

*Longwood University Planning Council (UPC)*

*Minutes*

*January 26, 2016*

**Present:** President W. Taylor Reveley IV, Jennifer Apperson, Troy Austin, Paul Barrett, Jeff Halliday, Courtney Hodges, Naomi Johnson, Mark Kendrick, Victoria Kindon, Virginia Kinman, Vicki Levine, David Locascio, Matt McGregor, Michelle Meadows, Cat Mobley, Joanna Morrison, Joan Neff, Jonathan Page, Suzy Palmer, Jeannine Perry, Tim Pierson, Justin Pope, Lissa Power-deFur, Kim Wingo, Charles White, Cindy Wilson.

**Absent:** Ken Copeland, Paul Chapman

**Call to Order**

The University Planning Council (UPC) met on January 26, 2016 at 3:30 PM in the Blackwell Ballroom. President Reveley called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and guests and thanked the members for their service on the committee.

The October 22, 2015 minutes were approved as presented.

**UPC Organizational Overview**

President Reveley presented a brief overview of the agenda and noted that the University Planning Council will serve as a great forum for discussion of key issues affecting the University.

He also noted that the best way to know how a college or university is doing is by their enrollment and Longwood is doing quite well on that front. Over the last three years, applications have increased by over 50 percent and are up by 12 percent over the last year. Much of that increase can be attributed to the upcoming debate and the other great things that faculty and staff have been doing at the University over the last few years.

President Reveley noted that the officers/co-chairs of the UPC will provide a brief overview during the meeting of how the UPC fits together as a whole. The co-chairs will include the President serving as the Presiding Officer, Ken Copeland, Vice President for Administration and Finance, Dr. Joan Neff, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Charles White, Chair of the Faculty/Senate Finance and Planning Committee.

President Reveley reviewed the newly formed University Planning Council Charter, which was approved on October 22, 2015, and explained its purpose to serve as a means of aligning the University's operations and budgeting with the strategic priorities of the University and will

serve as a forum for discussion of key issues for the University. The UPC and its committees will analyze and present options into the regular decision making process of the University and will assist in taking actions on various fronts.

The UPC will consist of individual standing committees which include: Compliance, Diversity, Finance, Purchasing, and Technology. The committees span all of the operating areas of the University and provide an integrated, institution-wide, and data-driven approach to the achievement of strategic objectives. The committees will meet at regular intervals throughout the year for discussion of issues that are relative to the University and are on the forefront. The standing committee co-chairs will appoint individual members to serve on their committees.

President Reveley explained that the full University Planning Council will hold meetings in October, January, and April of each fiscal year. Ex-officio members will include the President, Vice Presidents, and Academic Deans, as well as, members of the Faculty Senate's Finance and Planning Committee, the Director of Athletics, and the President's Chief of Staff. The chairs or co-chairs of the standing committees of the UPC shall also serve as ex-officio members. Membership will also include up to two appointed members each of the Student Government Association (SGA), the Staff Advisory Committee, and the Faculty/Senate. The President may also appoint up to four individuals to serve.

Each committee will be provided a budget of several thousand dollars to assist with training modules, speakers, and reading materials of importance. Budgets may increase in the future or as needs arise. President Reveley mentioned that committee co-chairs should consider the addition of student members to their individual committees. He noted that the membership of the Diversity Committee does include several students.

President Reveley invited each standing committee chair/co-chair to provide an overview of their committee's mission. The individual chairs/co-chairs and overviews include:

**Diversity** – Naomi Johnson and Jonathan Page

The primary goal of the Diversity Committee is to develop a Diversity Strategic Plan to address issues related to pluralism and inclusion across Longwood in a systematic and coordinating manner. Using research, theory, and institutional best practices, the Diversity Committee will develop policies to be implemented that will create institution-wide advancement related to diversity initiatives and issues at Longwood University. There are six major areas the committee will focus on to include: Recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, administrators, and students; gather data related to demographics, practices, and experiences related to diversity at Longwood; develop education and assessment plans for faculty, staff, and administration; develop education and assessment plans for students; create a public record of data and initiatives related to diversity to demonstrate Longwood's commitment to pluralism and inclusion; and outreach to the local community and to alumni who are minorities.

**Compliance** – Virginia Kinman and Michelle Meadows

The mission/purpose of the Compliance Committee is to serve as an advisory body to the UPC evaluating issues and strategies as it relates to University compliance with federal, state, and local governments, accrediting agencies, and major organizations and oversight bodies of which the institution is a member.

**Purchasing** – Cat Mobley and Kim Wingo

The mission/purpose of the Purchasing Committee is to evaluate ways in which Longwood can be more strategic in its sourcing of goods and services.

**Technology** – Vikki Levine and Mark Kendrick

The purpose and role of the ITS Governance Committee is to serve as a sounding board to assist ITS in aligning its strategy with the strategic direction of the university. It will assist the CIO in guiding the strategic prioritization of ITS supported projects and consider the scope and interplay of criteria and projects on each other and the resources available to support them. Specifically the committee will:

- Establish criteria for prioritizing ITS projects;
- Prioritize ITS projects when criteria/time conflicts arise;
- Provide advice and support when ITS projects and security concerns are impacted by factors external to ITS, including practices that may need to be reviewed/modified in other VP areas;
- Ensure appropriate IT support personnel are included from the initiation of any considered technology solutions/decisions made by each area of the university, and;
- Include ITS in any decisions that will impact services currently provided by ITS or its vendors, including extended or off campus changes.

**Finance** – President Reveley, Ken Copeland, Joan Neff, Charles White

- The mission of the UPC Finance Committee is to ensure alignment between the budget and the University strategic plan and to improve processes associated with the formulation of the University's budget in a transparent and inclusive fashion.
- This committee will provide guidance on finance related issues and training on how the budget process works and will work closely with the other committees to assist with making the budgeting process as efficient as possible.

President Reveley indicated that the Finance Committee will play an important role in gathering information to make financial recommendations to the UPC and later to the Board of Visitors.

President Reveley expressed a desire to have a website created for the UPC to house pertinent information related to the committee. He will speak with the University web design team in the near future regarding this project.

The President noted that Cindy Wilson in the Vice President's Office for Administration and Finance will serve as the impresario for the UPC Committee and will assist the individual committee members in the planning and scheduling of their meetings and other tasks as needed.

### **Strategic Highlight: Retention and Graduation**

President Reveley noted that retention is of first and foremost importance to the University and Victoria Kindon, Vice President for Strategic Operations, leads the charge in that arena. Ms. Kindon reviewed her unit's mission which includes building a strong and meaningful relationship from perspective students up to engaged alumni. A large part of the mission is to work on retention goals and create an increased and ultimately sustained retention percentage. Ms. Kindon stated that the official definition of retention as reported occurs when a first time, full time freshman returns in their sophomore year. She has learned over the years that the official reported number is very important as there are many other smaller numbers reported internally that have as much or more effect on the success of our students. Fundamentally, being able to move retention numbers up and sustain them requires a strong foundation across campus. The impact of retention has a huge impact not only on the University, but also on the students because if they do not return in their sophomore year the odds that they will finish with a college degree really diminishes. The University has a moral obligation to encourage and assist students with moving thru the first weeks, months, and year and we need to really work with them to overcome difficulties and challenges they face.

The goal of Strategic Operations is to develop an infrastructure to have an increased and ultimately sustainable freshman to sophomore retention rate that is in line with what we are able to achieve. In looking at where we stand amongst our peers, there is room for growth.

Ms. Kindon shared examples of how her unit will achieve their goals. They will look at their ability to collect and analyze and disseminate relative information data. It is important to look at information to view trends and make decisions based on them and to provide solutions. Her unit has instituted several reporting programs that can be released to members of the community. Many reports have been developed for faculty members and the Registrar's Office which will allow them to do analysis quickly.

A donation received has made it possible for Ms. Kindon's staff to run data on perspective students as well as enrolled students and perform a variety of predictive models to include whether many students will be on probation and whether the students will come back for their sophomore year. The information has been quite helpful to view trends ahead of time.

Ms. Kindon shared that her unit will also achieve their goals by bolstering programs and interventions that help students progress. She has been able to hire a full-time Learning Center Director, which has assisted in an increase of students being tutored and attending writing center sessions. She noted that the numbers have almost doubled in three years and the numbers will continue to be tracked.

Ms. Kindon's staff has also been working on creating a better understanding of why students stay and why they leave. More exit interviews are being conducted and staff are using a more systematic way of collecting information so data can be better categorized. Research has determined that students stay because of their community and their connection with faculty. Data continues to be collected through marketing materials and communications with parents.

Finances can also play an important part of whether a student stays or leaves. Ms. Kindon's unit has been working closely with the Foundation to provide them with a better understanding of the impact that Foundation scholarships have on students.

Ms. Kindon shared several charts showing application rates for the freshman class. The chart revealed how the pool has increased each year. The pool presently is over 4,000 applications, which is the highest seen before. To assist with growth and competitiveness, the Admissions deadline has been moved up to be in comparison with other universities. This change has generated a large impact of interest in Longwood. Another chart revealed the retention rate for the class moving from fall to spring is growing. Ms. Kindon noted there has also been a substantial increase in admitted students with a GPA of 3.75 or higher.

### **U.S. Vice Presidential Debate**

President Reveley shared that The Commission on Presidential Debates has been very complimentary of the Longwood faculty and staff and how things are going here in preparation for the debate. The Commission uses Centre College in Danville, Kentucky as the gold standard for debates as two debates have been held there. Centre is about one third of the size of Longwood and the area is rural. The President of Centre College, John Roush and Joan Neff were colleagues together at the University of Richmond. A group of staff from Longwood visited Centre College recently to meet with staff there and it provided an opportunity for our staff to gain valuable information to assist in preparation for the debate at Longwood.

President Reveley acknowledged that Jeff Chidester has been appointed as the debate coordinator to assist Longwood in preparing for the debate. Mr. Chidester and President Reveley were colleagues together at the University of Virginia and Mr. Chidester has substantial experience with similar events. He will be visiting the Longwood campus frequently to assist with every aspect of the debate and to ensure that the campus will be prepared for the big event on October 04.

Justin Pope gave an overview of the structure that has been put into place at Longwood for the debate. Mr. Pope also visited Centre College and found the visit to be quite informative and helpful. He returned to campus with a long list of items which will need to be put into place, but feels very confident and encouraged. He noted that the structure of the debate has been designed to do several things. a) we want to achieve an impressive television event b) we want to take full advantage of this event to advance our strategic goals for our students and the University c) we don't want the University's ordinary functions to be adversely affected.

Mr. Pope noted that a debate team has been formed and is already hard at work making preparations for the debate. Communications surrounding debate related events and volunteer opportunities will be announced in the days ahead. Mr. Pope stated that we want to make the most of every aspect of this opportunity, from engaging students and alumni to sharing the Longwood name and story. The highest hope of this endeavor is that virtually everyone at Longwood will play a role and will feel empowered to capitalize on the debate to advance whatever work they do.

### **Other Business and Next Meeting**

President Reveley reminded everyone that while our focus will be on making the television event work well, we should take the opportunity to do academic and alumni programming in and around the debate. Thought should be given to a sequence of events and speakers to build the momentum as the debate draws closer. Dinner events in the Washington DC and Richmond areas may also be held for alumni participation.

President Reveley stated that the debate is exciting and will do great things for Longwood. Admissions should continue to rise and Courtney Hodges, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, has seen an increase in donor contributions.

Suzy Palmer and Paul Barrett were thanked for their contributions to Longwood, having recently announced they would be stepping down from their dean positions, and President Reveley wished them well in their future endeavors and future roles with the University.

President Reveley stated that the next UPC meeting will be held in April and Mrs. Wilson will contact the committee members regarding scheduling.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM.