decisions in the context of a longer-range set of challenges.
- This coming semester, Cruise decision and F2F are tied together with new semester in the fall, and spring semester that follows. There are decisions the President doesn't make (eg. decisions about curricula, waiving requirements)
- President asks "what is your plan? As faculty?" Sees role of administration as providing the resources and making sure it's coordinated with other aspects of the university, and other department goals/aspirations for returning to some sense of stability/normalcy
- Since Cruise is pre-req for follow-on courses this fall, the Senate needs to make a decision about what is the progression academically for cadets who don't go on the training cruise. President will affirm the decision once he makes sure the impacts are considered, but that's the work faculty will have to dig in on, and soon, to look at the long-term recovery, maybe even into next summer. There are challenges, but also opportunities, and some obligations.
- President notes "I feel an obligation/responsibility to get the seniors completed at the earliest safe opportunity." Looking at forecasts, middle of May we're almost bottomed out again in COVID cases. Last expected day of any death in CA is May 15. May 21 is listed as beginning of containment strategies.
- We have 94 seniors who need at most 14 days of instruction in order to get their degrees. Most need about 10 days.
- 106, all by 16 have billets remaining, awaiting a faculty curricular decision on what they're supposed to do now. Are faculty going to waive? It's your curricula, I will stand with you, I will need Senate and Departments to help shape answers and plans on how we're going to handle that, and expeditiously.
- We have academic requirement for commercial cruise, there may be alternatives, but President needs to know what faculty want to do. It's possible to finish seniors, then the commercial cruise folks (don't know where they are – they may be in 3.5 weeks of instruction), so then your bigger group for 500 is down to 300.

- Seniors, Commercial Cruisers, rest of cadets – try to minimize the number of people on the campus, which would drive down the number of people on campus.
- Long-range planning group will be waiting to hear from faculty.
- President asking, “what do you need?”

III. Senate Executive Committee Comments

- We need to know who can do it, poll them quickly.
- Provost adds that there will never be *no* risk, but it’s a question of how much risk we can tolerate. Is it 1% chance?
- Brown reports that concerning Commercial Cruise: department chairs can waive prerequisites with a signature. Department faculty are experts in the particular curriculum.
- Moorhead adds one thing, at least for ET, is that we’re actually by shifting cruise around it’s surprisingly less of an issue than anticipated. The ETs have very few follow-on classes from Cruise 150; working amongst ourselves, we have been able to mitigate that.
- President asks to report to planning group. Asks do some commercial cruise cadets need to return to campus? Moorhead says he doesn’t think there’s anything critical that should stop anybody from going on commercial cruise.
- President asks, “do you need to make up the instruction this summer or this fall?”
- Moorhead says it could be made up in the fall, doesn’t see anything critical that would make us need to do it in the summer.
- Pinisetty says the problem with the manufacturing process is that they have that class on a 5-week schedule. So, by the time they started that class we had already moved to online, and those classes can’t be online. Create a separate section in the fall for Manufacturing Process. It’s not something that needs to be finished in the summer, it’s just that they may have to do some switching with the schedule in the fall. It’s likely that the ET students would not be prohibited from going onto commercial cruise, because we would waive pre-reqs. Pinisetty says this is their opinion, but they need to meet as a department and inform faculty. This is a possibility, not a decision.
- President asks: what about deck? Browne reports there’s a faculty meeting today, and that will be the first time they talk about it, as far as he knows. McNie says a lot of people are sympathetic to the problem the commercial cruise students have, but we don’t know for sure yet. One possibility is waiver and complete in the fall, the other possibility is to return to campus to complete the face-to-face this summer and then go on commercial cruise. Moorhead sees one other scenario: with no cruise this summer that means next summer we’ll have no commercial cruise people, so next summer we’d have a substantial number of extra billets in theory. Could see a scenario where people who don’t want to go this summer just do it next summer.
- President reports: Another option is dockside steaming for 2 weeks, get 14 (really 21 days) of sea time. We need 35 cruising days for this next class. It’s possible we could get a number of rising seniors done, and some of the commercial cruisers could get sea time. What will likely be two cruises next summer, there will likely be a short cruise and a longer one.
- President: “We’re going to do whatever we can to keep all our cadets on track. This is why I want to understand what possible impediments there are: this could be scheduling, availability of equipment, health and safety issues, faculty or staff saying “I don’t want to” (which is not an impediment, but something we need to know about before we can

- move effectively to complete these things). Freshmen are a concern because MARAD and USCG waivers don't apply past the class of 2021, so trying to keep them on track so that we don't have a long tail of requirements that follow them and we're playing catch-up for the whole time they're here, which could cost them/their families more money. So, we're trying to focus on that freshman group as well."
- McNie notes that some of the questions we posed in our [April 24 memo] letter are what a lot of faculty are waiting to hear about. Right now, there are a lot of rumors about how the return is going to work. We need something in writing about a plan. Cadet survey revealed 82% strongly agreed, but that means 1 out of 5 is uncertain about how to maintain safe practices. So taking a little time at the beginning, maybe it's an online thing, maybe it's in the auditorium, but some kind of education needs to happen, including for faculty and staff, so everyone's on the same page as expectations are concerned. But also just having a written plan, so someone can get on their computer, look at it, understand what the expectations are, and that will allow them to make a much more well-informed decision. Faculty hasn't seen the COVID-19 working group presentation and are unsure if that even was a plan.
 - President agrees, says "There's a need for strong communication. This is shared governance at work, and it doesn't produce quick results. This is the development, this is how it should work. We should remember this going forward." Cadets arrive on Day 1, next two days spent educating them, so 4th day is start of instruction.
 - President asks if there's a policy that needs to be amended/suspended for a time to move students along.
 - Curriculum Committee may need to look at revisions
 - Senk asks "can we make it clear what things require curriculum committee decisions and what things can bypass the committee?"
 - President presents Fall issues / wants to vet and re-vet through "well-functioning shared governance." One wrinkle: UC epidemiologist advising the campus offered prediction of resurgence of COVID in October, complicated potentially by a wave of flu (campus wants to get flu vaccines early to at least mitigate that).
 - President asks: "if we need to do another "off-ramp" to virtual, what do we need to do to facilitate that for faculty who could. How might we front-load some of the face-to-face classes so that they could be completed. If you've been to other systems, to other universities, it's almost like a quick inter-session course; you can have a 3-4 week course of intensive study. If there's a possibility of front-loading F2T, U of Maryland does this frequently, with classes 6 days a week. Doesn't mean we have to, but if that's something we can do to obviate the need for that faculty member to be on campus later. If there's a way to front-load August through September, or early October, I'm open to that. If we can find some creative ways for faculty to deliver the curriculum knowing what's coming, we'll be better off to serve our cadets better."
 - President adds: There's a possibility that it might mean leaving for Cruise in early October, taking a COVID-free cruise with us. We won't have luxury of time. We need to have the whole campus focused on an agreed-upon plan. Where do we want to go with the curriculum for the next couple of semesters?
 - Senk mentions her department already discussed this option, lots of potential for faculty input.
 - Browne suggests, "maybe we could split the Fall semester in to two condensed semesters. Fall-1 would be f2f, Fall-2 would be classes that could be taught online."

- Senk reports that some departments already discussing. Things we need to figure out: what happens to IBL/GSMA students who don't "need" any F2F classes? Do they do intensive major classes in Fall-1? What happens to GE courses with mix of students? Do we just create separate sections by major for now?
- President: these are things for faculty to decide.
- Senk asks "Can I clarify what the next steps are? Should we report to our departments? Report out potential options on the table? Ask for input on additional options?"
- President says Provost will be leading effort. Deans/Chairs/Faculty will decide.
- Senk notes: "You mentioned how we need to work quickly. A deadline will be helpful. Can we say that by May 20 we will get a list of potential options?"
- President replies that he will let the provost lead that effort.

Meeting adjourned.