

Minutes of President's Advisory Council
November 3, 2022
2:00 - 3:30pm

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

- Virginia opened the meeting by sharing with the President that faculty are excited about the attendance at recent Immersion Day and Open House Events. She noted hosting an Open House event during Oktoberfest seemed to work well and showed prospective students the academic and social side of Longwood.

Concerns of Underrepresented Student Populations

- Virginia asked the President to discuss the meeting he, Provost Smith, and Interim Vice-President for Student Affairs Cam Patterson had with minority students on the evening of October 13th following the Faculty Senate meeting.
- The President explained they met with CHANGE, which is made up of leaders of diversity-focused student groups across campus. He shared he has been meeting with this group for the past 6 years, although the name of this leadership group has changed over time. Following some unrest at UVA, student groups at UVA called upon student groups at other Virginia universities to stand in solidarity with them and to request similar implementation strategies for change at their schools. It is a difficult time to be a 20-year-old away from home. The meeting focused on how we can improve conditions for students of color at Longwood. COVID has disrupted the continuity of the class cohorts so current student leaders were unaware of the progress Longwood made prior to the pandemic, such as the development of the Clark House Intercultural Center.
- The President noted our student population and the composition of the Board of Visitors is more diverse than in the past, but the faculty changes more slowly; students want further diversity of representation among these groups as well. It is challenging to diversify faculty. CHANGE leaders want more meeting spaces on campus in addition to the N.H. Scott Multicultural Center and Clark House Intercultural Center.
- Sarah asked what steps have been made and will be made to address the students' concerns and put our [Diversity Strategic Plan](#) (DSP) into action. President Reveley regularly meets with the Co-Chairs of the University Diversity Committee. Additionally, the web presence for the DSP has made information more easily accessible. Retention of underrepresented students, a part of the DSP, is being addressed through the QEP and the recently-announced Retention Task Force. Advertisements for faculty and staff positions are being strategically posted to publications to increase diversity in hiring. However, part of the difficulty in recruiting more diverse faculty can be attributed to a lack of diversity in graduate programs and a pipeline problem that began more than a decade ago.
- Andrew said in his experience, there was diversity in graduate programs but we are not seeing many applicants of color for faculty positions at Longwood. It is hard for

Longwood to be competitive when universities across the country are all trying to recruit and retain a more diverse faculty.

- President Reveley said if we look back 15 or more years ago there were fewer women with PhDs, but now Longwood boasts a strong population of female faculty. Through solid progress, we foresee similar gains in faculty diversity over time.
- Lee stated Longwood alumni of color have shared some serious incidents of racism they faced on campus, which prompted them to consider leaving Longwood at some point in their academic career. President Reveley said the university is very focused on attempting to fix these issues. He noted there are positive developments as county leaders are coming together to take a stand against the large Confederate flag on the outskirts of town, as well as approving a new county seal that incorporates an image of the Moton School.

Financial Questions

- Virginia noted at the previous PAC meeting the President said Longwood is financially stable, but saving is currently prudent. Faculty are aware of the ways financial austerity measures have affected their work and classified staff, but asked the President to discuss the austerity measures being taken to save money on the administrative side.
- The President said they have postponed equipment purchases unless necessary, have more limited travel, and positions are being more heavily scrutinized. Decisions are being made more carefully about spending in various areas, for example concentrating landscaping projects in the most visible parts of campus. He and the Provost have worked to try to protect faculty lines. Today feels better financially than it did two years ago, but “blue skies” may not be truly on the horizon due to overseas issues affecting government policies. The energy crisis is a problem. If federal spending slows in Washington DC, Virginia would be more affected than many other states/regions given the many federal positions and contracts in the Commonwealth.
- Lee asked the President to more specifically address austerity measures at the Vice-President level. There is a perception administrative positions have been added, while faculty and classified staff lines are not being replaced. President Reveley said the perceptions might not match the reality. The head count at the VP/Dean level is the same, if not lower, than it has been. They are assessing hiring at the VP level and positions have been moved around, which may have left the impression there has been an increase in administrative posts. In 2020 when the faculty took salary cuts the Deans, VPs, and President took salary cuts too. The President also shared he is using a laptop that is ten years old and also a five-year-old phone.
- Virginia asked how Longwood is positioning itself to handle the loss in revenue in the next year as our senior class graduates, and over the next five years. President Reveley said the 2019 Freshman class was not particularly large, but the good news is the size of this year’s senior class is due to gains in transfer students. Financial challenges are very real, but we are more “clear-eyed” than other universities. The lower birth rate will affect enrollment indefinitely. Increasing opportunities in graduate programs and understanding undergraduate education is at our core, can help generate revenue.
- In higher education, we spend money on people rather than equipment; retirement and healthcare costs are high. Therefore, we need to be attentive to the number of full-time

employees. We can use student employment and part-time positions for some work, although there are challenges when it comes to offering an attractive compensation package.

- The future portends a demographic plateau, rather than an on-going decline. The endowment is strong and is a huge benefit to the whole institution, although we are not in a time of abundance. The state is investing in us and ensuring we are thriving and competitive. This is illustrated by their \$100 million of financial support of the Wygal Replacement project.
- Karla asked if Longwood is considering the increased interest in Career and Technical Education (CTE). Virginia shared about the interests of students at the Education Immersion Day in CTE and agriculture. The President said nothing formally is under consideration. Sarah suggested programs to serve non-traditional students can fill a need and increase enrollment. President Reveley said this is a potential area for growth.

A More Student-Centric Convocation

- Virginia shared that several faculty would like to see a more student-centered and fun Convocation ceremony, and asked how Convocation is planned and whether there could be more student input into the event planning. President Reveley said Longwood elevates Convocation in ways other schools do not. Planning of the event pre-dates him, and he knows Junior Marshals provide feedback on Convocation. The opening of the Joan Perry Brock Center offers an opportunity to revise the Convocation ceremony.

Longwood as a Leader in Teacher Education in Virginia

- Virginia said faculty were pleased to hear President Reveley say “Challenge Accepted” to Dr. Jones’ request for more support of teachers and teacher education. She asked the President to share what progress has been made on the action points Dr. Jones suggested.
- The President said there is a clear teacher crisis and something needs to be done. He is looking for an opportunity to write an Op/Ed piece for the newspaper. He also is working with Dean McDonald to explore if a lab school is an opportunity to pursue. Currently the state-level leadership has not determined whether grant money for lab schools will be given in addition to or in place of existing K-12 funding.
- The University currently provides reduced cost housing, through a pilot program, so recently graduated Longwood educators can stay in the area and work in our local public schools. There is space for early career educators to take advantage of this opportunity.

President’s Remarks

- The President encouraged everyone to be engaged with the QEP focus groups and the Retention Task Force.