

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

April 20, 2020

Online Meeting - 5:00 pm

Present via call-in (in alphabetic order): Collins, Jay; Daniel, Dianne; Derkay, Craig; Johnson, Clarence; Hosseini, Alireza; Ikonne, Uzona (A); Lattanzio, Frank; Morris, Shannon ; Musto, Alberto. Invited guest-President, Provost and Dean Dr. Richard Homan.

1. The Faculty Senate was called to order at 5:00 by Dr. Derkay.
2. The minutes of the March meeting were approved.
3. Prior to Dr. Homan calling in, Dr. Derkay gave a short update on his monthly discussion with Dr. Homan. The main concern was the school's finances that were declining during the COVID-19 pandemic and would have to be bolstered through reserves that Dr. Homan had accrued over the past several years. There was mention of the possibility of restarting research on May 15 and elective surgery on April 28, dependent on a number of factors, including restrictions active in Virginia, securing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and the formulation and execution of plans that would protect EVMS patients, faculty and staff while performing research or medicine, respectively. Both Norfolk General and CHKD were working on COVID-19 testing as well, with the goal of beginning to safely ramp up their clinical enterprises. Currently the Virginia non-essential work order stoppage is set to expire on June 10. Virginia's pandemic abatement plans were to be placed in concert with those of Maryland and Washington, D.C. to allow a regional response that would include Northern Virginia, a pandemic hot spot.
4. Grievance Committee activities were presented by Shannon Morris. An ongoing grievance chaired by Shannon Morris that was to be held in April was placed on hold. In another active grievance, Dr. Jay Collins noted a memo was being drafted with General Council Stacy Purcell. This hearing was placed on hold until late summer or early fall.
5. Dr. Homan called in and spoke to the Faculty Senate in detail about how EVMS was addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. Before Dr. Homan started his presentation, Dr. Derkay

mentioned a guest commentary by Dr. Homan covering the impact of COVID-19 on Hampton Roads that was published in the Virginian Pilot on April 19.

6. In the education arena, clinical rotations for Medical and Health Professions students would not occur until it was safe to do so. Drs. Flenner, Combs and Crews were working on details to allow replacement of research and clinical rotations so that the students would not be held back. The graduating fourth year medical students have successfully completed all of their clinical rotations. Of the 2020 class, twenty Physician Assistant students may need to extend their time to complete rotations, with EVMS investigating the possibility of some latitude in this requirement by the national accrediting body or uncovering other potential options for this requirement. The Surgical Assistants also need to complete their clinical rotations. For graduate medical education there have been a variety of approaches nationwide. In areas that are COVID-19 hotpots, such as New York City, there is a movement for early Medical School student graduation, followed by use of the new graduates as mid-level providers for non-COVID-19 patients. EVMS has not taken this approach as we have not seen such a surge in COVID-19 patients in the Tidewater area. Ways to best assist International Graduate Medical students is under review through Linda Archer's office, with many of these individuals possibly starting on July 1, a group that includes both foreign nationals and American graduates of foreign medical schools. For graduating EVMS medical students, commencement will be a virtual affair, occurring on May 16 with event details under review, including whether the commencement speaker will present a recorded speech. 2020 graduates also have an option of additionally attending the 2021 graduation, either with the class of 2021, if there are fewer than 100 attendees, or having a separate ceremony, if there are more than 100 attendees. 2020 Match Day was a drive through, with each student having a Facebook page and goody bag. All but 2 of the 2020 class matched, with about 5% not matching in the first round, this being comparable to 6% not matching in the first round for all US medical schools. The concern for the class of 2021 may be the lack of audition rotations, so EVMS may hold additional spaces for EVMS graduates, an option under discussion with program directors.

7. In the clinical arena, Dr. Abuhamad designed a face shield constructed out of supplies from Office Depot and 400 face shields constructed by 20 EVMS students (working with appropriate PPE and social distancing). These face shields were then used by COVID-19 screeners and other practitioners. Both Norfolk General and CHKD may resume elective surgeries on April 28. During this pandemic the medical students have been performing volunteer services that they may also give them academic credits. There are many unknowns concerning the pandemic duration and aftermath, with the Virginia peak expected at the end of April. Some questions are: (1) will there be a vaccine available or sufficient herd immunity if there is a return of COVID-19 in the 2021 winter? (2) will there be long lasting antibodies generated by the disease that will confer resistance to individuals previously infected? Re-opening the EVMS clinical enterprise in June will depend upon having sufficient PPE, social distancing, temperature monitoring and potential other protective options. Telehelp is being used to contact patients, but there are still significant losses of revenue (\$1 ½ million/month) with this approach. These losses then affect clinical salaries and many US schools with hospitals are having to make significant pay cuts across the board. At EVMS, financial projections are under review, with reserve funds staged to use as bridge funding.
8. In the research arena, Dr. Wasilenko and Helen Heselius are working on ways to cover the loss of research funds of about \$670,000/month. There is a possibility beginning to re-open research on May 15, depending on resolving number of issues. ODU through John Broderick has made some 60 separate dormitory living spaces available to EVMS residents and physicians to allow them to distance themselves from their families while they treat COVID-19 patients. Some residents have also been self-quarantining due to possible COVID-19 exposure. There have been requests to share COVID-19 treatment protocols but the AAMC did not want to post such protocols. Dr. Marik (EVMS) has been working with a consortium to share COVID-19 data. There are ongoing studies to determine if zoonotic carriers of COVID-19 might extend to pigs and cattle that could then serve as reservoirs for the disease; this study due to the large number of cases in meat processing plants,

although the proximity of workers to each other is the likely cause. Dr. Derkay noted a Town Hall meeting for the community sponsored by Dr. Strasnick (Otolaryngology) on April 23. As previously mentioned, Both CHKD and Norfolk General will resume elective surgery if the current Virginia moratorium does expire on April 28. Telehelp is useful but it is also reducing clinical revenues, with the further concern that elective surgeries may not be rescheduled due to patients' COVID-19 fears and/or due to financial constraints brought about by the pandemic. Dr. Homan stated there will be another Town Hall meeting on April 30 to maintain communications with the EVMS community. The Summer Scholars program, normally hosting undergraduates and M1 students, will be re-directed to allow rising M2 and rising M3 students to get extra research credit for graduation. Several EVMS grant opportunities were discussed, one through HADSI that was co-opted by UVA and another through VBHRC with George Mason University, EVMS, Sentara and Vibrant. To bolster finances, funding sources from departments and PI may be utilized and there may be some furloughs (this approach would allow qualifying for unemployment). Non-funded researchers would be asked contribute to administrative and educational missions, with Dr. Combs and Flenner examining the school's needs, to avoid furloughing any faculty. Dr. Daniels asked if upon the restart of research would EVMS be providing masks and other PPE; this would occur and would also include sanitizing agents, social distancing and temperature monitoring. Dr. Lattanzio asked when graduate students could return, a question that would be referred to Dr. Wasilenko. For a return to clinical activity, certain practices, such as ENT, are much more likely to be exposed to COVID-19 and would require much more complex protocols to reduce exposures. Dr. Derkay asked about the re-initiation of academic travel; this would need further guidance from the CDC and currently the EVMS travel ban will be maintained.

9. Financial items. (1) EVMS has been the lowest state funded school in Virginia and had its \$625,000 support rescinded due to re-budgeting during the pandemic. Virginia is expecting a \$1.8 billion shortfall next year, with the actual budget cuts possibly available 2-5 weeks from now. Earlier in 2020, additional support from Sentara to EVMS was under discussion

but those discussions were halted. It was noted that the federal stimulus money will be available to Sentara, with the hope that some support may be given to EVMS. EVMS will allow salary increases for faculty promotions, but will suspend merit raises, maintain a hiring freeze and not fill vacant positions.

10. LCME and SACS visits. The LCME site visit is still scheduled for October 1-4, 2020, with SACS rescheduled for February 19, 2021. The EVMS replacements for MS clinical rotations were approved by the LCME, but the school must be fully open (in line with both CDC and Virginia recommendations) for accreditation to occur. At this point, Dr. Homan finished his discussion with the Faculty Senate, was thanked by the Senate and then he logged off.
11. Dr. Ikonne commented on the similarities and differences between the depression of 2008 and the current COVID-19 situation. The major difference is the likely to be a much slower rebound in 2020 with 75% of the US families seeing an average decrease of 25% of income. Clinical shortfalls will continue, as although telemedicine has greatly increased, it generates less revenue and additionally many patients may opt to wait for Medicare coverage for elective surgeries due to reduced family income.
12. Faculty Senate elections. An email notification requesting nominees for President-Elect, Secretary and Member at Large will be distributed. Once a ballot has been created, voting will occur in the May or June Faculty Senate meeting. Departments are also encouraged to vote for their Faculty Senators and their alternates.
13. The deadline for the annual faculty evaluations was extended; Frank Lattanzio will request the new deadline from Dr. Mylona's office.
14. The request to create an EVMS Facial Nerve Center was approved by the Faculty Senate. Dr. Derkay suggested that the Center include surgical subspecialties that perform such techniques, thus securing the most number of participants.

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 6:22 PM.

Next Meeting: May 18, 2020