Academic Contingency Planning

8-5-2020

Dr. Aulgur greeted the committee and thanked everyone for attending. He is grateful for the participation, voices, and support. In respect of time, we are going to try and meet the goal for a one-hour meeting.

Dr. Schoephoerster let us know the Academic Affairs’ task force is finished, now. All AA area plans have been approved - “pretty much done.” The University task force is still at work. EAM has put together a decision matrix to help guide us in moving from phase to phase. He has been told EC has approved the matrix for release, so it should go out in the next week or so. Chartwells has also put together a very extensive recovery plan. “It looks good.” It will help take care of the students in the cafeteria and other various eating places, as well as quarantined and isolated students with delivery of food. There has also been discussion about PPE. They found out not enough shields were ordered. All face masks have been delivered, but as far as shields go, we are in the process of trying to get some more. Lastly, HR is working with faculty representatives from the senate and DHs on their faculty disciplinary action item for not wearing masks, social distancing, and not completing daily health check-ins. Evidently, there has also been rumors about changing the class template for times. There has not been any discussion about that within the task force, and it is left up to AA. There were discussions at one point about gapping between classes, but that is not discussed from the recovery task force point of view.

* Dr. Greco asked Dr. Schoephoerster to speak on the antigen testing.
* Dr. Schoephoerster reiterated last week’s news about contact tracing and testing. ATU has, on order, an Abbot Labs fast-testing device (tests within 10 minutes). In addition, we have contracts with St Mary’s and one other private lab. Both promise test results within 24-48 hours. Fast testing is critical. Right now, Quest is taking 1-2 weeks to get results back. We are in a good position. For contact tracing, we had an initial team of internal people. That team is going to be assisted by the Department of Health and UAMS. We have a good system in place.

Next item: Communication working group

Dr. Cezeaux let us know the email went out yesterday including the FAQ’s. Working with Sam Strasner to put them in ATU News. Also working on where they will go on the website. The FAQs did go out in an email to all students. Dr. Aulgur spearheaded the communication to the students who had schedule changes. Every student with a schedule change received an email and Mongoose text (followed by the FAQs). It has also been in OneTech and will remain pinned in OneTech for one month. This was a good request to accomplish for the Advising Center. Hopefully this will help with their question load. The sub-group is now turned towards faculty. Although Dr. Aulgur is working on Blackboard Expectations for faculty, the question is, do we need another document on how faculty should run a F2F class? Example: It may be good for faculty to keep a seating chart. How do we help our contract tracers? With a seating chart, you know who was within 6 feet of each other in your classroom. What items do faculty need to know to safely work in their classrooms? Should this be another document, or be sent out through chain of command via email?

* Dr. Bean let us know she is already sharing with her DHs. She calls them “tips” and they are good practices to be shared with your faculty. Also, she thinks we have so many papers and files, that we don’t need to inundate with anymore lists. An email may be best.
* Dr. Cezeaux noted if students agree, faculty could take a picture of where students are seated (instead of a seating chart). Would that be an alternative to paper? Is that okay? Would we need permission to do that?
* Dr. Cass is not sure about that idea.
* Dr. Daily wondered how will faculty know their students from a picture?
* Dr. Cezeaux replied, “Take a picture, then identify them.”
* Dr. Bean believes faculty would still need a seating chart. She thinks that is better. There may be new people and it may take a while to know who they are. Charts help tremendously.
* Tammy let us know that everyone has a Banner class roster. When you go to a particular section in ARGOS, every student has a photo listed with their name. It is called a “Detailed Class List with Photo” (in the class roster file). There is a “summary”, “detail”, and “detailed with photo.” Takes a few minutes to render. While we are also talking about attendance, she really hopes we can encourage faculty to use the Blackboard attendance. The module is an option. Tell faculty ahead of time (before first class) when they email the student, they can direct them to the module as well.
* Dr. Cezeaux asked how we want to proceed. Trying to make life easier for the contact tracers. Is this a communication her sub-group needs to work on? Or, any other issues in the class to address? Maybe just to give helpful tips to faculty.

There were no other questions or suggestions but Dr. Aulgur asked if anyone thinks of something later, to please send it along to Dr. Cezeaux so we can continue to work on this. He did also ask Marika if she has noticed the FAQ has helped, yet? Has she seen any relief since the email went out?

* Marika doesn’t think there has been much relief. In terms with what she received back from students, she got a lot of “thank yous.” She did also change several schedules to fully online and it also gave students the opportunity to withdraw from classes. The Advising Center is still busy and are still receiving text messages. Marika appreciates the support of Dr. Cezeaux and the sub group.
* Dr. Cezeaux hopes the FAQ document will help in non-pandemic times as well. Would like to see it exist beyond COVID and we can continue to add to it. Should be a living, breathing document. If there is more to add, we will do our best to keep adding to it.

Next on the agenda is Dr. Cass. He and his group have been working on a 48-hour pivot guide.

Dr. Cass greeted everyone and offered a Good Morning. He and his group worked up a 48-hour pivot guide, but are trying to keep it to two pages in length. Believes Dr. Johnson wants one bullet removed because we do not have a process for taking information from faculty and doing something with it. Will take care of that. Basically, it is a document showing expectations for faculty and students (paralleling) so they understand each other’s expectations. Then, in box format (thanked Dr. Bright for this), the responsibility for pivoting in 48-hours, as well as pivoting in 72-hours, is included. He and his group feel they have provided good guidelines and resources. This was their intent, and they hope it helps faculty and students in pivoting to the online space. Questions or suggestions? It is not going out just yet, but we need to have it in our back pocket. Dr. Cass thanked his committee for all their work.

* Dr. Aulgur thanked them as well. He appreciates the efforts at this time of both Dr. Cass and Dr. Cezeaux and their groups.
* Dr. Cass thanked Dr. Cezeaux too. Her work is “key” right now.

Dr. Aulgur let us know the AA pandemic page is functional. It is a way to alleviate emails and is a repository of information for Deans, DHs, and faculty related to AA. He is also making an intentional effort that documents are being sent to the DH council and Faculty Senate. We will continue to receive new information and he appreciates any feedback. Documents produced this week will be uploaded today. Also included will be guidance for departments and faculty on how to self-assess their online courses (documents produced by Dr. Cass and his working group of the Online Quality Committee in the spring). This guidance can also be used by DPTT. Departments, feel free to adopt another instrument if you prefer (like Quality Matters, OLC, and more). Remember, this assessment document is not a requirement, just guidance.

* Dr. Cass noted the self-assessment documents were intended to be very low-key. “We are not trying to foist our will upon people.” But, we needed guidance on how to oversee and look at online courses in specific ways. The documents can be used, changed, altered…but we hope they are helpful to faculty in conceiving how online courses are reviewed, and we are doing all we can to promote interaction between faculty and students.

Dr. Aulgur will be glad to address this with Faculty Senate, if needed, in the fall. Keep in mind, it is guidance. Moving on, he asked everyone to please look at the pandemic recovery page. You can go to the CETL homepage and it links directly to it. This morning, AA did release a schedule of events. When you look at that document, you will see some areas still require WebEx links. We are working on this. PD activities were extracted and emailed to this committee:

* August 10 and 11 – ID team will be available for individual faculty appointments. Will work on any issue faculty need assistance with. The team will be available for appointments through August 21, at minimum.
* August 12 – Dr. Tobin will speak on universal design and learning for remote teachings.
* August 12 – Following Dr. Tobin, the afternoon sessions are repetitive (covering Blackboard, WebEx, Ally, and Kaltura). Each presenter will provide a 20-minute overview of their topic, and then open the floor to Q&A. No reservation required.
* August 14 – (He let Dr. Robertson speak on this HLC session). Dr. Robertson let us know it will provide an overview of what our HLC visit will look like. He will also hand out questions that will be similar to questions asked in the HLC Open Forum (for each criteria). Think about the questions. Will have assurance argument ready for campus review within the next 2-3 weeks. In October, we will have sessions over questions that were handed out during the 8/14 session.
* August 14 – As far as the Blackboard sessions go, clarifying language will be provided. The first session will be for the target audience of those who have little to no experience in Blackboard. If you have more experienced faculty, they can reach out to the ID team and schedule an appointment. The 2:30 session is an “Ask Me Anything” open forum.

Dr. Aulgur began speaking about a Blackboard Expectations document requested by AA. They are working on a guide to publish no later than this Friday. It includes very simple expectations: posting syllabi, including a course schedule, a welcome announcement, and posting contact information and virtual hours. For those who have taught online, you understand how effective it is to post announcements in Blackboard as well as email out to students. This documents communication efforts to your students. Provides substantial protection if needed. We will also provide an important topic regarding the DoE’s unclear standard on what constitutes interaction to students in the online space. Very low bar to meet in a virtual space. Any number of ways to meet this. Also provides understanding on why it is important to have this interaction (referenced Western Governors University). There is a reason to ask for this…to protect the institution and protect us. If courses can be designated as correspondence courses, Title IV funding is in jeopardy. Working language from the DoE will be included in the document. Bottom line, if you provide discussion forums, and if you are providing timely feedback, you will be okay. If a course is auto-graded and only contains one discussion forum, this will not meet requirements. Therefore, AA wants to provide the guidance of Blackboard expectations.

If you have any questions, please circle back to Dr. Aulgur.

Ken Wester confirmed with us the 60 laptops we have ordered have been processed. Should have them soon, hopefully. Also, the Adobe licenses (350) for student at-home use were processed yesterday. Should be available for us to take care of. Mr. Keating and Mr. Austin will work with the list we received, and put the students in for coordination. Will also work with instructors for add/drops. Believe we will have enough licenses to handle Adobe at-home. Still waiting on zoom cameras. Have hopes they will get here. But, will adjust as needed. As we move forward, there has been a lot of conversation about “one-offs.” We need to get together on how we are going to move forward from now on. If we are going to spend this money and put effort in how to handle this, we do not want to consider it a one-time thing. Think of it as a movement in moving forward. It is Ken’s desire to outfit all the classrooms. All of us are in this together and we don’t want to feel like we did all of this for only a one-time thing. Do not want to pull it and then put it in the closest. Whatever he can help do to encourage this equipment being used, he wants to.

* From chat, can he provide a list of all classrooms that will be outfitted?
* Ken replied he thought it had been provided. They have an updated list. Also, Dr. Cass sent an email, so the information will move a little bit.
* Steve noted he would send the updated list to Dr. Aulgur.
* Ken also appreciates communication (like from Dr. Cass). If something changes with your classroom, help us not waste our time so equipment can be moved to the appropriate location.
* Dr. Aulgur will distribute the list and put it online.
* Dr. Cass thanked Ken and Steve. Appreciate everything they have done and how they have responded.

There was nothing brought up in Open Forum.

To close the meeting, Dr. Aulgur reiterated his email from this morning – we will not plan to meet for at least the next two weeks, and will not schedule a formal meeting unless our plans for the term change drastically. He would like to have a survey assessment, should these endeavors need to be repeated later. What did we miss? Did we unintentionally eliminate constituencies? Etc.

He thanked the group, again, for time and effort. Dr. Aulgur is deeply appreciative of commitment. There will be issues we have likely not anticipated, but we are in this together. If there is support we are missing from the AA side, please email Dr. Aulgur. Take the time to bring it to attention.

Take care of yourselves, and families.

From Chat:

Tom Nupp: CDC defines a probable close contact as someone who is within 6 feet of infected person for 15 minutes. If 6 foot spacing is maintained there are no PCC’s.

Jeffrey Cass: Detailed class list is cool.

Jeff Robertson: 1 for each day.

Carl Greco: Ken, can you provide a list of all classrooms that will be configured for lecture capture and streaming?

Jeff Robertson: OIStacular!

Judy Cezeaux: Can we also frame the use of Blackboard as a step to a paperless campus?

Ken Wester: Yes, that is also a good place we have done thus far - no paper – lets continue that approach.