**Council of Chairs**

**September 9, 2020**

Present: Trisha Folds-Bennett, Amelia Harris, Scott Bevins, Amy Clark, Andy Cox, Tom Costa, John Cull, Jacob Somervell, Robin Woodard, Brandy McCarroll, Michael McNulty, Bryan Hoyt, Robin Benke

**COVID-19 Updates:** We do not have any new positive cases currently. When a student or employee has COVID symptoms, they get tested and are turned over to the health department. They are told they should isolate until they receive test results. The health department will be responsible for doing the contact tracing and will typically wait until they know whether or not the results are positive before tracing. Once they get a positive result, they will contact our health clinic and do the contact tracing. All the information is processed through VA Dept. of Health (dictated by the governor). Students must go through the process on the student portal to request remote instruction. Chairs should receive emails regarding students who have gone through the process. Faculty can check with Narda to determine whether a student has gone through the process and has been approved.

**Course Evaluations:** discussion on mid-term evaluation of Block A courses to determine what is working and what is not working. These will not be summative, only formative evaluations both for individual faculty members who may need to make mid-course adjustments and for us, as a Council, so that we might make recommendations for the spring schedule.

We need to add questions into our regular course evaluations (including remote instruction, inclusion and diversity information). We need volunteers to work on evaluations, please email Trisha or Kasi to volunteer.

Midterm grades: Trisha will email faculty members to let them know midterms for Block A are necessary for all students in all courses (if your department has its own system to give students feedback that is fine – no need to duplicate efforts). The goal is to make sure students know where they stand. Michael suggests leaving reporting open a bit longer so it encompasses more of the student’s work.

Spring Planning Discussion:

* We need to make decisions regarding course calendar. Do we start on time (Jan. 12) or do we delay? Do we cancel or keep spring break (March 12-16)? Should we consider blocked schedules again? What do we recommend regarding remote instruction?
* Amelia would prefer to avoid the blocks. Lack of data is a concern because it’s still very early on to gauge how this semester is going.
* We have to decide what the schedule will be before students begin signing up for courses. We can delay that, but we don’t want to wait too long.
* Spring break may need to be canceled to give us more time and to prevent students from traveling. Should we push the start of spring semester back a week to Jan. 19?
* Scenario 1: Could we say we will do regularly scheduled classes, but each class will be hybrid (left up to professor to level of remoteness – can be fully remote or barely)? We would still have to be flexible for students to take classes remotely as needed, following the procedures in place. Faculty and students will have had more time to adapt to the technology.
* What about a j-term? This could help prevent the long gap between Thanksgiving and January 12 (or 19th if pushed back), but Trisha fears students will not take advantage of it and feels faculty may need the break as well. Most feel we need to consider j-terms for the future, but need to allow more time to plan.
* Trisha things we would test students before returning for spring semester.
* What data do we need? Percentage of students struggling, formative evaluations to see how things are going and preferences
* Science students would prefer not to have block scheduling in the spring. Some students noted having a heavy Block A and light Block B, etc. so spreading courses out would need to be a focus. VPAR practical classes have the same problem.

Conclusion:

Start on time, regularly scheduled courses (not blocks), all courses are hybrid and faculty have some discretion to decide how remote each course can be. We must be clear that social distancing will still be in place so more sections may be needed in some courses. Trisha plans to pull data to help see trends in course scheduling on campus so we can plan accordingly. Ideally each course will need to schedule a classroom in hopes that they can meet in person to some degree. Course scheduling will have to be decided based upon students’ needs and data driven. We cannot offer classes that cannot go online or that could not maintain social distancing.

**Strategic Plan:** we have scheduled the Parthenon Consultants to present to the Council of Chairs on September 23rd. In preparation for that meeting, I have attached a power point presentation that summarizes their work on our behalf. Discussion of current mission statement draft:

**The University of Virginia’s College at Wise exists for its students. Drawing upon the Appalachian region’s rich history and culture, the College strives to build a diverse and close-knit community of learners. Through individualized attention and commitment to student support, UVA Wise creates opportunities for those seeking wisdom and an enriched life. Our graduates and employees are well-rounded citizens with the drive to serve, lead and uplift their communities, the nation, and the world.**

Michael would like to have liberal arts and public institution included in statement as well as financial accessibility and high-quality education. Tom agrees in include this. Include this in the same realm as mission, vision, goals etc. in the least.

Conclusion was: in a mission statement when you mention liberal arts, you find yourself having to explain what it means as there is a lot of confusion as to what that means. One of our value statements would reflect our identity as a public liberal arts institution, but would be able to flesh that out a bit more.

One of our values would also be accessibility, supportive, etc. particularly for first generation students, our regional students and those who need financial assistance.

Andy asked if we could clean up the first sentence and remove/reword “its.”

John would like to add success/succeed somewhere – that we prepare our students to succeed.

On 9/23 the Parthenon consultants are going to present their work to us. Please read slides carefully before the presentation.

They also did a cost analysis that was all encompassing and did a lot of comparative work. We will discuss those findings further.

**Role of the Department Chair:**

Tom mentioned increased workload for chairs i.e. the paperwork from state, federal, SCHEV, etc. and the compensation has not kept pace with the addition to workloads. A discussion regarding reduction of course load could help with this.

Bryan appreciates being able to be candid.

Brandy talked about the high stress levels and how appreciative she is of the work chairs do.

Andy discussed how many moving pieces make up a chair position; feels it is truly not a 9 month contract because they must work continuously. Much more to the position than most realize.

**Retirement program:**

Still making decisions for the faculty side. The BOV will have to weigh in and the governor will have to sign off as well.

This will be a period of restructuring.

**Misc:**

If you want an iPad Pro, contact Andy as he has a few extras, otherwise he plans to turn them over to Scott.