



COUNCIL of UNIVERSITY SYSTEM FACULTY

Regent's Report June 17, 2021

Academic Integrity- Over the last four years, CUSF has considered academic integrity as a matter for the academy to define. As early as the March 2018 convening CUSF suggested that an environment of integrity is best served if we address three specific areas of conceptual interest: teaching and learning, technology, and policy, processes, and procedures. In the last 18 months, we have worked with USM to propose an academic integrity policy that addresses these three goals. We have written multiple drafts and realize now that as one group of stakeholders, we have gone as far as we can go with our efforts to develop this proposal from our ad hoc discussions with other stakeholders. The process needs representatives from all stakeholder groups gathered at the same table, which we do not have the resources to make happen. USM does!

It was decided in our last meeting with Dr's. Boughman, Lee and Bishop that USM would take over the work on the Policy by bringing together stakeholders in a workshop for the purpose of revising the existing policy. We look forward to bringing our work to the new group. It was also decided that CUSF would pursue a parallel path by working on the important component to implementation of a new policy by examining how best to create a campus culture that promotes academic integrity in a positive manner. Work on this will begin in earnest in September of 2021 when CUSF reconvenes after the summer break.

Technology effort- Technology subcommittee members report that the recent questionnaire/memo distributed to the CIO's and Provosts has been returned by all the schools. Highlights of the answers received are featured below. However, it is important to note that committee is still in need of additional time to work though the extremely detailed response received from the University of Maryland, Baltimore, which provided extensive information for each of the schools on its campus. A complete report will be made available later in the summer.

Summary Context:

The responses vary greatly in terms of clarity and amount of detail provided. Some institutions provided brief replies, while the University of Maryland, Baltimore provided detailed responses for each school on campus. More importantly, the responses make clear that there is no uniform approach to any of the issues we explored, apart from access to a VPN. The committee is not yet finished writing our report, but I can provide the following overview to the responses received.

[Topic I: Types of Technologies Required, Equipment Provided, Privacy Concerns](#)

1. **What types of technologies (including but not limited to computers and access to the Internet, webcams, microphones, software for exam administration, and other types of special tools) does your institution require for students who are involved in distance learning?**

All responding institutions require a computer or laptop with a webcam and microphone, along with a reliable Internet connection. Beyond that, there is no uniformity in approach. Different learning management systems (LMSs) are utilized on different campuses. Some institutions (e.g., UMBC) provide various options for faculty regarding exam administration, while others (e.g., Bowie State, Salisbury) provide required proctoring software.

2. Are any of these technologies provided by the institution? If so, which ones?

Again, institutions vary greatly on the technologies they provide, with some providing only required software and others providing hardware and software to students. For example, Frostburg, Towson and University of Baltimore have loaner laptops available to any student who needs one. Towson also noted that its students had access to CARES grant funds. The University of Maryland, College Park stated that its students are expected to acquire their own hardware or make use of loaner programs. The University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) does not provide any technologies for students other than an email address, Zoom account, and access to the LMS and student portal.

3. How do the institution's practices and procedures ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in instances when the use of cameras is required during online classes, and/or when classes are recorded?

Not surprisingly, practices vary across institutions. Some schools have policies and guidelines that are distributed to faculty, and several institutions have mandatory annual training relating to FERPA, cybersecurity, and related privacy concerns. The guidelines may require statements in syllabi and/or at the beginning of each class, advising students that classes are being recorded. For example, UMCES students are notified at the beginning of classes that the class is being recorded, that they have the option of showing a video feed, and that microphones should be muted except when participating in discussion or asking a question. The University of Maryland, College Park also ensures that appropriate FERPA language is included in all contracts with third party service providers. Other campuses do not have any practices or procedures to ensure that camera use does not violate FERPA (e.g., Frostburg). UMGC, on the other hand, does not have synchronous class sessions that utilize cameras or class recordings (The exception occurred during the pandemic when **hybrid classes** only were held online using synchronous class sessions.)

4. How does the institution ensure that its guidelines relating to camera usage and recordings do not adversely impact the students' learning experiences?

Institutions are at different places in addressing these concerns. Some have no guidelines relating to camera usage, while others ask faculty members to be flexible (e.g., University of Baltimore). College Park and Towson have both identified best practices; College Park specifically calls out the need for empathy and consideration of situations relating to students' learning environments. Some institutions are in the process of approving guidelines for academic year 2021-22, which will address issues such as required statements in the syllabus informing students of recording, written consent of students, and blocking downloads by students.

[Topic II: Potential Liability Risks Arising from Telework and Use of Personal Computer Equipment](#)

- 1. Are faculty provided with university-owned computers that they can use while working from home, or must they provide their own equipment?**

Many institutions provide university-owned computers to faculty members (e.g., Towson, Frostburg, UMES, UMCES, UMB, University of Baltimore). In some instances, faculty members had been provided with a desktop computer in their offices, rather than a laptop. For those faculty, most schools provided loaner laptops when the institutions moved to telework in March 2020. College Park noted that its approach is mixed: while most faculty are provided with university-owned and managed laptops, part-time instructors (adjuncts) may not have university-owned computers. UMGC does not provide its adjunct faculty with computer equipment, and even some of its collegiate (i.e., full time) faculty must provide their own computer equipment for remote work.

- 2. Are all faculty, including adjuncts and instructors, provided with secured access to university networks while working remotely (VPN or other types of secured network capabilities)? What type of secured access is provided?**

Almost every institution provides access to a VPN, although it may be optional in at least some circumstances. The University of Baltimore observed that VPN is not currently required, but going forward, faculty in administrative roles may need to use it. Other types of secured access are also provided by some institutions. For instance, UMES provides all faculty (including adjuncts) with a secure account to the Google suite, including email, cloud storage, and the Google productivity toolset. Towson offers Remote Desktop along with a VPN; Remote Desktop is also an option for some UMB schools. At UMGC, collegiate faculty can access the network via VPN if they have access to a school computer, but it is not available to adjunct faculty.

- 3. Do faculty have access to secure storage facilities for computer files and electronic information, such as university-controlled cloud storage? What requirements does your institution have in place relating to storage of sensitive or confidential information?**

Various types of secure storage systems are provided for faculty and staff. The number and type available vary substantially by institution, and they include Box.com, Microsoft OneDrive, and Google Drive cloud storage systems, as well as secured network share drives available for storage of information. Some institutions (e.g., UMBC) provide guidance on what types of information may be stored on each solution, while other institutions (e.g., Salisbury) have mandated data loss prevention software to scan and flag any stored PII. Bowie State also advises employees against transmitting or storing confidential information to or from a personal email account, a non-State issued device, or with an unapproved third-party storage service.

- 4. Are faculty provided with instruction on using Zoom, WebEx, Blackboard, and other platforms for online teaching and collaboration? What type of instruction is provided? Is specific emphasis placed on security issues?**

Overall, faculty across institutions have been encouraged to participate in trainings related to planning of instruction online, and specifically during 2020 in order to support efforts during the pandemic period. Trainings target the use of the video/audio conferencing platforms used at each institution, including Blackboard Collaborate, WebEx, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google

Meet. During training, faculty are sometimes warned against inadvertently sharing the guest link with students, in order to prevent their ability to share the link with others who are not affiliated with the institution (e.g., UMBC). Other institutions have also distributed email instructions for using these platforms, have posted instructions on university websites, and have help desks and other consultations available to faculty members.

- 5. For those campuses that use Google Apps for Education: Some faculty have expressed concerns about migration of university email to Gmail and whether use of those email accounts jeopardize privacy and security of communications relating to research for the Government or other sponsored research. What steps has the institution taken to address such concerns, and does the institution provide an alternative means of electronic communication for faculty involved in potentially sensitive research projects?**

This issue apparently applies only to UMBC, Towson, UMCES, UMES, College Park, and UMGC. Some campuses (e.g., UMBC, Towson, UMGC) also have agreements with Microsoft for Office 365 usage and have migrated certain areas to that environment to ensure a higher level of security. Towson is also in the process of moving its student population from Google Apps for Education to Office 365. UMCES will be introducing encryption of Gmail in the near future, while UMES stated that it has experienced no security issues since it migrated staff and faculty email to Gmail in the spring of 2019. College Park created a task force two years ago to evaluate concerns related to its institutional agreement with Google, which resulted in changes to ensure that all UMD data is stored in US-based data centers. College Park believes that the Google platform exceeds all security and privacy guarantees of the ad hoc, locally administered email systems it replaced, and the campus also provides a CUI computational enclave for controlled, unclassified research. At UMGC, some faculty and adjuncts still use Google Apps (UMGC's previous email system), but they are only able to receive email, not send it.

Topic III: Reflections on Current Practices and Plans for the Future

- 1. What is your IT Department's assessment of the risk of inadvertent disclosure of data and other confidential information, arising from telework by your faculty members?**

Responses varied greatly. UMBC noted that it took proactive action to address this risk several years ago by minimizing access to and use of confidential information, and also training employees to protect confidential information. Other institutions control their risk by providing IT security awareness training and alerts to employees through videos, emails messages, DLP tools, and IT Security policies. The University of Baltimore feels that if faculty use University-provided resources, the risk is minimal; it notes that all faculty will be moved to multi-factor authentication by June 2021, and teleworkers will be required to use a university-provided computer in the future. UMGC considers its risk to be low since it is not a research university and therefore has a minimal amount of proprietary data as compared with other USM institutions. Towson observed that its risk is less focused on remote work and more on the way in which a faculty member is accessing TU's information systems; personal devices lead to a higher risk of data disclosure both in local and remote settings. Other institutions have not performed risk assessments (e.g., Frostburg, UMES).

- 2. What is Academic Affairs's assessment of privacy risks (including but not limited to FERPA considerations) arising from distance learning and computer-administered exams?**

For most institutions, Academic Affairs works closely with various other offices to provide resources and support for faculty relating to privacy concerns of students (e.g., Office of Equity and Inclusion, Faculty Development Center, and others). Remote proctoring tools have been properly licensed, and contracts have been reviewed by the institution's Office of General Counsel. UMGC replied that its instructional model was already built around the online learning environment, and therefore Covid-19 did not pose any new student privacy concerns or risks. Towson similarly observed that it had been teaching online courses and programs since long before the pandemic, and privacy and regulatory issues can largely be handled through increased training of both students and faculty. Other institutions had not yet completed a comprehensive assessment of privacy risks associated with distance education and/or were not yet sure how to respond to the question (e.g., Frostburg, Bowie, Salisbury).

3. As it seems likely that higher education institutions will not go back to the “pre-pandemic” conditions, and some of the issues we are experiencing now might still remain, do you have any plans to make any changes as your campus moves from the current emergency situation created by the Covid-19 pandemic and begins to reestablish live classes and an increased presence on campus?

Several institutions reported that they are working on new strategies and plans for our return to campus. College Park indicated that its plan is being crafted with significant input and review from faculty, students, staff, administrators, and campus leaders. UMBC expects to have more remote working and more hybrid and online courses than was the case in the past, and it plans to continue to support faculty teaching online through additional training, to update its security guidance and practices to have solutions for users working on campus, remotely, or in a hybrid situation. Frostburg is considering several new strategies and practices relating to university-owned laptops. Towson plans to update its technologies, including moving the entire TU community to one digital ecosystem, moving student email and calendaring to Office 365 and closing down Google Apps for Education, and updating classroom technology standards to accommodate participation by some students at a distance. UMES pointed out that many of the issues discussed were in existence pre-pandemic and Covid-19 simply served to highlight certain problems, such as need for improved pedagogical skills, students' lack of appropriate workplaces, and the need for improved support to adjuncts and part-time instructors. UMGC again observed that it has been offering online courses for over two decades and was therefore well positioned to transition to a fully remote instructional model at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, although it did implement hybrid courses (largely on military bases and overseas) in places where in-person classes were previously offered.

The subcommittee plans to write a white paper with recommendations for actions when they come back in the Fall.

Structural Inequalities subcommittee- The Town Hall “**From Obstacles to Solutions: Experiences in Structural Inequalities, A Solutions Oriented Approach**” was held on **May 12, 2021**. Its purpose was to highlight the existing inequalities within the university structure. The event identified some of these structural inequities and explored solutions to existing inequalities in academia. It was hosted by Coppin State University. Close to 200 attendees came from across the system. The **Panelists were Dr. Kimberly Griffin from University of Maryland College Park, Dr. Ayanna Lynch from Bowie State University, and Dr. April Logan for Salisbury University. Dr. Lorenda Naylor from the University of Baltimore acted a Moderator.**

The Questions Addressed were:

1) Student Diversity. Student bodies at campuses across the country are becoming more diverse in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual minorities. For example, **females have represented the majority of bachelor earning adults since 1982**, with females earning 57 percent of bachelor's degrees in 2018. Since 1982 females have earned the greatest percentage of Masters' degrees, and since 2006 females have earned the greatest percentage of PhDs (U.S. Department of Statistics, 2019). In regard to race and ethnicity, **college students are twice as likely to be Black than faculty and 4 times as likely to be Hispanic than faculty** (on average) (Pew Research Center, 2019). The US Census Bureau also predicts that by 2042 the minority population will become the majority population increasing the diversity of college students. There is a theory known as representative bureaucracy (Krislov & Rosenbloom) that argues that government employees such as faculty members should reflect the people or students they serve. How critical do you believe this is to student success and student outcomes? Do students need to see faculty members that look like them and/or identify with them?

2. Faculty Diversity. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, as of 2017 universities across the country there is a shortage of female and minority faculty members at all ranks with the biggest shortage at the full professor level. For example, as faculty ranking increases from assistant to associate to full in the past there have been fewer women and minorities represented (27% of assistant professors are minority compared to 19% of full professors; 53% of assistant professors are women compared to only 35% of full professors). (<https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=61>). From your perspective what obstacles or barriers exist that prevent women and minorities from advancing in rank and salary? (lack of mentoring programs, role models, training, professional networking, etc).

3) USM Initiatives. There are numerous USM initiatives to advance minority faculty across the state. For example, U of MD College Park recently announced a \$40 million investment over 10 years to combatting racism and increasing faculty diversity (Baltimore Sun, April 22, 2021 <https://www.baltimoresun.com/education/bs-md-university-maryland-diversity-faculty-20210422-20210422-f27nyq5nj5ggbc4ef3elcwnxy-story.html>). We applaud the efforts of President Pines in directly tackling this critical issue. Not all USM institutions have the same resources available. Are there any strategies that have low cost and high impact in terms of advancing women and minority faculty members USM campuses can employ in increasing and advancing minorities?

4) White House Initiatives. President Biden has issued numerous executive orders combatting racism and increasing equality, diversity, cultural competency, and inclusiveness in the federal executive branch. This includes equal opportunity in regard to race, ethnicity, nationality, sex and sexual minorities (LGBTQ: sexual orientation and gender identity). How can USM institutions align with and promote these democratic values?

5) Diversity in the Curriculum. As faculty members how can we weave in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) into our course materials and curriculum to illustrate we understand the importance of diversity? Some accrediting bodies require DEI be incorporated into the curriculum. For example, the Networks of Schools of Public Policy, Administration and Affairs (NASPAA), which is the master of public administration accrediting body requires DEI metrics be woven into the curriculum including student and faculty diversity.

Solutions provided by the panelists in the answers to these questions are being gathered and will be presented in a report by the sub-committee on Best Practices schools/faculty can adopt in working with DEI.

Finally, the Education Policy Committee will pursue next year a collaboration with Dr. Nancy Shapiro on promoting best practices, innovation and new ideas on how to encourage civic engagement across curriculum.

Respectfully submitted,

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