

Newark Faculty Council Minutes
April 13, 2020

Present at Webex Meeting:

Nancy Cantor
Ashwani Monga
John Gunkel
Sherri-Ann Butterfield

Guests:

Amber Carter-Randolph
Taja-Nia Henderson
Piotr Piotrowiak
Corlisse Thomas

Alexander Gates, Chair

Jane Gilman
Michael Barnett
Rosa Oppenheim
April Benasich
Ashaki Rouff
Brandon Paradise
Corlisse Thomas
Haesum Kim
Jiahuan Lu
John Kettle
Joseph Markert
Beryl Satter
Tim Raphael
Miklos Vasarhelyi

Alexander Gates: .

- *Inside Higher Ed* said that Rutgers would lose \$200 million over three months.

-First: Senate Election. We have to vote for *two* senators. Gates will resend the ballot; we must vote ASAP. Any additional nominations can be sent to Ana Rivas.

John Gunkel:

One senate seat is a temporary one-year fill-in for someone who stepped down. The other is the standard 3-year term.

Q: Will they send statements so we know who we are voting for?

A: We can ask for a statement. It's due soon.

Gates:

We need elections for next year for the Newark Faculty Council (before our next meeting).

Q: Don't we usually wait until we know who the new members are, before we vote for NFC positions?

A: We will look into it.

Chancellor's Office: Changes Due to COVID-19

--Gates made a list of changes to the campus in response to COVID-19: Current Courses, Budget Forecasts, Campus Construction Projects, End of Semester and Summer Programs, Hiring and Promotions, Special Projects, Graduate school, Hardship for Students and Outlook for AY 2020-2021.

Cantor:

-State of NJ revenue has tanked. Sales tax and income tax has gone way down. The governor had to put a freeze on March, April, May and June spending, and it could go through September. State appropriations across all of Rutgers are frozen because of uncertainty of the state budget. Plus there are refunds we have to give; grants and revenue that we will lose. It's a substantial hit to us. We're working night and day with the deans to model scenarios for fiscal year 2021 and how to make up for hits in Fiscal year 2020.

Some "Care Act" moneys have been released, for direct student emergency aid. Care Team is working 24/7 on this. We're trying to figure out best way to give out the emergency money. There are millions in housing and dining refunds that we have to give out. We want it to go to the neediest students (those without housing, jobs, etc). We're pushing to keep students on track for graduation.

Like most public institutions, we're being hit by all sides. However, our students have been flexible and resilient. Staff has been extraordinary. We're doing "Virtual Admitted Students Day," "Virtual Town Halls," etc. Financial aid staff are working very hard.

Brian Strom thinks it's possible NJ has reached a peak in corona virus infections, but we won't know for a while. We're expecting a long haul. We're planning for remote instruction through the summer at least.

We need to keep our students on track for social mobility.

Current Courses: Ashwani Monga

-Faculty and deans, as well as staff and students have been phenomenal on keeping classes going. We've done all we can to help students with issues (getting them laptops, etc). Faculty

have been working hard to reach all the students. Summer planning has started. Students' option to take pass/ fail will continue into the summer. It could continue through the fall – we can't yet tell.

John Gunkel:

We used "Run for Success" to survey all instructors. We've gotten high response rates. Most of the problems were typical (students not showing up or submitting work). We did find a number who also had problems with internet connections or other technical issues.

Q: Have we had to cancel any classes because of COVID-19?

A: Some have had to reconfigure themselves (labs that went into demonstration modes instead of hands-on, for example). However, we haven't had to cancel classes. Same for art classes, which have been reconfigured to work virtually.

Budget Forecasts:

Chancellor Cantor:

-Budget is very uncertain, but we are trying to be flexible (re: deposits, late fees, etc). We're trying to make up things that have been frozen (for example, NJ Step – we want it to keep going no matter what). We're working on how to help international students who can't get here. For now, our enrollment figures for the fall are holding steady.

We're assuming it will take the state quite a while to recover. Therefore we're modeling a 20% reduction in state aid (and overall). We're going over every school and college and unit to determine how the hiring freeze might work, and what exceptions might be made.

Amber Carter-Randolph:

We are actively modeling budget cuts, and looking into how enrollments will affect tuition moneys etc. We are being flexible as possible.

Sherri-Ann Butterfield:

-We're lifting financial holds on students so they can register. We don't want to add anxiety to students who are already anxious. No one wants a hiring freeze, but we don't have much choice. The only exceptions are only if a department simply cannot function without a given hire. The exceptions must be truly exceptional.

Q: How does this relate to PTLs?

A: Cantor: We're going through hires course by course, line by line, area by area. There will still be some PTL hires, but we're going to try to be as consistent as possible. People might need to run larger classes. We'll only be rehiring who we absolutely must hire – long-time faculty, for example.

Q: What about crowded classrooms?

A: They'll be either remote, or functioning normally.

Q: What about the tenure freeze?

A: All promotions are still in play, with 10% increases. All contractual agreements are still in place.

Q: Regarding Pass/ fail: what about those who got incompletes last semester? Can they still get pass/fail retroactively?

Ashwangi and Gunkel

-This will not be applicable to things that happened before COVID-19.

Q: If we have to do online preparation for the fall, how are we do handle it?

Monga:

-We have a university-wide committee to investigate whether we have to do online teaching this fall. They will investigate what will be needed to help faculty do online classes.

Gates:

-What about FCP? Faculty Compensation Program?

Cantor:

-It's on hold at the moment.

Campus Construction Projects: Amber Carter-Randolph

-3rd floor of Dana and HLLC project at 48 New Street are ongoing, though there have been slowdowns. Both have probably been pushed back 1-3 months in their completion (so they'll be completed by fall instead of this spring). There are a few smaller projects we are trying to wrap up.

-We are still planning for new projects, such as One-Stop at Conklin; we still have architects and planners working on them. We won't be breaking new ground on projects until we are clearer on our financial situation.

-End of Semester and Summer Programs:

Butterfield: We have **postponed** commencement. One option is a virtual commencement.

Another is a kind of in-person commencement. We have no final date but we will do something. We're also figuring out how, when and where we'll do a graduate commencement. Summer programing: those that can go remote already have gone remote.

Taja-Nia Henderson:

Graduate school is working on a commemorative pamphlet for the graduating students. We want to use funds used for hooding ceremonies for an emergency fund for vulnerable graduate students. We will come together to support them, since we can't come together to celebrate

them. Many of our PH.D. students scatter around the world once they graduate, so we're trying to figure out a way to celebrate them now. We want to help those who are getting no aid at all.

Q: Is it still possible for students to return for an in-person event?

A: We would welcome any who can come back for the 2021 ceremony – with their family.

Q: Will the students still be certified that they have graduated?

A: (Cantor): Absolutely. We'll get them their diplomas (which is how it works anyway).

Q: Has the grading period been extended (when we can turn them in)? It's harder to grade them now.

A: Monga: We don't want to extend the grading deadline.

Q: How long do we have to do the grading after our finals?

A: Usually it is 3-4 days after the exam (72 hour deadline). But if we delay it, it can also delay the students' chance to be certified. We must be flexible so that our students can graduate, since they'll need to grab jobs ASAP in a hard job market.

Q: Can we get a list of graduating seniors?

A: Yes, that won't be hard to get from your deans.

Butterfield:

We will get you the hard date of final grades. We can look at our rosters to see who is a graduating senior (it lists date of graduation).

Gates: What about summer programs? All of mine have been cancelled (those bringing students to campus, etc).

Cantor: Many of these programs are going remote. Try to do that instead of cancelling. It may look different, but it can go on.

Butterfield: Many summer programs are still going on, in cases where they can do something remotely.

Piotr Piotrowiak: How will research be conducted on campus, now and in the near future?

-We've had a 90% suspension of laboratory research.

-We've had complete suspension of in person human subject research.

-We've suspended breeding and cage count, but tried to preserve genetic lines.

-We're working on maintaining major instrumentation (superconducting NMR, MRI and FT-MS machines, for example)

-All research personnel are still being supported.

-RN- ORSP is still open (remotely). Proposals are still being submitted and awarded.

-We have weekly meetings with SVP Kimball's Research team. We're also planning transition to "restart and recovery" (with no target date). We'll start with faculty, then graduates, then undergrads.

Q: Reduction in cage numbers was hard for biology. Can we get economic support to preserve genetic lines of mice? It's expensive and wasn't budgeted for in the grant.

A: We'll cover the expenses for up to six lines per PI. Keep track of all COVID-19 expenses and we will see if grants or someone will be able to cover it later. For now, we'll do emergency funding.

Q: If we have faculty without immediate money to cover preservation, then what?

A: The deans should cover it.

Q: What about human research? Ex: working with babies. How will that get restarted? Will people be tested (for antibodies) and then be allowed back in the lab?

A: We haven't worked this out yet.

Gates: Grants will need no-cost extensions. How will our research office help people get their grants extended?

A: There's not much we can do except process the request. Most of the time the extensions are pro-forma. Given the circumstances, I'm assuming extensions will be perfunctory.

HLLC: Butterfield: We're trying to keep everything on track remotely. We're hoping there'll be the usual enrollment. Run to the Top is also continuing.

Taja-Nia Henderson: Graduate school.

-Students have been heartened by work of faculty who are being flexible about dissertation defenses, electronic signatures, etc. Henderson is working with students individually to ensure that those who need to file and defend are able to do so. We had a firm April 1 deadline for defenses, but we've extended that. Trying to give students what they need to produce the dissertations they want to write. April 15 is deadline for new students with offers and funding to make their decisions. Henderson is working on this with students individually. We're attending to students who are being harmed by hiring freezes. We are letting students know what support is available to them. We're planning an informal drop-in program for students this week, to help end isolation.

-We've been running dissertation boot-camps 2x/year since 2016. It's part of PPP. Now it's online. It's a way to give them tools (not to give them additional pressure). We did it over spring break and will do it again in August.

-Problems with recruitment: 1/3 of our grad enrollments are international. Many won't be able to get visas to come here in the fall. We're keeping lines of communication open. It's challenging. Many consulates internationally are not even giving visas. We're considering remote learning or deferred start dates. If fall is remote, maybe we need to move research up to the first semester. We're exploring every possible avenue. Ask Henderson if you have any questions, they will do their best to answer!

Q: We're working on remote instruction for international graduate students. It's working OK.

Henderson: If you know of students in 26 who are in trouble, please reach out to her.

Gates: This is a very tough time for our students who were already facing economic and food insecurity. What else are we doing for at-risk students?

Corlisse Thomas: Counselling is now doing video sessions. We're getting a steady flow of students. There's no wait time. We also have telemedicine for students. Our food pantry is physically open 3x/week. All you need is a Rutgers ID. MW 1-4, Fridays 10-noon. We'll have about 300 students on campus after the move-outs. These include grad students and students who are housing -insecure. We are attending to these students. Career Development: We are working with students about to graduate. We're preparing them for polishing resumes, interviews, etc. We're doing an online orientation for new students.

Our "Care Team" is working closely with office of financial aid and student governing associations to help students. They are having trouble paying for food, rent, or utilities. We are awarding emergency aid. If you know students needing assistance – food, rent, laptops, whatever – we can help. MY-RUN, our student-facing website, has a large list of resources for students. It shows operating hours and contact information for all of our campus resources, and for external resources (such as applying for SNAP, or landlord issues, or wi-fi issues, or how to homeschool young children).

Cantor: Corlisse's group has been phenomenal. They have emptied Woodward Hall, and are now cleaning it, and then it will be turned over to health-care workers who can't go home.

Thomas: All of our students are struggling, not just those in crisis. Therefore we're keeping student events going. We're starting the "Destress Fest" early – on Monday! It will go all month. We're available to talk to students.

Cantor: We have no set plans for next year. Instead, we are modeling alternatives. Public Health people are expecting that even if we can do contact tracing, there could be another upswing of infections in the fall.

Q: Newark is under a close order. How will it affect campus operations?

Cantor: We've been in touch with the Mayor's Office. They will let our skeletal operations continue.

Elizabeth Searles, Library:

-it's still open for business. We are getting more virtual resources. We are offering online research help. We're still here for everyone.

Q: It's inspiring to hear about what we're doing. I've never been prouder of working here. Will summaries of what's been said here be sent out?

A: Minutes are being taken. It's our job to get information out to our individual units. It will be harder this spring. We ought to try to get the information out.

Q: There's a restaurant in Newark that's been giving away 100 meals a night. Others are taking similar steps. Is there a site where this can be publicized?

A: Contact Marcia Brown.

Q: "Stories from the Pandemic" is being created, with high school students as frontline reporters. We'd like to extend it to Rutgers students. It will also be archived going forward. Please share if you're interested.

A: Reach out to Corlisse.

Monga: criteria for publicly engaged scholarship (for external reviews) has been updated. It's now on the website.

Minutes by Beryl Satter