

UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 10, 2017, Tyler Haynes Commons 305

Members Present: Matt Barany (Vice Chair), Shannon Best, Amy Gallagher, Slade Gormus, Beth Ann Howard, John Hurst, Jackson Knox, Ingrid Lasrado, Paul Lozo, Kirsten McKinney (Chair), Barb Michelson, Julie Neville, Heather Sadowski, Brittany Schaal, Kate Sirc (Secretary), Cindy Stearns, Cassandra Taylor-Anderson, Harold Wainwright, Joseph Woodford

Nonvoting Members Present: Paul Brockwell, Lynn Robertson

Members Absent: Tara Stewart

Kirsten called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Minutes were approved via the listserv and posted online prior to the meeting.

Dean of Westhampton College and Associate Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences (Dr. Mia Reinoso Genoni)

Heather Sadowski introduced Dr. Mia Reinoso Genoni, who joined the University in her position on July 1, 2016, to the group. Dr. Genoni discussed the four main goals of her office: one, changing the Title IX structure and moving it out of her office; two, inclusion for students who identify outside the binary; three, collaboration between Westhampton College and Richmond College; and four, aligning the outreach/communication to students.

Dr. Genoni also shared several examples of events and programs aimed at creating community and providing a welcoming space for students. She mentioned the Café Con Leche event that will be held Friday, January 13 at 5:30pm at the Westhampton Center.

Lastly, Dr. Genoni fielded a question as to why housing now reports to one office as opposed to two (the two colleges). Dr. Genoni explained the change was originally made in order to re-delegate some responsibilities due to a vacancy in their office. However, it was determined this new model actually was much more streamlined and efficient, so it was adopted formally.

QEP Proposal

Leslie Stevenson and Sunni Brown both serve on the QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan) Steering Committee and visited us to update the Council on this important project. The QEP is part of an accreditation process the University must participate in every 10 years to improve student learning. Sunni gave some historical perspective and shared that the Sophomore Scholars in Residence (SSIR) program was the result of the last QEP.

Leslie explained the idea of a First Year Experience/Introduction to the Liberal Arts program that will build upon the current first year programs, balancing classroom and co-curricular pursuits. The program would incorporate several themes, or “tracks”, for students to pursue. While not mandatory, the goal would be for about 25% of first years to participate in the program. The next step is to communicate the draft proposal and gather community feedback, then develop a working group to define the concepts, logistics, and basic components of the program.

A question was asked if this program would eventually fall under one of the schools, or be its own entity. Leslie answered that currently the plan is for it to be its own entity, but could in the future this First Year Program and SSIR could partner and create one department.

Committee Updates

- **Executive** – Kirsten revisited the letter that was sent to Dr. Crutcher regarding USAC’s strategic plan feedback. A response was received yesterday from Dr. Crutcher and forwarded to the Council via email. Members are encouraged to share the original letter and this response with their constituents.
- **Communications** – meeting on Friday of this week. If you have ideas, email Amy G.
- **Elections** – no update from the committee at this time.
- **Volunteer and Engagement** – Brittany updated the Council regarding the committee’s meeting last week, where the previous semester’s events were discussed. The committee felt their efforts at the Benefits Fair and Parade were positive, however there is still some confusion about the overall goal. This question was tabled until closed session.
- **Affinity Groups** – Heather shared she is continuing discussions with Carl Sorenson and Laura Dietrick about whether affinity groups should fall under URWell Employee. Matt expressed a concern that affinity groups (or “employee resource groups”) may not make it in the final version of the strategic plan due to Audrey Coulbourne’s departure from the University.

PIT (Plant Involvement Team)

Paul Lozo explained what the “PIT” is and its purpose. Each “shop” in Facilities sends representatives to a monthly meeting to discuss ideas, questions, and issues that affect the department’s employees, such as uniforms, the MRSA issue, etc.

Web Submissions

The web submission from last month asking for a response regarding the election from Dr. Crutcher was revisited. His response was forwarded to the Council via email.

Nine web submissions were reviewed and discussed. The web submissions and answers are posted as a separate document on usac.richmond.edu/meetings.

What’s Upcoming

Kirsten reviewed the next few months and some important dates/items to keep in mind:

- February
 - At our next meeting, Carl Sorenson and Laura Dietrick will review changes to the University retirement plan.
 - We are hopeful Dr. Crutcher and/or Jan French will be able to join us at our next meeting for an update on the strategic plan as it will be in its final feedback phase. Beth Ann asked if there would be additional opportunities for feedback and Kirsten explained if Dr. Crutcher and/or Jan do present at the next meeting we can push for gallery attendance.
 - Nominations for executive board positions are being accepted.
 - The Annual Service Awards event will be held on February 15.
- March
 - We will begin accepting nominations for 2017-2018 USAC positions.
- April
 - The strategic plan will be in its final stages of review and endorsement.
- May
 - Spiders in the Know will be held on May 18. We are currently looking at ways for USAC members to be involved in this event.
 - USAC elections will begin.
- June

- We will hold our year end celebration and transition to next USAC.

Announcements

The floor was opened for announcements:

- Nominations for **Outstanding Service Awards** are currently being accepted and are due by January 20. The nomination form can be found on the HR website.
- All staff are invited to join the **Staff Sustainability Discussion Group**. This group explores a variety of sustainability topics during monthly, hour-long meetings by discussing readings from the Northwest Earth Institute, hearing from guest speakers, and volunteering at campus events. This is a great opportunity to contribute to sustainability on campus and learn more about a wide range of topics. Please contact the Office for Sustainability's Communications Coordinator, Cassandra Collins (ccollin2@richmond.edu) by the end of the month if you're interested in participating.
- Paul shared upcoming events for **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**. There will be a kick-off breakfast, Family Day, various service opportunities, historical walking tours, and a Commemoration Ceremony featuring keynote speaker Eboo Patel, Founder and President of Interfaith Youth Corps. More information can be found at richmond.edu/mlk.
- Brittany gave an update regarding **desktop alerts**. They have been pushed to desktop PCs.
- Brittany also informed the Council about an upcoming event, **Focus on Allies: A New Approach to Diversity and Inclusion**. Valeria Aurora is a diversity and inclusion consultant who will speak on changing the behavior of allies to help people who have less. This event will take place on February 2nd at 7pm in the Robins Pavilion at the Jepson Alumni Center.

Closed Session

The Council entered into closed session from 2:29 to 2:59 p.m. No actions or votes were taken.

The Council adjourned at 2:59 p.m. The next meeting will be February 14, 2017.

Submitted by
Kate Sirc
Recording Secretary and Treasurer