



Academic Affairs Committee

September 22, 2020

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dean Priddy (Chair); Kathy Manning; Betsy S. Oakley; Ward Russell; Austin Moore

MEMBERS ABSENT WITH NOTICE: Mona Edwards

OTHERS PRESENT: Chancellor Franklin Gilliam; Jim Coleman, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor; Waiyi Tse, Chief of Staff; Kelly Harris, Assistant Secretary to the Board; and other members of the administration, faculty, staff, student body, and general public.

PROCEEDINGS:

Chair Priddy called the meeting to order at 1:15PM.

The roll call was read and a quorum was confirmed.

Priddy welcomed SGA President Austin Moore to the board and welcomed Provost Jim Coleman to UNCG. He reminded members of the Conflict of Interest (COI) statement from the State Government Ethics Act and their duty to avoid COI and appearances of COI, if any should be identified. None were identified.

On roll call vote, the minutes of the November 19, 2019 committee meeting were unanimously approved with no additions or corrections.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

AAC – I Provost’s Remarks and Introduction (Coleman)

Jim Coleman said that taking on the role of Provost is hard during a pandemic, but he is excited about UNCG, which represents the transformative vision behind public higher education. Some universities have run towards being exclusive and elite, rather than being the great equalizer, but it is clear that UNCG remains committed to the role of public transformation. UNCG’s social mobility ranking is something to be proud of; faculty and staff have a great level of caring for students. Over 6.5 million dollars of new grants have come in to support new students. UNCG faculty are committed to the community and to North Carolina. The volume of external funds received since July 1st is impressive.

Coleman shared a partial list of projects that illustrate UNCG's mission to serve rural and underserved populations.

There are some immediate challenges for the campus: budget, enrollment, and COVID-19. Every new administrator finds that there can be improvements in collection, storage, and use of data. UNCG must work to more clearly define itself as an institution. This vision should be structured around access, excellence, and impact.

Universities are ecosystems with three inputs: students, faculty/staff, and money. When the ecosystem works well, it propels graduates, conducts research, scholarship, and creative activities; and improves people's lives in the community and beyond. When done well, more resources flow into the system. This model creates a management tool called the ecosystem test, the inquiry being whether allocated resources are leading to one of the three desired outcomes.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential. Racial equity is a priority that Coleman will be working on with Andrea Hunter and Julie Mendez Smith. In addition, Coleman has two other priorities: creating an integrated student success plan and thinking of academic programs that can sustain the university in the face of changing demographics. Coleman compared student success to climbing Mount Everest - students aim to reach the pinnacle (or summit) of post-graduation success. Programs to support students are housed in different parts of the university; it is important to integrate these supports around students in a proactive way. A metaphor for this is the Mayo Clinic, where the patient is assigned a care team that is rewarded based on patient outcomes. Academic institutions are structured like traditional healthcare systems, but Coleman wants UNCG culture to be like the Mayo Clinic. UNCG needs to base its award culture around student success, which is everyone's responsibility. Student success is important not only to UNCG's mission but also to revenue. The past year showed a 5% increase in freshman retention, which is fantastic. Due to changing demographics, undergraduate enrollment will be on the decline, but there is tremendous growth in older student populations. UNCG benefited in increased online and graduate enrollment this past year. This group of students is expected to increase significantly. Rapid changes in the economy produce tremendous opportunities for universities; it can lead to people seeking more certificates and degrees.

Coleman said he looks forward to working with the Board of Trustees to make UNCG the model university integrating access, excellence, and impact.

AAC – 2 Fall 2020 Online, Graduate, International & Retention Enrollment Update (Coleman, Bull, Burke, Anastasiou, Hamilton)

Jim Coleman, Karen Bull, Kelly Burke, Maria Anastasiou, and Andrew Hamilton provided an update on enrollment.

Bull said that UNCG Online is experiencing enrollment growth, much of which is taking place in online graduate degree programs where enrollment has increased 18%. A shift is taking place where people are pursuing stackable credentials via distance education. In order to identify what opportunities are viable in the marketplace, UNCG is pursuing extensive market analysis and corporate input to make sure it is offering the right programs.

Burke said graduate school enrollment increased almost 12% over the last five years through new and growing programs that are of interest to the work force. Burke explained how microcredentials, badges, certificates, and capstone experiences can be used to achieve a professional master's degree.

Priddy expressed his appreciation of the faculty members in new degree programs.

Oakley asked which disciplines would offer stackable credentials. Burke answered that UNCG must do market research to decide. Other UNC system schools want to follow UNCG in this approach.

Russell asked if this is focused locally or beyond. Burke answered that online learning is mostly done within a 100-mile radius, but that UNCG has a price point that is attractive nationally. This is a great way for graduate education to be nimble.

Anastasiou updated the board members on international enrollment. She said that more international students are choosing to stay in their home countries for undergraduate education. Competition for recruitment has increased as students go to Canada and Australia. COVID-19 has had an impact on enrollment as well. Many students could not get visas in time to start the Fall semester. A number of students deferred admission or chose to stay in their home countries. International students might need some extra support, but once they get to UNCG they love it and are socially and academically successful. UNCG's international students are a great value to the campus and community.

Hamilton said that retention numbers are challenging to move, but in just one year UNCG moved first-year retention by 5%, which is worth 1.25 million dollars. An integrated student success plan is going to contribute to retention. A student's capacity for success is not determined by skin color or family income; what students do when they get to UNCG matters for their success more than any other factor. The number of hours completed in the first academic year matter for success; this is true even when controlling for high school GPA, family income, or SAT scores. UNCG is rethinking the first-year experience program to get students on the right path.

Coleman reiterated that the 5% increase in freshman retention is unheard of; it is a huge success.

Oakley asked if UNCG has identified the courses that are most frequently dropped. Hamilton said a running list of D/F/W's (drops/fails/withdrawals) is kept every semester. UNCG is working very closely with relevant deans and department heads. For courses that are frequently dropped, failed, or withdrawn from, the issue often is that students lack preparation required for the course require.

Manning asked what unmet financial needs students face that might prevent them from graduating in four years. Hamilton answered that half of UNCG students are Pell Grant eligible. When UNCG does not meet total need for students it is because we don't have the financial means to do so. As a result, many UNCG students have financial anxieties and work high hours instead of studying.

Manning asked how many students depend upon the Spartan food pantry. Akens answered that nationally, 34% of college students are food insecure.

Priddy thanked the group for their presentation.

AAC – 3 Academic Affairs Related COVID-19 Update (Coleman)

Coleman provided an update of how COVID-19 has impacted UNCG. For the Fall semester, 46% of classes were online and 54% were in-person or hybrid. UNCG focused on having freshman courses in person. Different units had different approaches; only 21% of CVPA courses were online, for example. There are some complaints, but for the most part students feel that online and remote courses are better this semester than last semester. Last May, faculty members who were high-risk or caregivers of high-risk

people could self-identify as such and were assigned to online teaching. As the number of cases rose in the summer, faculty were given time to register extreme concerns about teaching face to face. Those faculty were allowed to teach online. There was a lawsuit against the UNC system related to COVID-19; the plaintiffs were not able to find a faculty member at UNCG to join the lawsuit, which highlights the good relationship between administrators and faculty at UNCG. Extra training was provided for faculty to adapt to online teaching. *Quality Matters* is UNCG's standard of excellence for online courses. For quarantined students, lecture capture capabilities were installed in learning spaces. Leaders of science labs and CVPA courses found impressive solutions to make sure they could continue in a virtual or socially distanced format. Student support was taken online, including orientation, tutoring, academic advising, and writing/speaking center consultations. A new academic coaching program was implemented that helped monitor student completion of assignments. There are many more examples of UNCG's creative problem solving.

Originally, students in classrooms were socially distanced at five feet, but for contact tracing purposes six feet made more sense. In response, classrooms were measured and rearranged. There were many requests from students for fully online schedules. The process for doing that after one is registered is difficult. In response, Andrew Hamilton established an online portal for request submissions. Orientation was redesigned. SERVE was virtual and held small, in-person sessions. SOAR was effectively done.

For faculty, the option was given to extend the tenure clock. Coleman asked the deans to take every faculty member's situation into context. More specific guidance will be given in the coming weeks.

Oakley said she was impressed by how many options there were for faculty to improve their online teaching skills.

ACTION ITEMS:

AAC – 4 Candidates Awarded Degrees and Certificates in August 2020 (Coleman)

AAC – 4.1 Official Transmittal Form and Candidates Awarded Degrees and Certificates in August 2020

Priddy invited a motion to approve the awarding of degrees and certificates as presented in the official transmittal form presented in agenda item AAC-4, and delegate to the Chancellor the authority to act on additions and deletions to the list as appropriate.

On roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

AAC – 5 Update on Research and Engagement (Coleman/Shelton)

Shelton said that Research and Engagement is having a very good year due to the talent of faculty, staff, and students. Over the past five years, funding increased by 40%. Faculty are really distinguishing themselves. Adjustments to research and creative work were made in light of COVID-19. Research and creative activity were continued in a safe way. There is an online portal with guidance on how to approach different kinds of research. Shelton expressed appreciation of UNCG faculty and students as research continues to move forward.

AAC – 6 Additions and Deletions to the May 2020 Degree Candidates (Coleman)

AAC – 6.1 Additions and Deletions to the May 2020 Degree Candidate List

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly Harris". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Kelly Harris
Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees