

Minutes  
Bloomington Faculty Council  
October 6, 2020

1. Due the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting occurred remotely, via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 2:30 PM by Provost Lauren Robel. The minutes from September 15, 2020, were approved by acclamation, and without objection.
2. Associate Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs Beth Gazley offered a memorial resolution in honor of James Herbert Vaughan.
3. Council President John Walbridge discussed challenges related to ongoing efforts to facilitate timely communication between council members under current circumstances. He pointed to the recently established BFC discussion listserv as one example of these efforts. He also reminded members that discussions taking place on the listserv are not governed by the rules of regular order and should therefore be undertaken with care, appropriate perspective, and some measure of restraint. Finally, he announced that chat logs from scheduled meetings that are conducted remotely will be included as part of the official transcripts of those meetings.
4. Provost Robel used her time to comment on a number of issues including the efforts of various campus units to encourage active participation in the upcoming national election, especially among students, many of whom will be voting for the first time. The Public and Civic Engagement (PACE) program was mentioned specifically, but Provost Robel underscored the important role we all play in helping to facilitate many of our students' first vote. She then provided a detailed update regarding the campus' situation vis a vis the ongoing pandemic. According to Provost Robel, the campus' situation is good, but the situation around the state is worsening. She attributed IUB's success in limiting the spread of the virus to its strong partnership with the city and the county, both of which she took the opportunity to thank publicly, and to our rigorous approach to testing. At the same time, she also underscored the need for continued vigilance, especially now that the state has moved into Stage 5 of its reopening plan. By way of conclusion, Provost Robel took the opportunity to clarify that funding to OVPDEMA has not been substantially reduced, contrary claims made in a recent (and subsequently retracted) story that appeared in the pages of the *Indiana Daily Student*. She also thanked the nearly 14,000 faculty and staff who contributed over \$163 million to the recently concluded "For All" fundraising campaign.
5. The next matter on the agenda was an update from the Benefits Committee, which co-chaired by Professors Maria Bucur and Cheryl Hughes. The report itself was offered by John Whelan, Vice President for Human Resources. Vice President Whelan began by acknowledging the ongoing and incredibly important contributions of Christian Royer to the formulation of IU's benefits strategy. He spoke about the scale and complexity IU's healthcare plans, which cover around 42,000 people at a combined cost of roughly \$300 million per year. He also discussed attributes which positively distinguish IU's healthcare plan, relative to those offered by many other comparable organizations,

including the fact IU continues to calculate premiums using seven salary bands, a practice many other organizations have abandoned, or never adopted in the first place. Looking ahead, Whelan reported that administrators currently anticipate a 6% increase in employee healthcare premiums next year—a cautiously optimistic budgetary hedge against rising costs, which industry analysts expect to increase between 5% and 10% over the same period. He also drew members' attention to a number of new benefits including Weight Watchers membership, which is now covered for all employees and their spouses, COVID testing and treatment, which IU has decided to cover as well, and expanded access to mental health resources under the auspices of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Additionally, Whelan reported that IU is exploring ways to expand access to resources aimed at helping employees manage pre-diabetic conditions, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure. Finally, he noted that the process of transitioning administrators for IU-sponsored retirement plans seems to have proceeded quite smoothly. Evidence suggests that it is already resulting in real savings for plan participants. A question was asked regarding how premiums are calculated for those on phased retirement. Vice President Whelan said he would investigate the matter. Another member asked whether there had been any changes to policy regarding the terms of coverage while traveling abroad. There have not.

6. Discussion then turned to B11-2021, a Resolution on the Use of OCQ Data from Fall 2020. Several objections to the proposed resolution were offered, including one multi-pronged objection that was offered by Professor Ken Dau-Schmidt on behalf of Professor Steve Sanders. Briefly, Professor Sanders objected to the short amount of time members were given to consult with colleagues regarding the proposed resolution, the extent to which he felt the proposed resolution risks interfering with unit-level policy, and the degree to which it might encourage selective cherry picking of important evaluative data by faculty. Several of the student representatives on the Council joined Professor Sanders in this final concern. Other members reiterated the value for instructors of data collected on OCQs. The resolution was ultimately adopted by the Council over these objections, albeit narrowly. The final vote, per the Council Parliamentarian, was 30 in favor, 26 opposed, and 3 abstentions. Given the narrowness of the margin, and given the fact that this measure was put forward as a resolution rather than a formal policy proposal, Provost Robel noted that she intended to present the resolution to campus Deans as a general plea for circumstantial mindfulness, flexibility, and renewed attentiveness to the very challenging conditions under which we are all laboring at the moment.
7. Vice Provost for Enrollment Management David Johnson presented a report on campus enrollment, as of fall 2020. Of the 7927 beginning students this year, 59% are Indiana residents. More than 1500, or 20%, are members of historically underrepresented groups. Despite various challenges associated with the pandemic, the group also includes international students from 33 countries and six continents. Vice Provost Johnson noted that beginning students are increasingly arriving at IUB with college credit earned elsewhere, prior to matriculation. This year, 75% of beginners arrived with an average of 13.1 credit hours. They are also seeking direct admission in greater numbers. In 2007, just 16% of beginning students entered IUB as direct admits; this year, 47% of them did.

Encouragingly, the most students who begin at IUB come back. This year, 90% of students who began at IUB in the fall of 2019 returned for their second year. While the total number of degree-seeking enrollees at IUB is down by half a percentage point this year, relative to last year, Vice Provost Johnson reported being generally pleased with where the enrollment situation stands, particularly given the extraordinary challenges everyone is facing at the moment. Provost Robel agreed heartily with the Vice Provost Johnson's assessment of the campus' situation given what could have happened. She also took the opportunity to thank Vice Provost Johnson and everyone associated with Enrollment Management for their truly extraordinary efforts. Looking ahead, Vice Provost Johnson reported that he intends to remain focused on strengthening the pipeline for potential recruits, leveraging IUB's institutional strengths, refining the recruitment and admissions process in light of IUB's recent adoption of a test-optional admissions policy, and further enhancing efforts to diversify the IUB student population. Members then posed several questions about specific enrollment metrics, all of which Vice Provost Johnson was happy to answer.

The meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.  
Colin R. Johnson, BFC Secretary