



Emory University Senate

Zoom Meeting

Date: 9/22/20

3:00-4:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Christa Acampora, Douglas Ander, John Bence Mikko Biana, Doug Bowman, Tramaine Braithwaite, Danielle Bruce-Steele, Hope Bussenius, Lynell Cadray, Erin Cahill, Kathy Campbell, Richard Castillo, Desireé Clement, Raphael Coleman, Dawn Comeau, Yolanda Cooper, Alicia DeNicola, Ronake Desai, Raciquel Edwards, Michael Epstein, Gregory Fenves, Emily Fisher, Ronald Foust, Dawn Francis-Chewning, Cynetta Freeman, Stacey Gall, Jen Heemstra, Carol Henderson, Curtis Henry, Tim Holbrook, Dilek Huseyinzadegan, Davis Husk, Octavian Ioachimescu, Laura Kimble, Benn Konsynski, Ninad Kulkarni, Frederica Lamar, Eleanor Liu, Donna Maney, Neal Marshall, Jill Marie Martin, Marilynne McKay, Sarah Meador, Rich Mendola, Theresa Milazzo, Kerry Milhaven, Melissa Morgan, Kat Morris, Giacomo Negro, Lynne Nygaard, Rob O'Reilly, Vanda Palmer-Hudson, Rafael Pardo, Nick Paschetto, David Payne, Jonathan Poole, Bridget Riordan, Kaye-Ann Sadler, David Sandor, Ani Satz, Jack Scott, Nancy Seideman, Stephen Sencer, Kendall Soulen, Jeff Sowell, Rachelle Spell, Lori Steffel, Sidney Stein, Emmakristina Sveen, Emily Swan, Lisa Tedesco, Shana Ware

Excused Absences: Leah Honkanen

I. Welcome and Introduction, Professor Giacomo Negro, President of University Senate

Explained structure and function of University Senate, invited attendees to visit website.

Topics for the current year will include monitoring COVID-19 impact, University finances, social justice, and career support for students.

II. Approval of Consent Agenda

Professor Kendall Soulen moved to approve April 2020 minutes; motion was seconded by Professor Marylynne McKay, the motion carried.

III. University President's Address, Gregory L. Fenves, Emory University President

Shared governance is important to the role, mission, and success of Emory. President Fenves is eager to work with Emory University's governance bodies as he has enjoyed a close partnership with similar groups throughout his career in academia.

In early June President Fenves began transition to Emory, worked with the Provost's office to plan return to campus in Fall Semester. Emory is not in the news for the wrong reasons because a lot of time and care was taken to handle the COVID-19 pandemic by Emory Faculty and Staff. Quality of programs, faculty, and students are impressive in their leadership around COVID-19. President Fenves quoted an interview with Professor Jericho Brown at the Decatur Book Festival about students being the real heroes of the pandemic. President Fenves is looking to keep this healthy momentum going.

A search committee to appoint the next Provost will be organized soon. President Fenves will chair the committee; it will be made up of Faculty and Students. Provost Love has been incredibly successful in a role she did not ask for in this unprecedented time, but we cannot ask her to continue forever.

President Fenves addressed the justified outrage over the murder of George Floyd. He gave credit to students (especially the coalition of Black clubs and organizations) that have brought matters of racial inequality at Emory to his and our attention. Asking questions like: How does Emory represent the role



of enslaved people in the history of the buildings of the University, especially at Oxford Campus? President Fenves has visited Oxford and knows two buildings were built by enslaved people and they have not been recognized by the University. How do we understand, represent, and remember the history of Emory University? Addressing these questions are a top priority for President Fenves.

IV. Academic Affairs Update, Christa D. Acampora, Deputy Provost of Academic Affairs

In planning for continuity and resilience, risk assessment showed that disruption was the largest hurdle to avoid. When planning return to research, University leadership adopted a standard that allowed the University to withstand worsening conditions and avoid another re-direct or shut down. It is thanks to students, staff, and faculty that we are faring as well as we are.

Community engagement is key to keeping campus safe, reaching out to neighbors, partners, and those within the community. We understand that we are part of a greater ecosystem. Reduced density has been key.

Emory Forward dashboard has current data for on-campus testing and many other COVID-19 related resources.

Something to celebrate is we have students all over the world right now, though this is also a challenge with risks to academic continuity. Students may experience disruption based on hurricane season; the University is keeping an eye all over the world to assist students as needed.

Some decisions about Spring will be coming soon. The calendar will likely be altered, reduced density can be expected again. We are hoping to achieve an in-person graduation experience.

V. Graduate Studies Update, Lisa A. Tedesco, Dean, Laney Graduate School and Vice Provost, Academic Affairs

The Laney Graduate School has the second highest enrollment rate after Emory College. Doctoral education and the strength of the research faculty are the heart of the research university in support of Emory's mission as a leading research university and member of the AAU, the American Association of Universities.

The Laney Graduate School and its faculty and staff engaged in addressing what it means to be agile and flexible in this tragic time of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to think about developing programming to advance the University's strategic framework and to minimize duplication of effort, reducing silos, as we respond to the pandemic and advance the work of students and faculty and staff. Some graduate students have chosen to defer enrollment. Currently, the enrollment of international students is down nearly ten percent.

Work on diversity and inclusion continues with strong support and positive results across areas in LGS. Programming supporting students and faculty to address climate, racial equity, and social justice will continue throughout the academic year.

The Laney Graduate School's creation of videos for this next recruitment cycle will promote programs is expected to have a major positive impact on recruitment as we continue travel restrictions in response to the pandemic.

The Career Planning and Professional Development Office in LGS is enhancing all its programming and is virtual this term and in spring term in order to sustain our work in support of doctoral and master's students as they prepare for academic and other opportunities in a variety of professional employment sectors.

VI. Senate Fringe Benefits Committee Update, Sidney F. Stein, Chair

Half day of paid leave for staff on Election Day to encourage civic engagement.



Fringe Benefits committee is looking into extending paid family leave for staff, from three weeks to six weeks; Human Resources is considering and examining the policies at other schools.

Peer institutions have recently been sued by Schlichter law firm, alleging excessive fees in 401(k) plans. Settlements have been made by universities with MIT having the largest outcome at eighteen million dollars.

Emory has settled with agreements to change fund offerings and to reduce the number of record keepers of the retirement plans. The settlement was for \$16.75 million of which \$10,000,000 will be returned to the retirement accounts of employees and retirees, with the balance going to the Schlichter law firm and the plaintiffs.

Human Resources will begin offering a Kaiser-Permanente Health Care plan which may be a more viable option for many members of the staff rather than selecting the high deductible plan as a method for having low premiums.

VII. Election Day Initiative

Senate President Giacomo Negro proposed an email message from the University Senate that encourages voting or another form of civic engagement on election day and to create a working group to finalize the message.

Octavian Ioachimescu moved to create the message, and Rachele Spell seconded the motion. The motion was put to vote and passed unanimously.

VIII. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm