

Staff Senate minutes: **November 20, 2014**

Noon – 1:00pm, VBI Conference Center

Attending: Bonnie Alberts, Blair Allen, Dan Cook, Rhonda Hawley, Cathy Hill, Steve Nagle, Alex Parrish, Heather Parrish, Katie Reaves, Wyatt Sasser, Robert Sebek, Judy Taylor, Sue Teel, Tom Tucker, Jon Wooge

Hal Irvin, Assoc VP for HR

Excused: Susan Archer, Velva Groover, Amanda Grose, Anna Hawthorne, Valerie Henderson, Maxine Lyons, Albert Moore, Amy Splitt, Leslie Thornton-O'Brien, Amy Tunison, Christine Watkinson, Sally Wieringa, Beverly Williams.

Guests: Mike Mulhare, Hal Irvin

Opening: We're looking at a more consistent location for future meetings.

Staff Appreciation basketball game: Dec 22, each staff member can get a ticket for themselves and a guest; take someone else's ID to get two more tickets (accepted practice). Staff Senate and Senators will be recognized at the game.

Hal Irvin: Title IX Retaliation training: Mandatory for every staff, including student wage. Must complete by January 30, 2015. Result of resolution agreement with Dept of Ed Office of Civil Rights after complaint from VT student's parent.

Tom Tucker: VGEA still drawing for gift certificate for every 3 people who sign up. See him for application.

McComas update: Dates have been narrowed, waiting on Pres Sand's schedule; will be on a Monday; Leading Through Change is theme

Mikah's Backpack: seeking lunch food items, can bring to future Senate meetings

Program: Mike Mulhare – Director of Emergency Management

- First higher education institute to get accredited
- Obstacles to emergency management: Silos and multiple points of failure
- Build, sustain, improve: Unit resiliency, departmental readiness, and individual preparedness
- [Policy 5615](#)
- Crisis Emergency Management Plan
- Continuity of operations
 - Each dept has one
- Building emergency coordinators
- Emergency blog coming soon
- Question on outsources security at student events
- Question on buildings without fire alarms: Coliseum, War Memorial Gym, Randolph (some coming soon)

Next meeting: November 20, 2014: Angela King – Director of Benefits, Department of Human Resources, 2420 North End Center

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Sebek

Staff Senate Secretary

Commission and Committee reports

University Council

University Council has been proving a lot of new degree programs and had a presentation on the University Master Plan.

CEOD Sept. meeting summaries:

Scheduling events and religious holidays

It was brought to the attention of the commission that a large campus event was scheduled on a major religious holiday, which precluded faculty (and potentially student) involvement. Given that major religious holidays are posted on the University Faculty-Staff Planning calendar and on the Religious and Ethnic Holidays section of the University Registrar's website (which utilize the comprehensive Interfaith calendar), a course of action to prevent such future personal and professional conflicts is needed.

Changes to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Dr. Jack Finney spoke with members about the open letter that had gone out to the Virginia Tech community on June 30th, 2014 from President Timothy Sands announcing changes to Diversity and Inclusion. Dr. Finney added that President Sands had asked Senior Vice President and Provost Mark McNamee to work with the university community to implement a new model of shared responsibility and accountability. This new structure is adapted from best practices at other universities and will be designed to ensure that university leadership and representatives take personal and collective responsibility for inclusive excellence. David Travis Jr. has agreed to serve as the president's advisor and interim vice provost. David added that CEOD will play an important part and role as we continue to move forward.

Role of university governance-Jack Finney

Dr. Jack Finney provided members with a hard copy of Virginia Tech's Governance Structures. He added that people who populate commissions should be communicating and reaching out to other commissions, so they can take information back to constituency groups. There was discussion of the roles of commission members in facilitating communication.

Constituent group discussion

Brought to the attention of the commission that an initiative to find affordable childcare for undergraduate students on campus is underway. Short-term solutions have been suggested but it was asked of commission members to help find long-term answers.

It was brought to the attention of a commission member in Appalachian Studies Program that staff and students from the local area and the Appalachian region feel they are treated differently (implying discrimination), based upon the way they talk. In the past, CEOD had working groups that discussed faculty/staff and student issues.

Working groups

To address concerns about campus event scheduling and religious holidays, the education of the university community on the changes to Policy 1025 (inclusion of gender identity and gender expression as protected entities), faculty/staff/student instances of harassment, and the overall mission, membership and charge of the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity, working groups were formed.

Commission on Student Affairs summary

The CSA always starts the semester by listing potential issues and topics for future meetings. A concern that has been discussed at two meetings is availability of affordable child care for graduate and undergraduate students, with the acknowledgement that this issue also affects faculty and staff. The Grad School is working on this issue for grad students and will announce a program soon. That announcement will drive CSA to contact other constituent groups, including Staff Senate, to look at a university-level solution to this problem.

Robert Sebek, representative to CSA

Summary of B&P Council meeting on 9/25/14

Update on state budget as it impacts Virginia Tech – highlights:

- the state did not achieve its projected revenue growth in 2013-14
- anticipated a 1.6% increase, but only achieved a 0.9% increase
- projected revenue growth for FY 2014-15 and 2015-16 has been revised downward from 5.2% and 4.1% respectively, to 2.7% for each year
- statewide reduction targets for higher education for the biennium have been reduced to \$45 million in each year
- Virginia Tech's General Fund reduction target for 2014-15 and 2015-16 is 3.93% each year for 208 E&G
- Agency 229 and Student Financial Aid are exempt from cuts
- the state has asked that Higher Education try to bridge the shortfall by productivity gains and avoid mid-year tuition increases
- the priority for FY 15 is to protect university initiatives such as the faculty and university staff merit program and identify one-time strategies for cost savings to provide time to allow thoughtful planning
- FY16 state budget is currently \$272 million short
- for FY 17, the state will need to manage the \$235 million draw from the Rainy Day fund
- council members were asked to bring ideas for one-time savings to future meetings

Summary of Commission on Research meetings held 9/10/14

What the Commission will be looking at this year:

- Revision to policy 13015, Ownership and Control of Research Results
- Predates digital era
- Sub-committee has been formed
- Pursuing discussion of safety protocols in laboratories
- National Science Board document: Reducing Investigators' Administrative Workload for Federally Funded Research
- Review what recommendations to bring forward to Virginia Tech
- Evaluating the barriers to research for teaching faculty
- Working with the Commission on Faculty affairs to review self-plagiarism as a possible addition to the policy on misconduct in research
- Barriers to research

University Council on International Affairs (UCIA)

The international undergraduate student population has grown with the fall semester. Chinese and South Korean students now number 600 of the total 1153. International student population is also growing at our peer institutions. International Support Services is working on increasing its cultural activities for the non-degree exchange program. The challenge is that these students do not pay the student activity fee and therefore, don't have access to some activities.

Career Services has new brochures and handouts that explain how they can help with cover sheets, resumes, study/work abroad and other services.

It was discussed as to how to increase the number of nominations for the alumni award. It was noted that there was a glitch in the People Admin system that held up about a dozen applications for a director position and it is important for departments to note that this same issue might happen to other applications.

The UCIA bylaws were last updated in 2010. A subcommittee was formed to collect feedback, make updates and bring before the committee.

There was a discussion as to who needed access to the information on the new Health Disclosure Form. There was a difference of opinion as to what constitutes relevant parties. A small group will reach out to Services for Students with Disabilities to see what might need changing.

There was a discussion as to where to house international visiting professors since the university does not have any international guest housing.

Judy Taylor