**MINUTES**

**September 10, 2020**

**Meeting via ZOOM**

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**Participating**:

Michael Abeyta, Anna Warrener, Masoud Asadi-Zeydabadi, Jennifer Boylan, Sasha Breger, Michelle Comstock, Benjamin Crawford, Candan Duran-Aydintug, David Hildebrand, Pam Jansma, Gabriel Finkelstein, Mia Fischer, Nick Fisk, Marjorie Levine-Clark, Darryl Mehring, Annika Mosier, Florian Pfender, Sarah Tyson, Andrea Velasquez

Guests: Laura Argys, Faye Caronan Chen

**Recording**: Karen Fennell

**Welcome and Introductions**: Sarah Tyson

**Minutes from May**:

Approved with no changes.

**Dean’s Updates:** Pam Jansma

*Strategic Plan*

* Will be posted to CLAS website for comment. This document was approved by the Council in the spring with minor changes.
* Chancellor Marks will do her own strategic plan process in the spring and we will have to align our plan with the campus plan once that is formulated.

*Budget*

* CU Denver has met our budget projections that were set last spring.
* We have more students than last year but fewer international and out of state students.
* There won’t be any further cuts at the moment, but we’ll have to wait and see what spring looks like.
* UNC is down 26% in first-time full-time freshmen and 13% in transfer students.
* Metro is down in enrollment also and has announced furloughs
* CU Boulder has announced some cuts as well.
* We will have a strategic enrollment management plan for fall 2021 and fall 2022.
* We have been asked what our capacity is in our graduate programs and there will be efforts made to recruit where we have capacity and opportunity for growth. The idea is to grow strategically and where the costs of growth are not large.
* We will keep an eye on the level of state support that we receive because that 4.6% is small and may shrink in the face of other state budget crises.

**Letter on Hypothetical $60k**: Sarah Tyson

* The Council reviewed the letter that English Department Chair, Philip Joseph, asked that the Council co-sign about faculty and furloughing people who make less than $60,000 annually.
* This issue is under discussion by leadership now.
* The wording of the document was approved and the Council will co-sign the letter.

**Facial Recognition Software for Exam Proctoring**: Shea Swauger

* Shea is a Senior Instructor with Auraria Library.
* In general, facial recognition technology is a combination of computer vision and matching people’s physical features to a profile.
* This would work better if the software functioned correctly across all demographics, but it doesn’t. The problem is that it identifies white males better than other persons or groups. So, employing these technologies can amplify discriminatory factors.
* Facial recognition software tends to be racist, sexist and transphobic so we have to think about the equity implications for using these technologies in campus.
* Banning use of this technology in an educational setting has to be considered carefully.
* Portland just enacted a facial recognition ban that is the strongest in the country.
* Building access and school security for campus buildings can be one way that facial recognition is used.
* We are using this technology with Proctorio, which is an anti-cheating software in Canvas that measures biometrics and tries to determine if a person is cheating or not. There’s a lot of ableism built in to Proctorio because of the way the software functions and it can be difficult for persons of color and persons with disabilities to access the functionality of the software.
* Programs and instructors tend to use Proctorio more when there are high stakes exams involved, as in nursing and healthcare.
* Some departments are trying to come up with alternatives to Proctorio and address the inequalities this software presents.
* We have to decide if there are other ways to authentically measure student learning that aren’t tests.
* First, we can start by developing a culture of trust with students in the classroom and assessing learning outside of exams.
* Testing and how we trust our students need to be considered in how we teach, but we also have to consider what are the incentives to cheat. Our teaching hasn’t evolved enough yet to not use exams or some of these Proctorio technologies. We have to look at if there is a way to rely on Zoom or other technologies that is ethical.
* There was discussion about whether grades are a good measure of student learning or not. There could be an increased risk of cheating in the class, but the harm cheating brings could be less than the harm that discrimination brings. We need to think about what CU Denver cares more about, cheating or discrimination.
* The downsides of discrimination seem to outweigh those of cheating for now.
* It’s hard to change teaching and exam modes in the middle of the semester.
* We need to think about the values we are embedding and our practices as a university.
* Some students don’t have enough internet bandwidth to even run video to do Proctorio and video on Zoom. There is a technological and digital divide for students. Some students have to come to campus when they would rather not just to use the campus computers for better technological access.
* Some instructors have used timed tests with notes and T/F questions that have worked well as a testing model.
* These facial recognition technologies are often shared with law enforcement and ICE, which can be problematic. It is hard to not share information and to protect our students from law enforcement usage if technologies get sold to other companies who engage in bad practices.
* There was a question as to whether we need to have students sign a waiver even to appear on Zoom and if is this a 4th amendment violation? The implications of civil liberties in this matter are unknown.
* It was suggested to put together an ad hoc working group around these issues and connect with Shea for more discussion and resource sharing.
* It was also suggested to work with Ronica Rooks, Director of CLAS Online, and the Center for Teaching and Learning for accessing resources and strategies.
* The Council voted to sign a letter presented by Shea, thus joining a list of universities who are concerned about use of facial recognition technologies on campus.

**Committee on Faculty and Staff Working Policies**: Faye Caronan and Laura Argys

* There is an interim more flexible flex-time and flex-place policy coming out soon that should allow for more equitable treatment of staff who need to care for dependent children and family members during the workday.
* CLAS has a Staff Council now that is looking into staff needs for support, wellness and communication and will be doing a short survey of staff needs soon.
* There are big challenges to balancing work and home life for all employees right now. The goal is to target things that can be done to make the workplace more flexible and help employees with the challenges they face.
* The task force is figuring out how to collect information on what the challenges are and what options could be provided. This includes sending out a survey, doing focus groups and discussing policies that would allow more flexibility.
* There are many concerns about schooling for young children, caring for dependents, and financial, housing and food insecurity issues.

**Faculty/Council Members Only Discussion**: Sarah Tyson