

**Academic and Student Affairs Committee Minutes**  
**Trustee Nicole Washington, Chair**  
**March 3, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Trustee Nicole Washington. Ms. Valeria Singleton called the roll and the following committee members were present: Ann Marie Cavazos, Michael Dubose, Kristin Harper, David Lawrence, Xavier McClinton, Craig Reed, and Nicole Washington. A quorum was established.

Trustee Lawrence moved to approve the minutes for the meeting on December 3, 2020. The motion was seconded by Trustee Reed and the motion carried.

The Committee recommended approval of the following items:

**Sabbatical and Professional Leave** - Each year the University provides our faculty the opportunity to apply for sabbatical or professional development leave for the succeeding year. This year, eight faculty members are being recommended for approval. In addition, there were no applications for professional development leave.

Trustee Cavazos moved to approve the eight applications for sabbatical leave. The motion was seconded by Trustee Dubose and the motion carried.

The eight faculty members are: Dr. Ramesh Katam, Dr. Seth Ablordeppey, Professor Robert Abrams, Professor Edith Carnley, Dr. Hongmei Chi, Dr. Phyllis Gray-Ray, Professor Jeremy Levitt, and Professor Harris Wiltsher.

**Honorary Doctorate Degree for Thomas “Tom” Joyner** – Other than the earned doctorate, the greatest recognition the University can award is the honorary degree. An honorary doctoral degree is granted for the purpose of honoring those who exemplify the ideas of the University through significant achievements and contributions to society.

Thomas “Tom” Joyner is a legendary radio personality, entrepreneur, and philanthropist. Mr. Joyner is a graduate of Tuskegee Institute with a degree in Sociology. In addition, Mr. Joyner, through the Tom Joyner Foundation, has raised more than \$65 million to support students attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The Foundation has helped more than 29,000 students at HBCUs over the past 22 years and FAMU received nearly \$645,000 from the Foundation.

Trustee McClinton moved to approve the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letter for Thomas “Tom” Joyner. The motion was seconded by Trustee Dubose and the motion carried.

**Honorary Doctorate Degree for Adora Nweze** – Ms. Nweze is the former Johnnie Raye McMillian. She received her bachelor’s degree from Fayetteville University and a master’s degree in Education

from the University of Miami. She retired from Miami-Dade County Public Schools after a 39-year successful career. Ms. Nweze has been a champion for civil rights through education, health, and a myriad of related issues that have impacted Floridians. She has on numerous occasions come to the call of the University by rallying legislatures and other government officials, including the Florida Governor, to review issues and ultimately reverse decisions that were dire for FAMU and other HBCUs around the state.

Trustee McClinton moved to approve the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters for Adora Nweze. The motion was seconded by Trustee Reed and the motion carried.

**Student Affairs Updates** – informational updates were provided:

- Dr. William Hudson, Jr., and his team provided updates on enrollment, transfer services, the counseling center, and hazing prevention.
- Ms. Teri Little-Berry stated that admissions applications are up by 9.43%. In addition, we have a 7.43% increase in first-time-in-college applications and Florida College System transfer applications. It is important to note that although applications have increased, students in many places are still experiencing test site cancellations and have not been able to retest for the purposes of increasing their scores.

**Question:** Is the testing requirements mandated by the state or is it a FAMU policy?

**Response:** The testing requirements are mandated by the state for public institutions.

**Question:** Are the other SUS institutions experiencing a lag in admissions because of the testing requirements?

**Response:** The flagship institutions may not be experiencing the same lag that we are experiencing. A large portion of our prospective students are from South Florida or large cities where testing sites may not be readily accessible which means the students may experience financial hardships by trying to travel to those testing sites.

**Question:** Has there been any changes to the admissions requirements?

**Response:** The average GPA for the incoming class is 3.7. In addition to the GPA, we consider the students' test scores to ensure that they are college ready. We realized that those students that were not college ready, incurred a lot of debt and were not graduating. So, this academic profile has allowed us to have better student success outcomes.

- There was an update on Transfer Student Services. The department has been collaborating with alumni chapters and FCS partners for recruitment. As of spring 2021, there are a total of 1,243 FCS transfer students enrolled and 2,105 FCS students statewide enrolled in the Ignite program. A robust recruitment is planned for this term with a total of 93 recruiting events scheduled.
- FAMU SGA provided a video about the importance of counseling services on campus.

- Dr. Hudson provided an update about the Office of Counseling. University counseling centers have seen an increase in appointments and visits. In response to the Board of Governors' request to develop a plan to address the critical need for student mental health coverage beginning in fiscal year 2017/2018, the university hired one licensed psychologist and an additional licensed psychologist position is currently posted. We have experienced an increase of 22% in student appointments from 2017 to 2019 and 25% increase in clients.
- Dr. Anika Fields, University Counseling Center Director and Immediate Past President of the International Accreditation of Counseling Services, discussed the recommended ratio of professional staff to students and the services we currently offer.

The International Accreditation of Counseling Services (IACS) recommends one professional staff to every 1,000-1,500 students. FAMU currently employs seven FTE clinical staff including the director. The current staff to student ratio is 1:1,300, using Fall 2020 enrollment of 9,100. Once we fill our three vacant positions, the ratio will decrease to 1:910. We are currently offering individual and group therapy as well as workshops via tele-mental health, self-help therapy, suicide prevention training, consultation to faculty and staff, class presentations, webinars, and campus and community outreach. The 24-hour crisis telephonic counseling is available on the main campus and satellite campuses. In addition, the law school has a full-time mental health counselor.

- The final informational update was from Mr. Bryan Smith regarding the hazing prevention initiatives.
  - Two investigations into possible violations of the hazing regulation were closed because the violations could not be substantiated. There is one pending investigation into suspicion of hazing.
  - Eleven organizations received hazing prevention training, via Zoom, in January. Approximately 7,325 students took the Alivetek online hazing training course since its inception.

**Academic Affairs Updates** – The following informational updates were provided:

- Provost Edington provided brief updates.
  - Spring commencement will be conducted in-person during a three-day period: April 23 through April 25. There will be six ceremonies.
  - For summer instruction, we will have a similar approach as the spring semester by utilizing a mix of course modalities such as in-person and hy-flex.
  - For the fall semester, we are moving forward to get as close to normal. We are at the beginning phase to work out the logistics of increasing in-person instruction, which may require us to have smaller sections dependent upon the current CDC guidelines.
  - Faculty professional development will continue during the summer to help faculty improve their teaching pedagogy.

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- The accountability plan is due to the Board of Governors on May 1; it was not ready for this meeting so we will schedule a meeting in April
- An update was provided on the search for the Dean of School of Journalism and Graphic Communication. Also, a search will begin soon for the Dean of the College of Engineering because the current dean is at the end of his five-year contract and he wants to transition to teaching, research, and service.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Washington, Committee Chair