**President’s Report**

**Faculty Senate**

**August 17, 2020**

* **Initial Thanks**. Thanks for your willingness to serve the university in your role as a member of the faculty senate. I thank the senate officers for their service, as well as Dr. Mark Watson for his service over the last 2 years in a leadership role with this group. I also thanks many involved in academic affairs who have been involved nearly daily since March in finding ways to return to campus in some form, and to find ways to support student learning in challenging times—challenges that will likely continue to evolve, and members of this group and the colleagues you represent will be vital for institutional responses to our circumstances
* **Senate activities** we have traditionally scheduled regular meetings with the Chair of the senate, (similar to regular meetings we have with other members of university leadership), and will continue to do so even in virtual form this year. The bylaws of the faculty provide an excellent outline for our shared work, and recommend reading (or re-reading) that work. <https://www.clayton.edu/about/docs/faculty-bylaws-april-2018.pdf> we benefit greatly from the work taken by this body, and especially benefit from the differences in the perspectives represented by the department and programs from which senators are selected. As a matter of usual practice, the senate chair serves as a member of the administrative council, the planning and budget advisory committee.
* **COVID-19 activities** we plan to continue for the time being COVID-19 contingency meetings at least once per week for the foreseeable future—it has covered COVID related issues on communication, academic affairs, enrollment management, IT, Student affairs, university health service, international student issues, and public safety
* **On-Going external issues influencing university activities** we focus our core focus on evidence and how various issues can be demonstrably related to learning. We must focus on ways in which the learning of our campus citizens are affected by external factors, and use specific evidence about those relationships to design university responses. Budget and economic issues force choices in ways we invest in campus activities, driven by university mission, vision, and goals, and evidence of the success of those investments. Dr Demmitt reports academic affairs efforts in race and learning, as well as academic affairs participation with student affairs and HR to frame short and long-term actions that will address university options. Our university has a chance to make model contributions to student graduation and retention, and thus change the national underrepresentation of poor and African American students in degree achievement. As noted above, we do this in the context of a pandemic, which affects significantly economically challenged institutions, and institutions serving students affected by race and class.
* **Many thanks** I appreciate your willingness to serve, and look forward to working with you to support learning for faculty, students, staff and community.