

UFC Chair's Report, Andrew Dolby

UFC Special Meeting

June 12, 2020

Over the last several weeks, I have been serving on the Academics Subgroup of the "Fall Return to Campus" Presidential Task Force. This subgroup is charged with making recommendations to the Task Force regarding logistics of delivering the 2020-21 academic program while complying with COVID-19 health and safety guidelines and constraints. The subgroup meets twice per week and joins the full Task Force for one weekly meeting. Other faculty representations on the subgroup are Anand Rao and Ken Machande. Topics of discussion so far have included the 2020-21 academic calendar, possible inclusion of a voluntary pilot January term in 2021, and implementation of health and safety guidelines and procedures in classrooms and laboratories.

I also served as a representative of the UMW faculty in a virtual townhall meeting with Virginia's Secretary of Education, Atif Qarni, on May 28. Initiated by Secretary Qarni, the meeting was designed to serve as a listening session to help the Department of Education provide effective resources and services for faculty to meet COVID-19 related needs and to address general concerns and challenges currently facing faculty. It was attended by approximately 50 representatives of Virginia's public and private institutions of higher education, representatives of the Faculty Senate of Virginia, the AAUP, and Virginia State Senator Ghazela Hashmi (District 10). Anand Rao, representing the Virginia Education Work Group, also attended. Issues discussed included faculty health and safety, challenges of maintaining connections with students, access and inclusion in remote teaching, faculty rights, availability of remote teaching resources, special needs of faculty who are also parents, among many other topics. I contributed to discussion via the chat function, which became part of a written record for later reference. Both Secretary Qarni and Senator Hashmi encouraged faculty to contact their offices with specific COVID-19 related concerns.

Finally, I participated in a meeting called by President Paino, along with the other members of the UFC Executive Committee, University Budget Advisory Committee Chair, Nabil Al-Tikriti, and representatives of the Staff Advisory Council, Michelle Pickham and Christy Pack, to discuss, ask questions, and provide the President with feedback on the faculty and staff salary reduction plan for the 2020-21 fiscal year.