

2020-2021 Graduate Council

Thursday, September 3rd, 2020

Members Present: Randolph Burnside, George Boulukos, Phillip Chu, Saran Donahoo, Otis Duncan, Themistoklis Haniotakis, Henry Hexmoor, Karen Jones, Usha Lakshmanan, Junghwa Lee, Liliana Leticariu, Ruopu Li, Adrienne Long, Matt McCarroll, Trish McCubbin, Caleb McKinley, Grant Miller, Marc Morris, Rachel Nozicka, Julie Partridge, Kyle Plunkett, Yuhosua Ryoo, Nicholas Sanislo, Thomas Shaw

Ex-Officio: Lizette Chevalier, Scott Collins, Gary Kinsel, Meera Komarraju, Austin Lane, Stephen Shih

Guests: Breanna Whitley

Meeting Started at 8:02

Morris: Corrections to the minutes?

Corrections were given

Morris: Motion to approve the minutes?

Seconded

Minutes approved (11-0-0)

Remarks from the Chancellor:

Lane: I hope everybody is staying safe. After 8 weeks of being here, I'm starting to remember names and faces. I want to cover 4 areas this morning. First, let's talk a little about enrollment. I tell people that enrollment is everybody's job. It's not just up to the Provost, John Frost, or myself. We need people to sell SIU, whether it's wearing your saluki gear in public or talking to your family. The positive with our enrollment numbers is that we have over 1300 freshmen, which is about a 30% increase. Anytime you get an increase like that, you know that you're laying a really good foundation. We are emphasizing recruiting students from Southern Illinois. We have already reached out to several superintendents and principals from local high schools.

We have a few things coming up this summer, with our Future Scholars program. These students will not have hit the 2.7 GPA, but will be admitted on a conditional basis. Regarding our budget, we have been talking about a 10% reduction across the board. For instance, we won't be rehiring if we have no reason to. Another area that is bringing us down is the amount of tuition waivers that we give out, so we are taking a hard look at the number of waivers going out.

I want to talk a little about our Covid safety plan. I often tell people that a 'plan' can be changed within minutes; it's not something that's set in stone. We've been working very closely with Jackson County Health Department. We are partnering with SIH and Jackson County to provide testing for all faculty, staff and students, should they seek it out. There will be a drive-up at SIH and a walk-up on campus. We have a dashboard on the Saluki Safety site, where you can see the number of cases. We are a little slow to update the numbers because we want to be accurate. You need to be mindful of the fact that these numbers only include those who submit themselves for testing and those from Jackson County. The first week, we had 3 cases, with 2 on-campus. The second week, we had 5 cases, with 3 students on-campus. This week, we had 30- with 2 or 3 faculty members and 9 on campus. The more we test, the more the numbers will go up.

I'm excited to kick off the listening and learning tour, where I will get the opportunity to hear the good, the bad, and the ugly concerning SIU. I want you to tell me how to enhance SIU. This was ultimately be a shared vision. We will be hearing from faculty, staff, students, alum and community members. This will run from September to March. In late March or early April, I expect to have a State of the University address and display what I've heard from the tour.

Questions for the Chancellor:

McCubbin: With respect to the SIH testing, will the data be put on the dashboard?

Lane: Yes. This will cast a wider net as to who's being included on the count. There will also be more information added in the coming weeks, such as information on quarantine and cumulative totals.

Boulukos: Is there the thought of updating the dashboard twice a week?

Lane: I originally wanted the count to be updated more frequently, but Jackson County just doesn't have the speed for that. In this case, accuracy wins over speed.

Remarks from the Provost:

Komaraju: Good morning, everybody. I would like to touch on several areas today. In regards to our current semester, I would like to extend a thank you to everyone who was involved in helping implement the new semester. We are pleased to see a compliance in regards to wearing masks, as well as maintaining social distancing. For Fall, we have 40% of our classes online, 31% face-to-face and 29% hybrid. We have only had a few instances where an instructor wasn't wearing a mask and no complaints of students failing to wear one. We have a working group that includes all of the associate deans, as well as representation from graduate students, undergraduate students, advisement, and registrar. The concerns that we have are the same as those from other universities.

In regards to Spring semester, we are asking instructors to submit their preferred modality, so when students register for the spring classes, they will be able to see how the course will be delivered. Typically, registration opens in the 10th week, but we are trying to get this done ahead of that. We want to finalize course modality by the end of September. Also, we are discussing entering the semester one week later, but going without Spring break. Faculty Senate, Grad Council and USG are supportive of this.

In regards to the reorganization, we had halted discussions during summer, but have picked back up with the start of fall semester. We have 11 schools, which would yield 3 colleges, at various stages.

Regarding the new hires, we've had 3 new deans start: Camille Davidson (School of Law), Cecil Smith (School of Education) and Frank Liu (College of Engineering). We also have Interim Deans for the newly formed College of Agriculture, Life & Physical Sciences, as well as the College of Health and Human Sciences. We've had 33 new tenured-track faculty join us this fall. Even though we are looking to reduce our budget, we recognize the importance of continuing to have mainstay faculty. I ask your help in mentoring the new hires in order for us to retain them.

In regards to the enrollment numbers, the graduate students are in a bit of a decline. We are looking ahead to improve in Fall 2021. I would like the various disciplines to their recruitment needs. We still have a budget that support recruitment, so please don't hesitate to express your needs. What I've learned from recruiting students for many years is that there is no secret ingredient that we don't know. Each one of us needs to sell SIU more wholeheartedly. As far as our retention, our numbers are well above that of the national average.

Questions for the Provost:

Boulukos: This question touches on remarks made by both the chancellor and the provost. Will the review of tuition waivers affect graduate students?

Lane: For graduate students, we are giving out 22 million in waivers, compared to the 7 million from other universities. Right now, we are looking at making sure no one group is unfairly harmed, but we will be considering all areas for cutting tuition waivers.

Haniotakis: Do you know what the enrollment numbers are for other universities? Because of Covid, everyone may have a drop in enrollment.

Lane: We don't have complete data yet, but, per calls I've had, most universities in Illinois are pretty flat.

Jones: Do you think going unranked by US News will have an impact on enrollment in the future?

Komaraju: When we were asked to update our numbers for the new ranking, our staff noticed an error and decided to come forward rather than stay silent. The corrected data meant that the entire ranking would need to be adjusted, so they just removed SIU from the list. It was a human error. Next ranking will come in mid-September.

Lane: In regards to US News ranking, we don't expect many students to be aware of it, however, parents will be, so we anticipate this question being asked during recruitment. We'll be as honest about it as the Provost just was.

Duncan: I want to go back to the tuition waivers. Given that so many first-generation rely on these waivers in order to attend SIU, how will the mission of equality of opportunity and inclusion be kept if these cuts are being made?

Lane: We are creating new categories of academic scholarships for students that fall under various GPA ranges, which we think will match up with first-generation and low socio-economic students. We also have efforts to get students over the threshold-after they've exhausted all other sources of funding like financial aid.

Burnside: Are we looking at cutting the tuition waivers for employees who take classes here? Most institutions don't offer this benefit for employees, so we are also leading the pack in that regard.

Lane: We will not do away with this employee benefit, as this attracts a large talent base within our faculty.

Morris: I would like to add that these tuition waiver discussions have come with compassion for the potentially affected parties. We have to make tough decisions.

Remarks from the VCR:

Kinsel: Good morning, everybody. I'll give a quick update on the research reengagement process. This process was started in late March. Faculty have been sending in their plans over the summer. We've currently approved about 80 plans and 200 labs or spaces.

The Foundation Research Grant program is currently open for submissions. The deadline is September 25th. Research projects are to promote innovation, leadership or student success. This grant isn't intended for simply going into a lab to study biochemicals.

We've had two retirements in the Office of Sponsored Projects Administration. We are trying to refill these positions. We are asking for your patience in the meantime, as our office is short-staffed.

We've finished negotiating the fringe benefit rate. The rate went down from 58% to 48%, which is surprising with the fact the fringe benefit rates normally don't decrease. We are

in the midst of negotiating our indirect cost recovery rate. This involves the evaluation of all the indirect costs that support research and the approval from the federal government. Deans and chairs may be asked questions in the coming months regarding what counts as research space.

Questions for the VCR:

Jones: I know that you've lost another person in oversight. Do you have plans to replace this position as well?

Kinsel: We are waiting for HR to complete the review of applicants. After this process, we'll begin the interviews.

Remarks from Dean of the Graduate School:

Shih: Good morning. I'd like use this opportunity to give a few updates. First, the Graduate School hosted the new student orientation. Over 150 students attended the virtual meeting. We had over 100 grad students for the virtual social meet & greet. In September, we'll be hosting another 2 events: The GA orientation and a workshop for directors of graduate studies. This year, we have the 2nd annual SIUC and SIUE meeting for the Coop PhD program. At last year's meeting, we introduced 4 Coop programs: History, Engineering, Computer Science, and Environmental Resources & Policy. The Pharmacology and Neuroscience program is a new addition for this year. This is a partnership between the School of Medicine, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, and School of Pharmacy.

I would also like give a snapshot on what the Graduate School has been up to. Last October, I presented the Graduate School strategic plan, which focuses on 5 areas: creating sustainable graduate programs, grad student recruitment and enrollment, student success and retention, promoting research, and GS reengineering and optimization. Some of the projects borne out of this plan include forging international partnerships, the 3 Minute Thesis competition and forming a grad admission working group. For my second year as Dean of the Graduate School, I emphasize enrollment. There's going to be a proposal to form a Recruitment and Retention working group. This will require collaboration between Enrollment Management, Center for International Education, all of the academic graduate programs. We are also looking to develop dual and online programs by using data on the most in-demand majors. I'm thinking of institutional efficacy; pertaining to the GS, this includes better integrating the admission processes among enrollment management, CIE, utilizing the efficiency of SLATE, better allocating available TA funds, as well as optimizing the process for GA contracts.

We will be hiring an Assistant Director of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions, which will be a recreated position. The duties of this position involve supervising the Admissions Office, fostering strong collaborative relationships between SIUC's graduate programs and the

offices of CIE, Enrollment Management, being part of the Slate implementation team, university retention committee, and the newly-formed enrollment committee.

Pertaining to the graduate catalogue, there has been a change that expands the pathways for an international student to meet the English proficiency requirements. This change has already been made at a number of other institutions. The holistic graduate admissions working group was key in arriving at this decision.

Report from Chair:

Morris: I just want to recap the work the Grad Council has been doing. We are helping with the reorganization as much as possible. We are rewriting the operating paper with the new representation of the reorg in mind. Also in the works is getting a graduate faculty listserv put together.

In respect to the council's expiring terms, there will be a slew of members whose terms end Spring 2021, because 2020 expiring terms were delayed one year. I would like to stagger these exits to avoid a mass loss at once.

Two days ago, the GPSC had their awards. I would like the two recipients here today to speak on their award and what they did to receive it. I want the council to hear this good news. Caleb?

McKinley: Good morning, everybody. I want one of three recipients to receive the Excellence in Graduate Teaching award. What I emphasize in the classroom when I'm teaching is being transparent with the students: What they're learning, why they're learning it, who I am as a person and how I live my life. I believe that when you're dedicating a lot of time in classroom, you should know who the person standing in front of you is. It's a great privilege to have been awarded this.

Morris: We also have Breanna Whitley, a recipient of the GPSC 2020 Research award.

Whitley: Thank you all for having me here. I'm a graduate student in the Plant Biology program. For my research, I study the evolution and ecology of a plant group called Trema, which is a close relative to cannabis. While this plant doesn't have the same effects of cannabis, there is research that shows that it has efficacy for anti-malaria treatment. More specifically, I work on the neo-tropical group. I use statistical tools as well as biogeography to understand relationships within this group. While the group is classified as one species, preliminary research shows that there may be several species. This research is important for a better understanding biodiversity as well as ecological niches.

Morris: Thank you. We would also like to acknowledge the recipients of the 2020 GPSC Distinguished Service Award. Among them are Lizette Chevalier and Julie Partridge. Thank you for your work.

Report from GPSC:

McKinley: GPSC had its first meeting on Tuesday. It was nice to have our new members joining us. Due to Covid, we were unable to have our awards ceremony in person. Our next meeting will be hybrid.

Report from Vice Chair:

Shaw: Nothing to report.

Report from Dean's Council:

Collins: On behalf of Dean's Council, we want to say thanks to everyone. I agree with the sentiment that if we don't tout the good news of SIU, no one will.

Report from Faculty Senate:

Miller: Good Morning. Our last meeting was on July 14th. We passed our resolution concerning a minor for Recreational Leadership in the School of Human Sciences. We approved the changes to the undergraduate residency requirements for graduation. We also passed a resolution to give a charge to our faculty senate standing committees in order to address issues concerning diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Report from Research Committee:

Jones: Nothing to report.

Report from Program Review Committee:

Donahoo: Nothing to report.

Report from Educational Policy Committee:

Partridge: We have a resolution in its second reading. There are no new revisions since last meeting. The committee is presenting the resolution as written.

Morris: Motion to approve the resolution on certificate hours?

Moved and seconded

Resolution approved 18-0-0

Report from Program Committee:

Haniotakis: Nothing to report.

Morris: Thank you all for your time. See you at the next meeting. Motion to adjourn?

Moved and seconded

Meeting adjourned at 9:48 AM

