Members Present: Mitch Alters, Michele Bedsaul, Ashelle Brown, Craig Buchbinder, Kourtney Ennis, Priscilla Greene, Fred Hagemeister, Josh Jeffreys, Allison Johnson, Frank McMurrough, Taylor McNeilly, Joe Minick, Jennifer O’Donnell (Secretary/Treasurer), Katy Olney, Paul Sandman, Beth Simms, Jeff Smith, Susan Sokolsky, Mark Stanton (Chair), Richard Thomas, Kaylin Tingle, and Jessica Washington (Vice Chair)

Non-Voting Attendees: Carl Sorensen (ex-officio), Melody Wilson (ex-officio)

Members Absent: 

Non-Voting Absent:

Mark Stanton, chair, called the Council meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. and welcomed council members and guests.

Mark Stanton opened the meeting by thanking the essential workers who worked through winter break to support our resident students and keep campus operations running.

Mark reviewed the 2020-2021 USAC goals

1. Strengthen communications and outreach efforts to maximize the visibility and accessibility of USAC to all staff members

2. Continue to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive intellectual community in which staff are recognized for their contributions

3. Provide council members with professional and personal development opportunities to improve their leadership and advocacy skills

Guest Speakers

John Hardt, Terry Heilman Sylvester, and Gil Villanueva, Presidential Search Committee Staff Representatives
Ann Lloyd Breen, Board of Trustees Contact
Molly Field, Special Assistant for Board Operations

Each guest speaker introduced themselves and gave a brief summary of their goals for the presidential search. The speakers then engaged in a Q&A session with council members and gallery guests. This portion of the meeting was recorded and is posted to the USAC website, here: https://usac.richmond.edu/
**Amy Howard & Carl Sorenson, HERI Campus Climate Survey**

The university will be participating in Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) surveys for faculty, staff, and students this spring. The surveys will help to assess campus climate across the whole community. The survey link will be sent to the university community in an email from President Crutcher, and will be live on February 1 through the beginning of April. The surveys will take about 30 minutes to complete, and there will be incentives to encourage participation. USAC will aid in ensuring accessibility of the survey to all staff members who wish to participate. Stay tuned for more information. Learn more about the HERI surveys here: [https://heri.ucla.edu/](https://heri.ucla.edu/)

**Updates from Around the Room**

**COVID testing for faculty and staff** will be available on 1/19 and 1/20, registration links will be available online. Look for Spiderbytes and email announcements.

**Outstanding Service Awards Selection Committee Volunteers:** HR is seeking nominations for staff members to serve on the Outstanding Service Award selection committee. Nominations are due by Tuesday, January 19. USAC members will write to constituents to collect nominations to submit to HR.

The 2021 **Outstanding Service Awards Ceremony** will be held virtually on **Friday, March 5, from 2-4 PM**. The deadline for nomination submissions is Thursday, January 28, at 5 PM. Nominate a colleague at [Service Award Nominations](#).

**Nominations for USAC Executive Committee** are open now – current USAC members who will continue their term for 2021-2022 are eligible. Forward nominations to the USAC Parliamentarian, Mitch Alters.

HR is teaming up with Instersections for a **21 Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge**. The 21 days will include weekly themes, discussions, and challenges. The challenge begins January 18, 2021. Register here: [21 Day Challenge Registration](#)

**Committees and Liaisons Updates**

**Communications committee:** Michele Bedsaul (committee chair), Kaylin Tingle, Kourtney Ennis, Paul Sandman, Susan Sokolsky, Taylor McNeilly, Ashelle Brown, and Mark Stanton

No updates

**Elections committee:** Mitch Alters (committee chair and Parliamentarian), Josh Jeffreys, Joe Minick, Beth Simms, Jeff Smith, Fred Hagemeister, Jessica Washington

No updates

**Engagement committee:** Priscilla Greene (committee chair), Craig Buchbinder, Frank McMurrough, Katy Olney, Allison Johnson, Rich Thomas, Jennifer O’Donnell
No updates

**Faculty Senate Liaison to USAC:** Mary Tate

**Plant Involvement Team:** Paul Sandman and Frank McMurrough

No updates

**Foodservice Involvement Group:** Richard Thomas and Jeff Smith

No updates

**Budget Review, Jennifer O’Donnell**

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Expected expenses:
- Name tags for new council members: $75.00
- Voting mechanism (will be needed for upcoming election)
- Professional development: ~$500

**Gallery Comments**

There were no gallery comments.

**Closed Session**

The Council entered closed session at 2:05 p.m.

**Web Submissions, Jessica Washington**

January web submissions were reviewed and discussed. Web submissions and full answers are posted as a separate document online at usac.richmond.edu.

Mark Stanton adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Katy Olney moved to adjourn, Taylor McNeilly seconded.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 9, 2020 from 1-3 p.m., virtual via Zoom.

*Respectfully submitted, Jennifer O’Donnell, Secretary/Treasurer*