

MINUTES

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education
Committee on Academic Staff Issues
1:30 – 3 p.m., Monday, Jan. 11, 2021

Present: Shane Hubbard, Nagesh Alduru, Lauren Meyers, Christopher Huffman, Peter Johnson, Jenny Hackel, David, Richards, Julie Karpelenia, Mallory Musolf and Steve Ackerman

1:30 Call To Order

Discussion with Vice Chancellor of Research and Graduate Education– Steve Ackerman

The university faced a \$35M shortfall and that was addressed by campus-wide furloughs for the spring semester, along with a one-time cut to all schools, colleges and centers 101 budgets for fiscal year 2021. A permanent 101 cut beginning with the new fiscal year is being settled for all schools, colleges and centers. It will be between 2 and 5 percent. How to apply that cut at the school, college and center level will be determined on a case-by-case basis in those entities. The first round of 101 cuts did not result in any staff layoffs within OVCRGE.

When it became clear that furloughs would need to occur in the spring semester, Ackerman gave a great deal of consideration as to whether to furlough those employees on 144 funds. Part of the decision was informed by conversations with contacts at peer institutions. He had heard from those contacts who did carve out the 144 employees that they regretted the decision because it was difficult to implement.

Regarding COVID-19, some OVCRGE staff were in the first tier for vaccinations and have received their first dosage. These are veterinarians. As more and more people are vaccinated, campus has no current plans to lift any social distancing, hand washing, travel restrictions, mask-wearing and working-from-home-where-possible protocols. The teleworking will likely continue through the summer.

There will be additional testing protocols for the spring semester if staff will be entering campus facilities. A negative test will be required every week that a person would plan on entering a building. Staff will need to prove that they are virus-free either by using the SaferBadger app downloadable to the iPhone and soon Android. Or, staff can provide documentation such as test results from personal health care providers. All staff can access the free spit tests on multiple locations on campus. <https://covidresponse.wisc.edu/testing/>

There will be three categories of buildings on campus. Buildings with high traffic and classrooms will have a Badger Ambassador stationed at the door to check testing status, buildings with perhaps a classroom or two that would see occasional spot-checking by a Badger Ambassador coming into the facility and finally buildings that are locked and to gain access a person would need to show their negative status. If they are a visitor, they would need to be escorted into and around the building.

Ackerman said current protocols have worked well. While every OVCRGE center has had at least one case of COVID-19, the cases have been isolated and contained. Safety protocols will continue, but there is one area in which Ackerman may make a modification. Currently, research labs allow for one person per 200 square feet, with exemptions for temporary training on a piece of research equipment that would allow for more people in that amount of

space. Again, he is consulting with contacts at peer institutions on their spacing requirements and may modify UW-Madison's to a less restrictive amount. He asked for feedback from the CASI representatives on this protocol as he makes a decision.

Subcommittee Reports

- Communications (Bendfelt (*chair), Heinritz, J. Hackel)

The website on KnowledgeBase has been enhanced with past annual reports and past CASI members. Minutes, agendas and subcommittee assignments are up to date. Hubbard and Hackel ask committee members to review the site and suggest any additional material that would assist visitors to the site to best know what the CASI does.

- Nominating and Districting (Johnson(*chair), Hubbard)

The committee voted unanimously to welcome Chelsea Dahmen, associate director for administration with the Space Science and Engineering Center, to fill the District 5 vacancy.

Adams' and Harrington's districts are up for election. The process will begin in March with the elected member being seated in the summer.

- Personnel Policies and Procedures/HR Design (D. Hackel(*chair), Meyers)
Meyers agrees to chair the subcommittee now that D. Hackel has left the committee.

J. Hackel raises the point about recent ASEC conversation about changes to the ALRA policy given that the combination of the pandemic and furloughs has meant people are not using vacation hours. Musolf said to expect some communication before the end of January from Mark Walters on this topic. Staff at different levels of tenure may see one-time changes in their ability to bank vacation hours through ALRA.

- Professional Development and Recognition (Harrington(*chair), Adluru, Adams, Huffman)

Two OVCRGE staff members were awarded professional development grants during the fall competition. This process will begin again in February with rankings from the subcommittee due in March. Specific dates are to be determined.

Business

- Approve December minutes
Tabled until the February meeting.
- By-Laws Review and Discussion
General agreement on suggested bylaws changes as formulated by the Personnel Policies and Procedures/HR Design Subcommittee and Hubbard as vice chair, mostly in the area of seats that have been abandoned. Look for final wording and a vote at the February meeting.
- Website updates
In updating the website, Hubbard noted the CASI has not completed a five-year self-study since 2009. ASEC recommends such an exercise but does not require it. Hubbard would like to undertake that effort in 2021 and to reflect the years 2014-19.

Hubbard and Karpelenia will work out an archival system in Box for documents such as template agendas, minutes documents, candidate bio formats, new-member welcome letters and other materials useful to the functioning of the CASI, but which not appropriate to post to the public-facing KnowledgeBase website.

- Next OVCRGE-CASI meeting Feb. 8, 2021; video conference. Note going forward on standing agenda items and beginning with the February meeting, Karpelenia will provide an HR update.

3:04 Adjourn