USAC Meeting Summary  
March 11, 2014  
1:00-2:15PM

The meeting was called to order by Tracy Cassalia, USAC Chair, at 12:56 p.m.

Members present: Katie Bell, Mickie Campos, Tracy Cassalia, Carrie Caumont, Bill Chappell, Michele Cox, Molly Field, Debbie Hardy, Melody Kimball, Roger Mancastroppa, Keith Mitchell, Robert Plymale, Jerry Robinson, Sadie Simmons, Ebony Smith, Carl Sorenson, Marti Tomlin-Allen, Anna Kay Travis, Maya Vincelli, Blake Widdowson, and Paul Witten.


**Program**

Tracy welcomed everyone to the University of Richmond Downtown and thanked everyone for being flexible with the schedule so that the group could catch the 12pm shuttle from campus for a 12:30 lunch and 1pm meeting.

Roger Mancastroppa, Parliamentarian, gave an update on USAC elections. Nominations for new USAC members will open tomorrow, March 12, and will run for seven days. Be sure to nominate people from your areas. He also raised the idea of offering Springfest attendees the chance to vote. Current USAC members could staff a table at Springfest and catch those coming in to the celebration and get them to vote. If this is done then elections would end two weeks later than usual which may delay the time the new council is notified. Roger will investigate to see whether this could work and he will let everyone know via email.

Carl Sorenson, Associate Vice President of Human Resources, gave an update on the dependent tuition policy. There is a proposal to make some changes to the program so that it aligns better with the tuition remission policy and tuition exchange policy in order to control future costs. The proposed changes are to limit the benefit to 8 semesters of tuition remission. The changes will go into effect for any student starting at UR this fall. Summer sessions will now count toward the 8 semester total. Tuition exchange program also now has an academic standard policy meaning that a student needs to remain in good academic standing at their home institution. There is also currently no age limit for the program so the limit has been set to age 23. USAC members in attendance agreed that the updates to the policy sound positive and make good sense.

Tracy reminded everyone that at the next USAC meeting members would be voting for executive board members and there would be an open forum on the campus master plan.

**Announcements**
Hearing no announcements, Tracy adjourned the business part of the USAC meeting at 1:48pm and reminded council members that they would now shift to a tour of UR Downtown led by Ebony Smith, UR Downtown staff member.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Field, USAC Secretary

---

**Web Submissions**

**Web Submission 1**
Submitted: 2/17/2014:

**suggestion** I wanted to publicly acknowledge and thank all the staff who worked so hard and diligently during the most recent snow storm. They kept the walks and roads cleared, they fed the students, they continually monitored the approaching storm and snow conditions, and they kept the University updated about closures and other snow related impacts. Their dedication and their efforts, even when it meant coming to work in dangerous conditions, is to be applauded and celebrated by the entire UR community.

Action Taken: 2/17/2014: Forwarded to full USAC council to share with their constituents as well as David Hale, Vice President of Business & Finance, Dee Hardy, Associate Vice President of Campus Resources, and Andrew McBride, Associate Vice President of Facilities.

**Web Submission 2**
Submitted: 2/20/2014:

**suggestion** Has there been any discussion or suggestions about the University offering childcare services?

Action Taken: 2/20/2014: Forwarded to HR (Carl Sorenson) for a reply.

2/24/2014: Carl Sorenson replied:

“Yes, there was an extensive conversation several years ago. There is a place holder in the campus master plan for a child care but it is contingent upon identifying a dedicated funding source.”

**Web Submission 3**
Submitted: 2/21/2014:

**suggestion** Can we do something about the lack of resources for professional development for staff? (Or perhaps the issue of communicating those resources?) UR TalentWeb and
eLearning are fine, but there are staff/departments who would really benefit from attending conferences, getting professional certifications, and taking advantage of other options not available on campus. Is there a fund for this? Can it be worked into future budgets? I think people would be happy to go through an application process, but to not even have the option is frustrating.

Action Taken: 2/21/2014: Forwarded to HR (Carl Sorenson) for a reply.

2/24/2014: Carl Sorenson replied:

“There is currently no central funding for this type of professional development. These opportunities can be funded by departments if they have available budget.”

Web Submission 4
Submitted: 2/24/2014:

I was recently at the Connecting Women of Color Conference and one of the sessions available discussed financial wealth, credit and student loans. I was wondering if UR offered something (or some resources) to its employees who may need help with credit counseling or information on how to improve/repair your credit, budgeting and how to deal with student loan repayment (even the differences between the types of loans you have).

Action Taken: 2/24/2014: Forwarded to USAC council and Carl Sorenson for reply.

During the USAC meeting on 3/11/2014 the council brainstormed some ideas to answer this web submission. TIAA-CREF has hosted free financial education sessions on campus for female staff and faculty called “Women in the Know.” SPCS also offers budgeting and financial planning classes that can be taken for free using tuition remission benefit. The consumer credit bureau also offers free courses for Richmond residents.