

May 27, 2020

Dear UA System students, faculty and staff:

In keeping with our efforts to inform students and employees about developments surrounding UA System planning during these uncertain times, we wanted to provide you with an update on matters addressed by the Board of Trustees at its regular meeting on May 20-21 via virtual conference. Regarding the ongoing planning surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board heard updates on the preparations for the fall semester, considered relevant policy revisions, and reviewed tuition and fee schedules and institutional budgets for the 2021 fiscal year, among other issues. Specifically:

- The Board approved flat tuition and fee schedules for two- and four-year campuses and minor increases at UAMS for the fall 2020 semester. In these times of uncertainty, the Board and campus administrators across the system have sought to provide some financial relief to students and families in preparation for the coming academic year. While all campuses face fiscal challenges due to the pandemic, we all agree that keeping the cost of attendance as affordable as possible for students is a top priority.
- The Board approved budgets for the 2021 fiscal year in which campuses across the system have done their best to absorb anticipated losses in state funding while making every effort to minimize the impact on students and employees. These are lean financial times everywhere, and we must do our best to steward our limited resources in ways that best serve each institution's central mission.
- President Bobbitt provided the trustees with an update on the ongoing planning across the system for reopening institutions for the fall semester. A systemwide task force continues to meet to discuss the latest information from health officials including campus reopening guidance from the Centers for Disease Control. Additional task force issues include campus PPE and sanitation needs, class scheduling and potential revisions to the academic calendar to reduce risk of spreading the coronavirus.
- The Board heard updates from seven campus athletics directors about health and safety plans for welcoming student athletes to campus when allowed by the NCAA on or after June 1.
- The Board passed a resolution temporarily amending Board Policy 440.1 *Tuition Waivers for Employees*, which provides tuition discounts to full-time employees and their dependents. The resolution allows for campuses to make exceptions to continue to provide this benefit to employees whose full-time status is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic through the fall semester.

The next special board meeting to address COVID-19 related issues will be June 17, 2020. As has been the case since the pandemic hit Arkansas in March, the Board and the UA System will continue to monitor developments related to COVID-19 and campus plans for reopening this fall. In the meantime, we hope everyone remains healthy and safe as many of you head into your summer break.

Sincerely,



Donald R. Bobbitt, President
University of Arkansas System



John Goodson, Chair
Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas

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