

# Minutes of the President's Advisory Council Meeting

May 2, 2023

3:30pm-4:45pm

Location: Stallard Boardroom

Members Present: Virginia Lewis (Chair, Faculty Senate), Karla Collins (Vice Chair, Faculty Senate), Sarah Tanner-Anderson, Haley Woznyj, and Lee Bidwell (Faculty Representative to Board of Visitors)

## ***Faculty want to share ...***

Virginia Lewis updated the President about who will be on PAC next year, thanked him for meeting with us this year, and opened the meeting with good news from the faculty.

## ***Successful CEHHS Interprofessional Education Event (IPE)***

- Karla shared the third IPE event was a success with over 200 undergraduate and graduate participants. Many faculty helped as room moderators, managing virtual and in-person attendees in the same breakout room. Students attended from a number of programs across CEHHS: Elementary Ed, Elementary/Middle Ed, Special Ed, Ed Leadership, Reading, Literacy and Learning, School Librarianship, Communication Sciences & Disorders, Nursing, Therapeutic Rec, Social Work, Kinesiology. There were also a few students from Occupational and Physical Therapy at VCU. We look forward to making next year bigger and better!

## ***Student Successes***

- Lee said faculty are appreciative of the institutional support for Research Day and Symposium Day. While it is challenging to work students through the research process, it is rewarding to see their growth and excitement over the final product.
- President Reveley agreed it is nice to see how these events have become part of the rhythm of the year.
- Haley was thanked for delivering an excellent keynote presentation at the Graduate Research Symposium.

## ***Appreciation for Advocacy***

- Virginia thanked President Reveley for his advocacy on behalf of Longwood, publicly writing about the challenges to undergraduate recruitment, and sharing that information with the faculty.
- Sarah thanked the President for speaking to Education Leadership students and advocating for teachers in the field.

## ***Budget Concerns***

- We are in an unusual spot. It is not typical for Virginia to have a late budget two years in a row. There are more unknowns than usual because there is no budget yet.
- The good news is there is bipartisan support for higher education in Virginia, which is rare nationally. It is unlikely that we will have less state funding than we have now when the budget is finalized, although that is just a prediction. President Reveley expects we will be allocated slightly more money in the budget rather than less.
- There will be salary increases; the form of raises is still to be determined. The University has prioritized this for a long time and it is beneficial when the state is also supportive of raises. Undergraduate admissions have been good. We are ahead of where we were last year after deposit day. Philanthropy is going well.

- An additional consideration is the political landscape at the federal level. The federal debt ceiling issue is a big issue and especially relevant for Virginia because of our large federal employee tax base. The debt ceiling issue is unlikely to have bearing in the short-term on next year's budget, but is worth watching for how it may impact future increases in support.
- Many universities around the state are focused on getting bigger each year. Longwood is in a good stable position, thanks to a lot of hard work by many people. Longwood is not in a position to have to get larger to still remain strong.
- Our endowment has increased during a difficult financial time. Our graduate programs are doing well, which is great for Longwood.
- Other states are not doing as well for higher education, but the bipartisan support we have in Virginia is good for us.
- Virginia expressed that some alums are concerned that we will try to get too big. It is good to hear that we still value personal connections at Longwood. Students remind us of the reasons they came to Longwood. Other universities have large class sizes but this is not us, and that is a good thing.
- When asked how many deposits there were as of May 1st, the President said he recalled that on May 10<sup>th</sup> of last year we had 850-860 deposits and we are "trending strongly in that direction" this year. Covid made recruiting difficult in recent years, but the freshman class we had last year was the best in four years.

## ***Faculty Search Timeline***

### **Presidential Approval**

President Reveley stated he always approves the initial hiring process. He must approve creating or filling positions because most of our budget is personnel. Being careful about how many full-time people we have is important. We have great health care benefits, but they are expensive and the cost has escalated over time.

### **Earlier timeline for approving positions for essential tenure track lines**

Virginia explained it is difficult to recruit when lines are approved later in the hiring cycle. Virginia said faculty need to be able to post positions in late August-early September in order to cast a wider net for potential candidates. Delayed searches can mean we have unfilled positions. President Reveley stated they have already started to get some searches in the queue for FY 23-24 and he and the Provost are in constant communication. If there were timing delays, it was more of a result of COVID challenges. The President stated Longwood's dedication to full time, tenure-track faculty is part of what makes us great.

## ***Commencement Speakers***

### **Process for Choosing Commencement Speakers**

The Board of Visitors selects the commencement speakers and the President works closely with them. The Board is very diverse and they are proud of the range of speakers we have had for graduation ceremonies. The Board has a lot of political savvy and are cognizant of having a range of speakers.

### **Possible representation for underrepresented student populations**

President Reveley said if people have ideas for speakers, they can be sent to his office. He thinks it is important for politicians of the mainstream from both parties to feel welcome on campus. Sarah asked how that message has been conveyed to students who

feel they are not being heard. The President said he has tried to get this message across in a variety of ways, but he does not expect students to have a long view of Virginia politics. Lee said she understood that diverse perspectives should be welcome on campus, but asked what processes were in place to ensure commencement speakers do not deliver messages that are antithetical to Longwood's values.

President Reveley reiterated that we are in a very polarized society right now and that there is some balance between the two speakers' positions. Sarah suggested having student representation in the selection of speakers would help to have a pulse of honoring all voices and give students the message they need in a pivotal moment.

## ***Campus Communication***

### **DEI Town Hall Faculty and Staff Invitation**

President Reveley stated this event was a nice two-hour event that students put together and that is likely the reason for the late communication. He said the students worked very hard on the Town Hall, which was a meaningful and productive time. The students did a really good job.

### **Timeliness of communications so faculty and staff can plan to attend events**

- Virginia explained the people-connection is so important at Longwood and particularly since the pandemic people are wanting to reconnect with each other.
- President Reveley talked about the changes in communication over time, with more direct communication being replaced with new technology that is hard to cut through to have that personal connection.
- Virginia said it would be nice to have a place where faculty could share issues and concerns with each other and the President without sharing with the outside world. When in-person, you can read other cues that are not evident when communicating through technology.
- Lee shared that faculty appreciate the emails the President sends that highlight good things that are happening on campus. However, the lack of highlighting of the golf team's successes is disheartening.
- President Reveley stated it is hard to maintain a balance in our marketing with so many different avenues for sharing information and to be sure one area does not feel left out.
- Virginia said there are so many positive things happening on campus and the more we share the stories broadly, the more prospective students might be attracted to Longwood.

## ***Effective Process for Sharing Campus Highlights***

### **Creating a process to share the great things faculty and their students are doing to be seen by the university community, potential students, and their parents**

- Lee explained there are numerous awards, presentations, and achievements of students that programs want to highlight. If departments had more control of what they can put on their web page, it would be helpful and improve showcasing student successes in a timely fashion and in reducing some of the demand on those who are charged with maintaining web pages. Virginia said it would be helpful if we had a better understanding of the process of how decisions about what to post are made, and it would also be beneficial to showcase activities across campus throughout the summer.

- Lee said there was value in redesigning the university web pages so there was more uniformity across programs, but we might have gone too far in expecting one small group to have to do all of the web page management and not allowing departments more control over sharing information. Sarah suggested that giving departments control of the news scroll on the program's page would be helpful and make the page more relevant to those who want program-specific information. Virginia suggested forming a work-group to create a process for sharing that everyone could use.

***What questions do you have for us? What additional thoughts would you like to share with us?***

The President thanked the group, especially Virginia Lewis as Chair of Faculty Senate and for running PAC meetings. He said there is a lot of turmoil in society, but Longwood is on a good course.