

April 6, 2020 3:00 PM Deans' Council Zoom Meeting Minutes

Present: Paul Blake, Steve Durst, Lincoln Gibbs, Dave Damari, Steve Reifert, Steve Halko, Leonard Johnson, Trinity Williams, Dave Nicol, Rich Goosen, Mandy Seiferlein, Jason Bentley, Meeting Minutes: Robin Hoisington

Temporary Job Actions Update

Paul Blake shared that all unions have been notified of an upcoming announcement from the President. Paul held a discussion with the FFA and FNTFO unions and neither of those unions are affected. It is anticipated that the first round of job actions comes into effect April 7, 2020 for those unable to work remotely. The deans will need to keep track of names and hours of employees continuing to work and identify the load percentage. Health Professions (13) and Optometry (6) are working on their lists and will submit them to Paul today.

Paul distributed unemployment compensation and benefits information and said that additional information should be coming tomorrow. Affected employees would be brought back as physical situations and/or employment conditions brings them back. The time period of now to July 31st is approximately 120 days. Human Resources will initiate unemployment measures; contact them for further information. We will also need to collect information on employees unable to work more than 55%. Phase 2 job action information/instructions should be coming from HR soon.

Summer/Fall Registration Summary

Paul Blake shared registration numbers for summer and fall. Discussion included concerns regarding when the academic year and summer enrollments may be back to normal since current numbers have declined. The University is facing unique circumstances. Students are questioning if they have to continue on with more online classes formerly taught in studios and classrooms and there is a sense that students were more upset than the faculty when they had to switch to online learning from a physical classroom presence. As Ferris draws its enrollment from many rural counties, students may be suffering more with technology and internet issues when they moved to a virtual learning experience. Additionally, not being allowed to teach hands-on courses with them does not allow faculty to mentor them. Virtually teaching courses requiring specific mediums and tools, for example, at the Kendall studios, which is also very challenging. Faculty can do demonstrations, but there is a lack of access to the studios and tools, and tools are expensive for the students. There is also a common fear factor that exists for families, and higher education is not being prioritized by many at this time, even when the content is brought to them. They are hitting the pause button on higher education for now as a part of their children's future. Additionally, employment prospects are currently problematic, which brings a sense of even more anxiety, and students are questioning why they should continue pursuing their education when the employment outlook can be so bleak. All of these current issues are prohibitive to enrollment. Therefore, we need to focus on creative ways to recruit, market and stimulate enrollment. The deans shared and discussed ideas including the possibility of allocating scholarship dollars (Ferris Futures/matching scholarships, etc.) toward student financial incentives to help them recover; investigating whether student employees could remain with the University as student employees beyond the semester; identifying and offering more Certificate programs to help students become as marketable as possible; possibly offering reduced online tuition; developing a junior/senior bridge program this year for students not allowed to complete their traditional high school year; a

semester-long program could help transition them into the college mainstream; creating a path for them to pursue part-time class work as an alternative track to full-time; and creating a student mentor program, such as the one at Kendall to help increase their motivation factor in the classroom and in their future. Jason Bentley shared that our SLA and tutoring areas are equipped and already offering online services, and if we could flex FLITE personnel into serving SLA tutoring sections, we would have even more flexibility. He is reviewing options. He also discussed a summer bridge program with reduced tuition. Now we need to immediately work on our marketing campaign and marketing messages, including social media and digital.

Paul thanked everyone for their comments and asked them to continue to send him ideas which he will take to the Presidents Council. He will send information on current enrollment to the deans today.

The next Zoom DC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 8th at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Robin Hoisington