

MINUTES

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
BOARD OF REGENTS**

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Thursday, April 8, 2021

Call to Order and Attendance

Committee Chair Regent Zeeck called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

Assistant Secretary Tennant called the roll. Present by videoconference and telephone were the Regents: Regents Zeeck (Chair), Ayer, Benoliel, Jaech, MacPhee, Pogolian, Rice, Riojas, Tamaki; President Cauce, Provost Richards, the Secretary.

Regent Harrell was absent.

Approval of Minutes

Regent Zeeck announced that, hearing no objections, the minutes of the Committee meeting on March 11, 2021, were approved, as distributed.

Academic and Administrative Appointments (Action) (Item No. A-1)

Approve Graduate Degree Program Title Changes: Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, School of Public Health (Action) (Item No. A-2)

Hearing no objections or questions, Regent Zeeck announced that Items A-1 and A-2 would appear on the full Board's consent agenda, as distributed. Regent Pogolian abstained from Item A-1.

See Attachments A-1 and A-2.

COVID-19 Instructional Update (Information only) (Item No. A-3)

Provost Richards reported that his remarks will focus on instructional preparations for Autumn Quarter 2021. To provide perspective, he noted that the UW was the first United States university to move to remote instruction. No one then imagined that situation to last more than a year. Remote instruction has been a qualified success, thanks to the efforts of faculty, staff, and students, in particular to the support available to UW faculty members. It is nevertheless clear that the every one craves the togetherness and the community that only in-person contact can provide.

Autumn Quarter 2021 is intended to be mostly in-person. As limits on gathering and required social distancing are relaxed, the number of available seats in classrooms will increase. For instance, moving from six to three feet of required distancing quadruples the number of seats available on the Seattle campus, and would allow the resumption of all classes up to 200 students in an in-person format, with optional or alternative remote sections available. Sports, clubs, and gatherings will begin to resume, even as masks will still be required in classes and for most indoor social activities. It has not yet been determined whether the UW will require vaccination, although it may not be possible to require the use of what are still technically experimental vaccines. The risk of transmission is slow when masking and social distancing protocols are

followed. He hopes that vaccination rates can exceed 80 percent voluntarily. In terms of infrastructure, 86 classrooms are now outfitted for lecture capture, which faculty members are encouraged to adopt.

President Cauce observed that there will be more in-person offerings during Spring Quarter, including study spaces, access to faculty offices and laboratories, office hours, study groups, and so on, provided masking and distancing protocols are observed. All planning currently has an asterisk, though she is confident of an upward trajectory toward greater in-person interaction. She expects a high level of compliance.

Asked about Commencement and new student orientations, Provost Richards replied that there will be three virtual commencements, one for each campus, with further events for individual schools and departments. Some units may choose to add a drive-by element. With respect to orientations, plans are underway to orient last year's and this year's freshmen classes. He will provide an update next month or in June on those preparations. President Cauce added that, while virtual commencements are not ideal, it proved impossible to accommodate students, families, and guests safely in Husky Stadium.

Margaret Shepherd, Chief of Staff in the Executive Office of the President and the Provost and Chief Administrative Officer, recognized the significant efforts of faculty members, many of whom also cope with additional obligations on account of the response to the pandemic. The University is continuing optional telework through September, as a sign of compassion, particularly for the parents of children facing a lack of childcare or remote schooling.

Asked further about orientations, President Cauce observed that orientations will begin even before students set foot on campus through the addition of telemedicine-style advising. Provost Richards stated that he worries most about harmonizing the disparate levels of preparation among freshmen and entering students, because remote learning has likely exaggerated prior learning gaps. The administration will pay attention to learning gaps in the core courses that are gateways to heavily sequenced science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) courses of study. Faculty Senate Chair Professor Angotti feels confident that professors will respond proactively when students are falling behind.

See Attachment A-3.

Adjourn

Hearing no other business to come before the Committee, Regent Zeeck adjourned the Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting at 10:18 a.m.

Approved at the meeting of the Committee on May 13, 2021