

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
University of Missouri-St. Louis
Faculty Senate
June 3, 2020
Special Senate Meeting**

Senate Chair Alice Hall called the Special Senate Zoom meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Dr. Hall explained that the Faculty Senate does not usually meet in June, but due to the unusual circumstances of this semester, the Senate is meeting to give the senators an opportunity to ask questions about various topics of concern and to share the information with their colleagues.

Dr. Hall informed the Senate that she is working on two messages that will be forthcoming. The first message is a recommendation from UM System President Choi. He has asked the Senate Chairs from all four campuses to craft a message on the importance of faculty developing flexible and thoughtful plans for teaching in the fall that allow faculty to teach students effectively and safely during this time of the pandemic, but remaining flexible if the classes have to move to 100% online if needed. Dr. Hall said that she plans to include helpful faculty resources in the message.

Dr. Hall reported that she is also working with the Staff Association on a joint message that addresses the death of George Floyd and the emotional impact it has had on the country, as well as what it has highlighted about the ongoing systemic problems in our society. The message from the Faculty Senate and the Staff Association will be sent to show support and solidarity with our black faculty and staff colleagues at UMSL.

Dr. Hall invited Chancellor Sobolik to speak to the Senate and elaborate on some of the important issues the campus is facing. Chancellor Sobolik said that she was happy to attend this special meeting to answer any questions from faculty. She has also met with the staff to address their concerns and will meet with the Student Government Association to respond to questions.

Chancellor Sobolik said that she understands how hard it has been the past few months as everyone copes with a viral global pandemic which has caused big changes in our lives. She commented that now the country is dealing with systemic racial disparities that have been highlighted by the death of George Floyd. Chancellor Sobolik stated that all of us need to face it, own it, and change it. She commented that we at UMSL have some work to do, but we will continue to do our best to transform lives.

Chancellor Sobolik thanked all who attended her livestream on May 29. She stated that everyone has worked hard to balance the budget amidst revenue losses due to COVID-19, while looking at further reductions for FY21. Chancellor Sobolik said that the Unified Command Team is moving forward with an organized repopulation plan for the campus. She also reported that summer enrollment is up 4.4% for the first time in seven years.

Dr. Hall opened the meeting up for questions. Senators brought questions from their departmental colleagues and addressed them to Chancellor Sobolik, Provost Marie Mora, CFO Tanika Busch, and Mr. Jim Hertel from Human Resources.

Some of the discussion covered the following topics:

- Although the campus has already made major budget cuts, it is expected that an additional \$9–14.5M reduction will be needed for FY21 (which begins July 1). Administrators are working on ways to meet this additional shortfall such as revisiting the recommendations of the Academic Program Prioritization Committee that met in 2018.
- In Chancellor Sobolik’s livestream address on May 29, she announced a reorganization for some of the administrative positions. The livestream address has been recorded and is available at: <https://youtu.be/SCH-xffMtes>
- Senators inquired about changes to the Graduate Program and who will be making decisions regarding graduate students. As of July 1, the Director of the Graduate Program will report to the Provost. More information will be forthcoming at that time.
- The Senate discussed the increased workload for tenured faculty. Provost Mora reported that they are working on guidelines for workload exemption requests. The information will be sent to department chairs soon.
- The Fall schedule was discussed. The Fall 2020 schedule will include a combination of blended and online courses. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is available to assist faculty as they prepare for the Fall. In particular, the Resilient Course Design program offers faculty support to design a flexible, blended course with a resilient course plan including backup plans for possible changes in instructional mode and assessment. The program runs Jun 1 – Aug. 2. The CTL is also working with faculty who may have specific IT needs for classrooms (contact Dr. Keeta Holmes for more information).
- The Unified Command Team is working on the repopulation of the campus. The health and well-being of faculty, staff, and students is a priority. Social distancing guidelines are being considered. The Team is working with the Registrar’s Office, Facilities Management, and ITS to review the availability of classrooms. They are looking at how desks are aligned to ensure that faculty and students have enough room for social distancing in classrooms. Because of limited classroom space with social distancing, classes greater than 50 students will be moving on-line.
- Ms. Tanika Busch reported that the expenses for COVID-19 will be handled centrally through her office. The Unified Command Team is reviewing COVID-19 related needs as submitted by units. They are considering a requirement for students to wear masks.
- Faculty who request to teach only on-line due to medical reasons for themselves or a family member should contact Human Resources which will consider their requests and work with their department chairs.

Dr. Hall thanked everyone for attending this special Senate meeting and adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erika Gibb
Senate/Assembly Secretary

(Minutes written by Loyola Harvey, Faculty Senate/University Assembly Office)