

**WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
THREE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOURTH MEETING**

**March 28, 2020**

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THREE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOURTH MEETING**

**Saturday, March 28, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.  
Remote Live Stream**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Sean Fitzpatrick, chair, welcomed everyone and stated the purpose of this meeting is to discuss Wright State University's response to the coronavirus pandemic. The meeting of the Wright State University Board of Trustees was then called to order on Saturday, March 28, 2020 at 10:09 a.m. Ms. Shari Mickey-Boggs, secretary to the Board of Trustees, called the roll:

**Present**

Michael Bridges  
Douglas Fecher  
Sean Fitzpatrick  
Martin Grunder  
Tom Gunlock  
Bruce Langos  
William Montgomery  
Andrew Platt  
Grace Ramos  
Olivia Sneary  
Shaun Wenrick

**Absent**

Anuj Goyal  
Vishal Soin

**II. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT**

Mr. Fitzpatrick read the following conflict of interest statement:

It is of utmost importance to ensure that all university decisions are free from any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Therefore, please be mindful of all obligations with which you have been charged as a Trustee of Wright State University; and take the steps you deem appropriate to perform your duties fairly and impartially.

**III. PROOF OF NOTICE OF MEETING**

Mr. Fitzpatrick reported that the meeting was called by written notification and a quorum was present.

#### **IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

##### **Chairs Comments**

Mr. Fitzpatrick commented that it is still the early days of this COVID-19 crisis with much being done to flatten the wave that is rapidly approaching and thanked: Governor DeWine for leading our state and country by example with quick and evasive actions; Dr. Edwards and administration for their rapid response in mobilizing the entire Wright State University community to prepare for and prevent the spread of this disease; faculty for their creativity and ingenuity in finding ways to quickly establish remote-learning options; and the students for their resilience the past several weeks.

The Wright State University community needs to be thinking about what else can be done to help in this crisis as there is still much to do, stated Mr. Fitzpatrick. And one of the main assets at Wright State University is the educational system developed to educate students. Wright State is here for the students taking a couple of semesters off, undecided high school seniors, and workers displaced by this situation.

Mr. Fitzpatrick also remarked Wright State has other assets to help the State of Ohio through this crisis such as graduating doctors and nurses, the Nutter Center and housing. Dr. Edwards was then asked for an update.

##### **A. COVID-19 Update from President Edwards**

President Edwards thanked Chair Fitzpatrick; the Board of Trustees; Dr. Laura Luehrmann, faculty senate president; Ms. Lindsay Miller, representing staff; and the community for joining the live stream meeting.

Additionally, Dr. Edwards thanked the Wright State community for rapidly mobilizing to make the sweeping changes necessary to navigate the constantly evolving COVID-19 situation in the last unprecedented eighteen days.

While the coronavirus situation was monitored on the international front since the beginning of the year, no one could have actually anticipated the depth and pace of changes that would occur, Dr. Edwards stated.

On January 28, Ohio received its first notification of two suspected cases, both of which were negative at the Miami of Ohio University. At that point, emergency planning began on campus for a possible COVID-19 outbreak.

And as the COVID-19 situation escalated on the national front, on March 10, the Governor announced a State of Emergency for the State of Ohio. At 10:30 that evening, OSU announced that they were moving to cease face-to-face classes. The IUC Presidents were then called to a meeting with the Governor

on the morning of March 11, at which time all Ohio institutions were asked to cease face-to-face classes for two weeks.

For most institutions, this was not an issue as they were either on Spring break or they had Spring break coming up. For Wright State, having just come off Spring break, it was a very difficult and different situation. Wright State was then immediately forced to communicate that campus was going to close for the remainder of that week and cease face-to-face classes.

Dr. Edwards thanked the faculty, the staff in the Center of Teaching and Learning, and the CaTS staff for their unification in the mammoth undertaking to convert approximately 1500 face-to-face classes for remote delivery in five days and thanked the staff in Residence Life and Chartwells who continue to serve our resident students on a daily basis.

A timeline of University changes due to COVID-19 was given by President Edwards:

- On Friday, March 13, the Ohio institutions were asked to extend the remote teaching period through the end of Spring semester. And based on state and public health advice, Wright State was asked to close student housing. For some of our student body, Wright State is their only home; and the Chancellor asked student housing to continue in the case of extenuating circumstances.
- On March 16, the Library and the computer labs moved to close. It was communicated to our students as they were leaving campus that there was an availability of laptops for loan through the CaTS help desk so that they could continue their education.
- On March 17, the Governor announced a move to remote work for the next two weeks for those staff that it could apply to. On March 18, all non-essential research operations ceased and remote-working protocols were operationalized. Spring commencement was postponed as it fell within the eight-week period that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) had asked all group activities to cease.
- By March 20, Wright State preempted a Stay in Place Order from the state, moved to essential staff only on campus, and extended our remote work practice beginning Tuesday, March 24. On that Sunday, March 22, the Governor announced the Stay in Place Order.

In the last two weeks, every one of the Governor's requests have been carried out to effectively, efficiently and significantly to reduce the number of faculty, staff and students on campus.

In one video communication with the Wright State community this week, Dr. Edwards stated the strategies around recruitment, retention and relationships were continuing to move forward. Dr. Edwards also encouraged the community to remain connected with students and community partners to let each other know we are family and we care.

Strategies around recruitment have been altered. Staff reached out to students that applied and have been admitted. Wright State wants to let our region know we are here to support them and remain committed to providing a high-quality education at one of the lowest-priced tuitions for a four-year institution in the State.

In terms of retaining existing students, Wright State recognized that some students may not, in fact, excel in the current remote-teaching mode. Faculty and staff are committed to supporting students through this period of time; and in addition to the support units, a team of over 175 faculty, staff and athletic coaches will be making calls to existing students in the next few weeks to check in and find out how they are doing and how we can be of assistance in supporting them to be successful.

Student support services have moved to remote mechanisms using video communication, telephone, messaging, Facebook, Twitter, to conduct counseling, advising, tutoring and keeping the campus informed. Wright State will continue to support students every day in every way possible.

Dr. Edwards had several conversations with members of the student body via video sessions in the last week and will be meeting with the Student Government Association on Tuesday via WebEx.

Wright State continues to support our community through COVID-19. Many of our medical faculty and medical and nursing graduates are on the front lines, in not only our region's hospitals, but also hospitals across the nation. Dr. Steve Burdette, Dr. Gary LeRoy, Dr. Glen Solomon and Dr. Colon have been seen in many new stories over the last two weeks.

The State regulatory boards are assisting our new nursing graduates with allowing them to gain an immediate temporary license upon completion of their graduation requirements so they can assist in efforts in the community sooner. Dr. Edwards understood that graduates in the medical college will also be following suit. Wright State will continue to work with the Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association (GDAHA) as they plan to activate the emergency management plan associated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to utilize the Nutter Center as an overflow care facility. Wright State remains in constant contact and ready to mobilize.

Dr. Edwards continued by also thanking the Wright State Foundation who stood up the Wright State Student Emergency Relief Campaign to support students adversely affected by COVID-19 and alumni, faculty, staff, community partners, parents and students who contributed to the fund. As of right now, the Foundation has raised over \$20,000. If you are interested in contributing to the fund, it is at [givecampus.com](http://givecampus.com); and that money will be used to assist students that may have lost their jobs during the COVID-19 situation.

Dr. Edwards ended her comments thanking the students for their understanding, patience and compassion to fellow Raiders and thanking faculty and staff for their resilience, unwavering commitment to the students and the collegiality and support demonstrated to each other and students.

Dr. Edwards, again, thanked the members of the Board and appreciated them reaching out with communications of support and offers of assistance. The leadership team, faculty senate, staff senate and student leaders were, again, thanked for their leadership each day as Wright State navigated these uncharted waters. Finally, Dr. Edwards thanked Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Husted for their leadership of the State and their compassion.

Wright State Raiders will get through the COVID-19 by working together and are much better when working together. Together is better.

Chair Mr. Fitzpatrick took a request from Mr. Bridges asking Dr. Edwards to expand the update regarding the students in healthcare approaching graduation and their temporary licensure.

Dr. Edwards responded the announcement was made yesterday about nursing students. Basically, the Board of Nursing met with the Chancellor and members of the colleges of Nursing; and they have agreed that once the students have completed their graduation requirements, they will grant them a temporary license to practice, recognizing the fact that we are in an emergency situation where health care providers are in high demand. They will obtain their permanent license as we move down the track.

Mr. Bridges noted his appreciation on the State's flexibility and the graduating students' willingness to join the fight.

Questions about Dr. Edwards' authority and Board support needed to react quickly to the changing circumstances including whether she or the administration foresee any upcoming decisions that would need the Board of Trustees' approval came from Mr. Fecher.

Dr. Edwards commented the Board have been exceptionally available to ask questions and bounce ideas off of and have been incredibly supportive. The administration has been moving rather rapidly, primarily reacting to Governor's

DeWine's requests. No significant changes other than face-to-face delivery were made, which in other times would have gone through the Board. Dr. Edwards did notify the Board at 5:30 that evening of the Governor's request.

Mr. Doug Fecher asked Dr. Luehrmann for an update on the status of the faculty and the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Laura Luehrmann thanked Mr. Fecher and remarked the senate and the senate executive committee have been unbelievably responsive. They have been working seven days a week since COVID-19 started and working extremely close with all the members of the administration and leadership, which has been really helpful. The main thing has been to reach out to all of faculty colleagues about any proposed policies being discussed and get as much feedback as possible.

Faculty leadership have also been very careful to make sure to include students in any conversations they are able to, because all these decisions impact students first and foremost. So, there has been a lot of texting, phone calls and WebEx meetings.

From the very beginning, even before moving to remote delivery, faculty voices were included. As we continue to make decisions about what this is going to look like moving forward including summer, faculty have been trying to be as responsive and as representative as possible. And so far, I think it is going well. People are a little bit weary and have really stepped up to the challenge. It has been exhausting. Faculty realize they just have to do this remote delivery for the students.

In answer to Mr. Fitzpatrick's question about what role the Nutter Center would play if a big wave of the virus comes through, Dr. Edwards explained that Wright State has a long-time, established MOU with area hospitals. The Nutter Center would be a medical overflow facility, commonly seen as FEMA has set up in many areas; and FEMA would assist with bringing in medical equipment.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked to hear from the Student Trustees in terms of how things are going from a student perspective?

Ms. Olivia Sneary was impressed with the Boonshoft School of Medicine on getting classes up and running the next day using WebEx and Collaborative Ultra. It was a great transition from in-class to online lectures. It is tough and different from face-to-face, and I am sure a lot of students all across Wright State are feeling that, but I think we have been doing great work.

Mr. Shaun Wenrick commented the whole experience is a great opportunity to learn. As a student body, students have been through a lot over the last several

years; and one thing I have learned is that Raiders are resilient. I think we are stronger because of these situations we encountered.

Ms. Sneary asked President Edwards about temporary licensure for the medical students and Dr. Edwards replied there have been conversations.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated at times like this, things can change quickly; and it's really important that Dr. Edwards has the authority to act quickly and in her best judgment. While in more normal times, there are communication protocols and approval processes in place. With changes happening so rapidly, sometimes there isn't time to follow normal protocols. We have a resolution that actually gives Dr. Edwards some additional authority to act on urgent matters that impact the health, welfare and safety of the Wright State community.

Dr. Edwards further interjected a comment so the Board and the people watching the live stream understand that no decisions were made in isolation. Decisions are collaborative. Administration worked with faculty, staff and students and the leadership team. There are multiple consults with ever decision that's being made. Dr. Edwards reassured everyone that it is not a singular authority of allowing business to be conducted. Wright State has been conducting business in the best interest of the community.

After further discussion from Trustees in regards to an expansion of the COVID-19 Resolution and a possible future State of Ohio emergency policy, Mr. Fitzpatrick indicated that this Resolution could be amended at a future meeting.

## **B. COVID-19 Resolution**

### **Presidential Authority to Respond to a Public Health Emergency**

#### **RESOLUTION 20-45**

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of COVID-19, a public health emergency of international concern; and,

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Health and Human Services Secretary, Alex M. Azar II, declared a public health emergency for the United States to aid the nation's healthcare community in responding to COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, testing by the Ohio Department of Health confirmed that three (3) patients had tested positive for COVID-19 in the

state of Ohio, creating a potentially dangerous condition that may affect the health, safety and welfare of Ohio citizens; and,

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, Governor Mike DeWine issued Executive Order 2020-01D, (attached as Exhibit A), Declaring a State of Emergency to protect the well-being of Ohio citizens from the dangerous effects of COVID-19 and to coordinate the state response to COVID-19; and,

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, Ohio Revised Code §3352.03 (attached as Exhibit B) empowers the University's Board of Trustees... "to do all things necessary for the creation, proper maintenance, and successful and continuous operation of the University..."; and,

WHEREAS, subject to the authority of the Board of Trustees as set forth in the Bylaws of the Wright State University Board of Trustees as Sections 3., 5. and 6., (attached as Exhibit C) outlines the broad authority of the University President, including the responsibility for the administration of the affairs of the University and the authority for administrative decisions in all matters of operations of the University; and,

WHEREAS, additional University rules contemplate the need for adjustment to University policies, procedures and practices during emergency situations;

WHEREAS, during the current State of Emergency and rapidly evolving public health crisis, there is a need for the University to act expeditiously at the direction of government and University officials, as well as public health and healthcare experts, to respond to crucial developments as they occur; now, therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees authorizes the President, in consultation with appropriate public health and healthcare experts, governmental officials, and University officials, to oversee and direct all steps necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the campus community and to maintain the essential functions and operations critical to carrying out the mission and business continuity of the University. However, if during this crisis the President encounters an extraordinary circumstance as determined by the President, which requires official action, the President will first contact the Board Chair. This resolution is effective retroactive to March 9, 2020.

With a motion from Mr. Fitzpatrick, and a second from Mr. Bridges, the motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if there was any other business for the good of the order and thanked everyone. The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

**V. ADJOURN**