USAC Meeting Summary  
March 12, 2013  
1:00 – 3:00 PM  

Meeting was called to order by Adrienne Piazza at 1:03 p.m.

Members present: John Butt, Carrie Caumont, Bill Chappell, Molly Field, Andy Gurka, Denard Hall, Denise Johnston, Crista LaPrade, Lindsey Love, Keith Mitchell, Adrienne Piazza, Martha Pittaway, Cheryl Poston, Nancy Propst, Jerry Robinson, Sadie Simmons, and Paul Witten. Ex-officio member Carl Sorenson was also present.

Members absent: Tracy Cassalia, Michael Torquato, Blake Widdowson, and Maya Vincelli

Welcome and opening

Adrienne Piazza welcomed Council to the meeting and gave a brief overview of the agenda.

Discussion of the draft Data Security Policy with Kathy Monday, VP of Information Services

Kathy Monday gave a presentation about the University’s data security policy, which has been recently revised. She emphasized the importance of keeping confidential and restricted information safe. The policy states that employees should refrain from downloading sensitive University related data onto non-University owned machines. Those who might work from home and connect to the University network by way of VPN should be okay so long as the files being saved are stored in a secure place (Netfiles).

Open meetings will be held regarding the updates to the data security policy after it is finalized.

Updates from Lori Schuyler, Chief of Staff to the President

Progress is being made with regard to the flexible workplace proposal. The hope is to have a revised policy by the end of this fiscal year, with a possible rollout in the fall. It is important for the administration to craft a policy that works well across various areas/disciplines and makes sure supervisors have tools they need to carry it out.

Looking ahead to rewards & recognition systems, the administration continues to research ways to clarify existing awards and bonus systems as well as ways to create a culture of recognition.

Other updates:
There were 9,800 applications for admission this spring.

The federal sequestration will have some impact on faculty research and federally funded grants, but may also impact Pell grants, federal loans, and work-study programs. The University continues to monitor the situation with regard to the federal budget.

The University strategic plan articulated a goal for all students to have access to experiential learning opportunities. This summer the University has begun the UR Summer Fellowships program to provide summer stipends to undergraduate students to pursue research or an unpaid/low paid internship. Existing programs and the new UR Summer Fellowship program can be found in a single website to make opportunities more accessible to students. The research awards were announced before spring break. Internship applications are due March 20 and the awards will be announced on April 1st.

Construction projects on campus: A new dormitory is underway near the new student activities center. The new dorm will have 147-beds/suite style and is slated to be operational by August 2014. The University Forest Apartments will be renovated this summer as well. A new apartment building will be
built this summer on the south campus. Renovations to the Robins Center have already begun and the renovations in the arena portion should be complete before next year’s basketball schedule.

The Annual Fund is doing well and is ahead in dollars this year. A capital fundraising campaign began this year, partially to 1) raise money for summer fellowships, and 2) for the construction of the admissions and career development building on the south campus (part of master plan). Scholarships and annual fund participation are also important components of the campaign. The goal is to raise $35 million over the next 20 months, which would coincide with the centennial celebration in 2014.

**Web submission review and updates from committees and working groups**

Nominations of new USAC members will be accepted until Friday, March 22. Elections will be held during the week of April 22-26, 2013. Help will be needed to assist people with the voting process both in the dining hall and in facilities. Employees will need to have their NetID and password handy.

Council membership will increase by one member in 2013-14 due to the ratio of staff to USAC representation. There will be 23 members of Council as of July 1.

The mentoring working group has a meeting on Friday with human resources and they may set up a meeting with Lori Schuyler at a later date.

The Cancer Care & Support Affinity group and website has been transformed into the Health and Wellness Affinity group and website to include a broader range of health concerns.

**Executive Session**

Council members discussed constituent concerns.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 9, 2013 in Tyler Haynes Commons, Room 305

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Poston, Recording Secretary
Submitted: February 19, 2013
Following last week's Employee Service Award Recognition Ceremony, I would like to suggest that the list of those receiving service awards be shared with all employees ahead of the ceremony. This could be a simple attachment to invitation and reminders that we receive about attending the ceremony or a link to the complete list could be included in the invitation and reminders. I was sad to learn after the fact (actually, I attended the ceremony and was very glad that I did) that many of my colleagues in my division were receiving awards. This is especially true for two reasons: 1) I asked the administrative assistant to our VP to share the list and was given only 3 of 7 names and 2) my own employee of 5 years was receiving an award and I had no knowledge of it. I understand that Deans and Department Heads were provided a list of the those receiving service awards, but I believe that the distribution list was incomplete (my supervisor is a department head and did not receive the list), the list itself was apparently incomplete, and at least in this case, it was not passed down to all employees who are co-workers of those receiving awards each year. I think we can do better and should. Someone's length of service may not matter much to any of us, but it certainly matters to the employee, and I for one, would like to say thanks!

Action Taken:

February 20, 2013: Reply from Carl Sorensen:
"We do notify deans, directors and department heads through an email list prior to the ceremony. This year we found an error in the membership of the list but there was not enough time before the ceremony to send new information. This will be corrected before the next ceremony. This is an important day to all employees and we want all to share in the excitement and recognition."
March 12, 2013: Nothing further to add.

Submitted: February 21, 2013
My boss pointed me in the direction of the "did you know" page- and I saved money on my weight watchers and my phone bill! All right! I know the university police do some vehicle checks before breaks-- are staff eligible for that? Also, I know the URPD has come out to jump my car before at no cost. They are helpful like that.

Action Taken:
February 21, 2013: Forwarded to Chief McCoy, in the URPD, for a reply

February 21, 2013: Reply from Chief McCoy:
"Any staff, student or faculty can participate in the vehicle check and have a slice of pizza, and we provide jumps to any vehicle parked on our campus"
March 12, 2013: Nothing further to add.

Submitted: March 6, 2013
HR should add to its website the date that it makes alterations to its pages, particularly those in the benefits section and the staff guidelines. Information Services does this practice (an example at: http://is.richmond.edu/policies/index.html - click on an individual policy). I went looking for information today and noticed some changes to the information on the page, and I don't remember seeing any SpiderBytes or announcements about policy changes. Policy changes need to be announced and it is troubling if the website is being changed and no announcement is done (or including the date/change on the website).

Action Taken:
March 6, 2013: Web submission sent to Carl Sorensen, in Human Resources, for reply.
March 6, 2013: Reply from Carl Sorensen:
"Last week Human Resources began the practice of including modification dates to policies when they are changed. It would be helpful to know more details about this request because we usually do inform employees when changes are made."
March 12, 2013: Nothing further to add.

Submitted: March 6, 2013
Inclement Weather - Why did the University not close on 3-6-13? Traffic conditions during the morning rush were very harsh. This caused many people to stay home and much anxiety for others. I understand that we are given the freedom to decide if we should stay home, but the University has a responsibility to those who have to travel into campus as well. Also, those locations on campus that are open into the night hours put additional staff at risk. If the Governor declares a state of emergency, that should require the University of reassess the safety of their traveling students, staff and faculty.

Submitted: March 7, 2013
I've heard several complaints about how the University handled the decision to remain open during the snow yesterday. One person in our office had her car stuck in the snowy parking lot, another could not get his truck up the hill and had to come back down in reverse, others fishtailed all the way to work. Many accidents reported yesterday [http://www.timesdispatch.com/news/state-regional/storm-contributes-to-deaths-in-va/article_48f247e8-17a2-5c58-847b-9303e6ac16e7.html](http://www.timesdispatch.com/news/state-regional/storm-contributes-to-deaths-in-va/article_48f247e8-17a2-5c58-847b-9303e6ac16e7.html). Some very unhappy employees in Communications office!! If this is not a USAC problem, please feel free to pass it on to the appropriate office. Thanks!

Action Taken:
March 7, 2013: Forwarded to Carl Sorensen (Human Resources) and Brittany Schaal (Emergency Management)

March 7, 2013: Reply from Brittany Schaal, Director of Emergency Management:

As a residential campus, committed to maintaining the safety and welfare of not only students but also faculty and staff, the University considers a variety of factors when determining to remain open or close.

When a weather system is forecast to affect the University, a group, with representation from all aspects of campus (Facilities, Public Safety, Human Resources, Academics, Student Development, Campus Services, and Administration), discusses the potential impact on the community. Factors considered include, but are not limited to the following:

- Ability of Facilities to maintain university roadways, paths and parking lots;
- Current weather and road conditions;
- Forecasted weather and road conditions;
- Class and event schedule for the day; and
- Other campus and jurisdictional closings and delays.

Over 12 inches of snow already had been reported in several locations along the northern Interstate 81 corridor when the governor declared a state of emergency, authorizing state agencies to identify and position resources for quick response. Fortunately Central Virginia did not sustain the same amount of snow or widespread power outages during this event.

While we realize these decisions impact people differently, they are always made with the best interests of the University and community members in mind. The feedback received after each decision (both critical and supportive) does play a role in future decisions.

Employees are always encouraged to use caution and good judgment in making the decision to come to
work during inclement weather. Accrued vacation or personal leave may be used if employees are unable to commute to the university.

March 12, 2013: Council concluded that perhaps an earlier message from Emergency Management about the weather conditions might be helpful. Council also mentioned that it is important for supervisors to apply the inclement weather policy in a consistent manner across campus.