

CAS Dean's Report to the UFC

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I continue to advocate for CAS as we work through nine retirements or resignations in the last year, all filled with either visiting positions or adjunct faculty. Currently, I am expecting eight more this year. We hope to renew or fill some of these vacancies with visiting faculty positions, and we remain hopeful that the final budget will afford us the opportunity to fill at least two vacant staff positions too.

Two tenure-track positions in computer science are funded by the Commonwealth's Tech Talent Investment Program (TTIP) and the statewide Commonwealth Cyber Initiative (CCI). In addition to the searches, planning continues on a \$600,000 renovation, also funded by TTIP, to the basement classrooms, laboratories and offices in Farmer Hall. Once completed in about two years, we expect to have improved spaces for our computer science faculty and students. The only other TT search is for a position in Physics, a program currently staffed with just one full-time faculty member.

The ban on faculty travel, and the cancelation of face-to-face conferences, sharply reduced the number of faculty supplemental requests that we received for the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters. The awards that we made covered the registration fees for virtual conferences. I encourage departments to use their own operating budgets as they are able to support faculty professional development. We still have a remaining balance of about \$8,000 for summer 2021.

Fundraising continues to be a priority for me as we attempt to build sustainable models to support our core values. The [Beyond the Classroom](#) endowment hit our goal of \$100,000 in 2020, and we were recently notified of a 6-figure gift from one of our distinguished alumni. Thank you to Jonathan Levin who is working with me this spring to try to bring in a few other larger gifts. I encourage departments to get involved in [Giving Day](#) this spring as a time to raise money for your departments and programs.

Finally, there is tremendous pressure from all sides to run a course similar to the *COVID-19 in Context* course that ran last summer. I distributed some materials to the department chairs outlining my idea to run a 5-week course focusing on social issues and the state of our country. My hope is to use the course as a fundraiser for the college's BtC endowment, asking attendees to make a donation upon registration. I hope that many of you can donate your time and expertise again this summer, running discussion groups with our incoming students and/or giving a lecture. Any efforts to increase engagement with our students during the summer is time well spent. If you have ideas for what we could (or should) be doing with this course, please enter them in [this google spreadsheet](#).