



Zoom Meeting ID: 505 539 0067 3:30-4:30

Called to order at 3:32 p.m. with 15 in attendance. Quorum reached

## MINUTES

- Call to order, Janett Naylor-Tincknell
  - 3:32 p.m. 13 present – quorum met
- Approval of August minutes
  - Denise Orth moves to accept
  - Cole Engel seconds
  - Discussion: Quick summary of minutes with it noted that minutes are available on the website. Going forward minutes to be approved will be emailed along with the upcoming agenda.
  - Approved as submitted
- President's Updates
  - Meeting with Dr. Mason and Dr. Arensdorf
    - Regarding China Faculty at Sias
      - There is pressure for faculty to return to China to teach face to face. Sias is feeling pressure from the ministry of education to deliver classes face to face. There is a perception that students are unhappy with online delivery. China is threatening to cancel those classes if faculty do not return. It has reached the level where the situation threatens the continuation of the China program. Canceled classes are not a good solution for either faculty or students. President Chen values the partnership and would like to see it continue but is frustrated with his limited control over the situation. FHSU hopes that getting 50% of faculty to return will diffuse the situation. FHSU wants faculty to be able to make the decision to go back themselves and not force them.
      - Questions and discussion
        - Will faculty still be paid if classes are canceled?
          - No clear answer at this time.
        - What does administration consider to be 50% for returning faculty?
          - There are about 44 faculty members total. Right now 25% have already returned. There needs to be about 10 people who would need to go back in order to reach that 50%

- What good does it do to send 50% faculty if they end up cancelling classes and those faculty lose their job anyhow?
  - The 50% faculty number comes from FHSU and not Sias. There is no guarantee that it will fix the current issue and that it will be accepted.
- Why is there such an emphasis on going back to in-person instruction?
  - It seems to be student complaint driven. The nature of the complaints from students is unclear.
- Are Chinese students back face to face?
  - Yes. It seems that many Chinese universities are back to face-to-face. Other American universities have returned to face-to-face instruction in China.
- Concerns from China Faculty:
  - Three weeks ago faculty were given about 24 hours to decide if they were going to go back. State department guidance has been discouraging travel. Rise in xenophobia has resulted in harassment for faculty. China is not reporting COVID numbers, nor are there any mitigation efforts being made. Faculty cannot make an informed decision to go back given the lack of information and safeguards from China. Communication from administration has been characterized as “emotionally abusive” regarding threats of job loss.
  - Faculty need to be re-authenticated under the current system to return which adds 2-3 weeks as well as additional costs. Faculty are being asked to sign a waiver because they are “voluntarily” returning and releasing liability for FHSU. There are also questions about the Chinese government requiring vaccination as part of the visa requirements.
  - Clarification: Waiver issue may not be the case. This is something being worked on at the university level.
  - FHSU has an interest in making it possible for faculty to return to preserve the partnership but there’s no sense that FHSU understands the level of risk faculty are taking on. There are health and safety concerns. There are large monetary costs involved and there doesn’t seem to be a move to make the risk worth the compensation. FHSU needs to make a compelling case for why it is so important for faculty to take on this risk.
  - FHSU did not communicate early and often to Chinese students that classes would be online for the fall. Faculty were assured that they would be online for the fall and to plan accordingly. This has changed now. Sias instructors

from other international partnerships are teaching face to face.

- AAUP President Naylor-Tincknell has asked the China faculty to get together and put together some suggestions for solutions and send them to AAUP so they can start working with Faculty Senate to bring them forward to FHSU Administration.
- COVID-19
  - The university dashboard is being updated as best as possible given the complex nature of how the information is gathered. There is potential for another surveillance testing round using a different lab. This may center on pockets of groups like athletics or residential life. More information will be forthcoming.
  - There are currently no outbreaks in buildings or classes. There are some associated with Greek life. Overall the quarantine and isolation numbers are down and there is a good chance we will finish out the semester. “The things we are responsible for are managed very well.”
  - Students who receive accommodation for COVID-19 are exempt from “in person” courses. It is not a 10-14 day break. Students need to be responsible for their work. Faculty are encouraged to be flexible but should be following their attendance and grading policies in their syllabus. Tiger Early Alert is a tool to help and to document situations where students stop responding when they have a COVID-19 accommodation. Faculty are encouraged to contact student affairs if they have further concerns regarding a student who is not engaging in their class.
  - Decisions regarding Spring courses are being made. The University may make a blanket decision to go online if the situation warrants it. When they discuss “on-campus” students they are referring to students who live on campus.
    - Once faculty make a decision for course format (totally online, hybrid, etc.) it cannot be changed. Students are making decisions and need to have the right information to make their choices.
    - Questions and discussion
      - Is there a final date for the decision on course format?
        - September 18th is the final deadline. Faculty cannot change after that date. Pre-enrollment begins October 12
      - What happens when an on-campus course goes online? Do faculty need to develop a totally new course?
        - No, things with a VA designation are assumed to be asynchronous while Totally Online is assumed to have a synchronous component.
    - Concerns from faculty
      - There seems to be a confusion on the part of faculty that going totally online means developing a new course.
      - The hybrid model takes a lot of effort when you have both in-person and students on zoom is a lot to manage in a classroom and affects quality of instruction for both groups. This can affect student evaluations which affects those who are going through tenure and promotion. Knowing this may reduce the number who choose the hybrid format.

- Tenure & Promotion and Merit
  - Conversations regarding work-life balance and ability to do scholarly work in the current environment are valuable. There are few requests for tenure stoppage right now but that may change.
- Financial situation – see notes from Janett
  - FHSU is on solid financial footing. We will need to make sacrifices and shift priorities but we should be ok. We will be tested over the next few years. We may need to pause move to market.
- Where is higher ed going?
  - Hybrid notation may be sticking around.
  - Expand online to have synchronous and asynchronous
    - Need to do better at online. We no longer have the corner on the market. More departments may need to go online. Will need to be more creative
- Open Discussion of Current Faculty Experiences in Classes and On Campus
  - Nothing that wasn't already touched on already.
- Concerns or Accolades?
  - Concern that upper administration has been staunchly dedicated to not being transparent regarding benchmarks for going online again. It is concerning that they aren't sharing their thought process as to why they're resisting transparency on this topic.
  - The practical realities of conducting in-person instruction in the current environment has perhaps changed people's minds regarding face-to-face instruction.
  - The KBOR process for review for low-enrollment programs has been changed and it is unclear why that needs to be changed at this time.
    - This is perhaps more reflective at situations at other schools
- Faculty Senate News
- Other Business
  - Reminder to submit z-course proposals
  - Suggestion to bring concerns regarding low-enrollment courses to faculty senate
- Next Meeting is Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup> at 3:30 pm on Zoom (ID 505 539 0067)
  - Meeting adjourned 4:42 p.m.