

Minutes of the President's Advisory Council Meeting

February 16, 2023

3:30 -5:00pm

Stallard Boardroom

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)

PAC members share what they are excited about

- A sense of normalcy returning to campus as students are sticking around after class to ask questions, coming to office hours, etc. It is nice to see the in-person interactions resuming.
- Virginia Lewis talked about the Advancing Computer Science Education for SVRTC Divisions. Paula Leach is the PI. Virginia and Stephanie Playton are co-teaching a professional development course so in-service teachers can learn how to teach computer science in elementary and middle school. There are two cohorts of the course and both have strong enrollment.
- Andrew talked about the Virginia Regional JSHS Science Competition that is coming to campus on February 25th. They have over 80 science students from around Virginia, including Prince Edward, who is joining for the first time.
- Sarah is busy helping out with marketing and recruiting for the grad programs. She also recently attended the First Pitch Dinner and both a Women's and Men's Basketball game. She said they were fantastic, and the athletes were so excited for her family to be there.
 - Sarah also talked about her experience at the General Assembly with the Virginia Women's Network. She recognized the effort the President puts forth when speaking to the General Assembly on behalf of the university.
- Karla talked about the third interprofessional event that will be happening in April, where education, health and human services majors get together to talk with each other to help solve a case. They get the opportunity to learn from each other and to learn about other specialists.
- Haley mentioned CBE is sponsoring a tailgate for the Men's Basketball game immediately following the open house this weekend. We also have our AACSB site visit early next week. We are excited to host the review team and get some feedback.
- Lee Bidwell survived COVID 2023!
- The President mentioned the next few weeks will be exciting all around campus. The Symphony is coming to campus, the last Men's and Women's basketball games are coming up, alumni will be back on campus, and Junior Day is on the horizon.

Conflicting banded tuition and winter intersession policies may lead to double charging students [Expenses and Financial Policy](#)

There are concerns about how tuition and fees are assessed when students take a course in the winter and then have a full load (18 credits) in the spring. Winter intersession courses are counted with the Spring load toward the 18 credits of load. When they have more than 18 credits in a semester, they are assessed a fee, which can lead to some students being charged twice. Students are paying separate tuition for winter courses and then if they are over 18 credits, if this fee is assessed, it would be a double charge.

- The President said this policy is in place to protect the students who are taking very few credits, which happens more frequently than students taking too many credits. For financial aid, students need to remain full time. If a student takes 3 credits in the Winter

and then 9 in the Spring, it is considered full time under the current policy. If the two sessions were separate, students would not be considered full time, which has financial aid implications.

- A short-term fix is to ensure the Registrar's office and advisors have a better understanding of what to share with students. In the long term, we may consider disaggregating intersession from Spring from a Canvas/Banner standpoint. Ultimately, the goal would be to come up with a solution that works for students at both ends of the spectrum (those with few credits and those with an overage of credits).
- Andrew Yeagley shared he called the Registrar's office about this issue and they said Winter credits are counted with the Spring semester. They were unsure of how those credits were charged. He also spoke with Jennifer Green about the situation. She explained Winter credits count toward enrollment in the Spring semester, but the two semesters are billed separately. So, students should not be overcharged.
- The President said if students are charged the overload fee in addition to Winter tuition, they should talk to the financial aid office (not the Registrar). This is a fixable issue and advisors should advise students to talk to the financial aid office. The President shared this is because each student's financial aid situation is different.
- The President also shared a lasting benefit from Virginia's COVID response is increased support from Pell grants. Virginia also created a program to help children of veterans, and it is more expensive than Virginia originally anticipated.

Athletic Fees High Compared to Other Virginia Universities

According to data from SCHEV, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Longwood's Athletic Fees are high in comparison to other Virginia institutions. [TF02: Full-time Undergraduate Mandatory Non-Educational and General Fees \(schev.edu\)](#)

- Virginia asked the President to explain how our athletic fees are determined.
- The President said there are two components to consider: Virginia specific requirements and NCAA requirements.
- The President shared there are regulations in the Commonwealth about how public universities must account for and itemize athletic fees to make them easier to track.
- Each athletic scholarship must have specific money backing it. A little more than one-fourth of the athletics fee is devoted to scholarships.
 - Lee asked if students' athletic fees help fund athletic scholarships. The President said yes, and said that other funds provide merit scholarships for other students.
- The other three-fourths of the athletics fee is approximately the amount of the athletic budget - team travel, coaches, etc.
- There are also considerations from the NCAA. Universities like CNU and UMW are Division III universities, so they do not award athletic scholarships. Comparing Longwood to these institutions is not comparing apples to apples. At universities like CNU and UMW, student athletes are likely getting financial aid of some sort, but they are not part of the athletic fees in the same way Longwood shows them as funded by the athletic fees.
- The President said Longwood's fee is high compared to other Virginia schools for a few reasons. Schools like UVA and Virginia Tech are the lowest, in part, due to their size, and also because they have some ACC media dollars that offset the costs. Schools like VCU and GMU who are similar in size to UVA and Virginia Tech do not have the same media dollars, so they have higher fees.
- Lee asked the President if he expects the fee to be held constant or to increase again. The President said early on in his tenure at Longwood, they cut the fee by a good bit and we are in a good position to be able to do that again. Philanthropy also makes a difference. The President said he hopes the fee will stay more constant in the future.

- The President said the sticker price for fees is meaningfully different than what students are paying on average.
- Virginia asked if we could be more purposeful about how we fund our student athletes. She shared from our most recent Senate meeting about the recommendation to be purposeful with student athletes' schedules so they are put in classes that conflict the least with games and practice. She asked if we could be purposeful in similar ways with how we fund student athletes to reduce the amount of their funding designated as an athletic scholarship. The President said most student athletes are very good students, and there are probably advantageous ways to have their aid based on academic merit, not just athletics.
- Lee asked if we can hold athletic fees more constant while also holding tuition costs steady. The President said it is complicated. There are four main types of costs students have: housing, dining, course fees, and then a bundle of tuition and mandatory fees. We have done a good job of keeping the latter low as we have increased an average of 2% over the past decade. Compared to inflation, that is really good. The Commonwealth has been much better at providing funds to support the university. As a whole, Virginia is in the lower third of all states in terms of the financial support they provide to higher education, although they are in the upper third for political support. The President said there is a way to keep doing right by students without continuing to see big increases in charges and fees.
- Karla referenced the Senate meeting last week, where the Faculty Athletics Representative and the Athletic Director gave a presentation. If a student comes to Longwood with an athletic scholarship and then stops playing that sport, their scholarship has to continue. The President confirmed this is true, particularly if there is an injury. It is less certain if there is a conduct issue.

Budget Process Update

- Virginia asked if the President was anticipating a long, delayed budgetary process like last year. The President said he believes we may not have a budget until late June. He thinks there may be raises in the final budget.

Update on the search process for a new Dean of College of Business and Economics

- The President said the upcoming AACSB visit plays a role. Lara will provide some updates in the Spring.
- Haley shared the spirit of this question was to ensure we are timing our search correctly to align with the job market.

Spring Budget Forum Update

- The President said the General Assembly determines when we will have some actual information about the budget. The formal General Assembly session will run through the end of the month.

ChatGPT

- The President asked if students are using ChatGPT. Most PAC members said no.
- Karla said she attended a presentation by Adam Franssen in CAFE and Ashley Leslie in DEC called AI, ChatGPT, and Teaching. It was excellent! Karla and her colleague Jen Spisak will be presenting at a school librarian conference about what ChatGPT is and how to use the positive aspects of it to help students. She likened it to Wikipedia when it first came out and how we told students not to use it. Then, we changed course to say you can use it as background information, but taught students to check sources, etc.
- Andrew said in sciences, students have to reference a lot of things, and ChatGPT cannot provide references, so it is not really applicable.

- Haley said ChatGPT can provide references of where information came from, but in her experience, the sources were not accurate.
- Virginia said in mathematics, this type of technology has existed for a while. Students can take a picture of a problem and the software will write out the steps. She sees a benefit of in-person learning being that students are more accountable when they are in the room with us as compared to online learning. She reiterates the Honor Code to students, which she thinks helps.

Final thoughts

- Lee said she heard from students that the incoming Freshmen class is so large, the university is backing off the policy forcing students to stay on campus for 3 years, reducing it back down to 2 years. She asked the President if this is true.
- The President said that would be a nice problem to have, but no, that is not true. We are in a good place with deposits. It is looking pretty strong compared to last year, maybe a little better. There is a lot of energy around open houses and prospective students.
- He said it is a blessing that graduate programs are doing well. Philanthropically we are doing well and the endowment is strong and is almost north of \$100 million. We were above \$100 million, then market turmoil made it dip below, and we are slowly approaching that mark again.
- The President said it is a great time to be a public university in Virginia. The Commonwealth is doing well, and Longwood is in their good graces. They have been providing a good amount of operating funding. We have construction underway on the new facilities building, and the new Wygal building will come soon.
- The President said there was a nice nonpartisan moment recently where the Governor unveiled a new portrait and exhibit of Barbara Johns at the Attorney General's office
- Karla said the stress in K-12 education is significant. Librarians are being verbally attacked for having certain books in their libraries. It is difficult to get students to want to go into the education field.
- Lee asked the President about a bill circulating regarding mental health education in K-12. The President said he thinks it will put a beneficial emphasis on mental health. He also said the Governor is trying to pull together a summit on mental health.