

**Report from Board of Visitors Meeting, March 19, 2021**  
**Lee Millar Bidwell, Faculty Representative to the BOV**

The Board of Visitors met via Zoom on Friday March 19 from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in accordance with Chapter 1283 of the 2020 Acts of the Virginia General Assembly, which permits electronic meetings when the Governor has declared a state of emergency in accordance with Va. Code § 44-147.17.

- Click [here](#) for the complete meeting agenda.
- Click here for a list of the [2020-2021](#) members of the BOV [Note: The Governor reappointed all of the Board members who served in the 2019-20 academic year.]
- Click [here](#) for access to the complete Board materials. NOTE: As at the December 2020 meeting, the Board materials less substantial than what is typical because no written reports were requested from Vice-Presidents and Board Representatives. When I asked Justin Pope in an e-mail about the lack of written reports in the Board materials, which are public record, he replied: “We have tried hard since last spring to recognize the substantial additional work and burdens that have fallen on everyone during the pandemic, including the VPs, faculty and Board members themselves. It has also been our experience that particularly over Zoom BOV discussions are most productive when teed up by a manageable range of focused written materials, but allowing for flexible conversation with the VPs. We certainly hope soon enough to move back to traditional meetings and associated practices. We also have discussed how important it will be as we move toward the finish of the academic year, both for practical reasons and the historical record, to reflect on and record the experiences and lessons of the past year” (e-mail, 3/13/21).
- I requested time on the BOV agenda in advance and although I did not submit a written report, the contents of my remarks to the Board are included verbatim in the minutes below (in italics).
- I urge you to look at several noteworthy items in the Board materials. 1. The Board Resolution in Honor of Longwood’s Nursing Program and Others Who Supported Community Vaccination Efforts” (p. 11, adopted in the Consent Agenda); 2. The wording of HB 1980: Enslaved Ancestors College Access Scholarship and Memorial Program (p. 28-29, which Provost Smith discussed in her remarks); 3. The Title VI Policy (p. 35-43, which was adopted at this meeting).

**Rector’s Welcome and Consent Agenda**

- Rector Hansen called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. with a brief welcome noting that Board members are appreciative of the hard work all at Longwood have done to bring a sense of normalcy back to the students this year.
- The Board approved minutes of the previous meeting and the Consent Agenda.

## **President's Report**

- President Reveley offered his thanks to the Board for their hard work. He also noted that the work Longwood has done year with regard to COVID-19 protocol is remarkable. He applauded faculty, staff, and students for their efforts at maintaining safety and respecting protocol. He outlined the topics to be discussed at the meeting, and introduced Justin Pope to give an update on COVID-19 information, expressing his deep appreciation for the work Mr. Pope has done overseeing and coordinating campus pandemic response efforts.

## **Update Regarding COVID-19**

- Justin Pope, Chief of Staff and Vice-President, said that with regard to COVID-19 cases we are “stable and steady.” He reported that we are seeing fewer contact exposures and small spread when students test positive. Further, cases do not seem to be originating on campus but coming from off campus. He said students have become accustomed to COVID-19 safety habits.
- Fortunately, there have been very few cases of moderate to severe coronavirus cases (about 10-12); most cases reported on campus have been asymptomatic to mild.
- The situation in the region also is “in good shape.” Currently there are no reported COVID-19 patients hospitalized at Southside Community Hospital and the number of patients at Centra hospital in Lynchburg has dropped from a high of 125 to 7.
- The state numbers are not as clear. We still need to be cautious and continue to follow CDC and VDH guidelines.
- The lessons learned this year are:
  - The dashboard works: when students see cases rising on the dashboard, they adjust their behavior to flatten the curve.
  - Quarantine/Isolation support works
  - Culture matters: In this discussion he pointed specifically to student athletes. Athletics has used “incredibly rigorous protocol” and excellent planning. They have conducted 3500 surveillance tests with a positivity rate of .0023 (6-7 positive tests). While 20% of Division I basketball games have been canceled due to COVID-19, the LU men’s basketball team only missed 1 game due to coronavirus in our program. The women’s basketball team went all season with zero positive tests. Sadly, they had 1 asymptomatic positive case after making it to the Big South tournament, so they had to decline the invitation.
- With the hard work of Longwood Nursing faculty, students, and other staff members 2200 doses of the Moderna vaccine have been administered to 1100 people.
- Some students have been vaccinated. Some nursing students and student teachers have received vaccinations. Staff at the University Health Center (UHC) are assisting students with chronic health conditions in locating vaccination sites. As eligibility for the vaccine is expanded, the University Health Center hopes to administer more vaccines to students.

- President Reveley noted that the temporary salary reductions taken this past year allowed the University to cover millions of dollars in COVID-19 expenses. When salaries are fully restored in the next contract cycle, we will not be facing the same level of COVID-19 expenses. Also, the economy in the Commonwealth has remained relatively strong. Thus, LU will be in a better financial situation next academic year than many other schools in the state and across the country.

## **Discussion of HB1980**

- Provost Smith read the text of HB 1980: Enslaved Ancestors College Access Scholarship and Memorial Program. She explained that the legislation requires public colleges and universities founded before 1865, of which there are 5, to identify and memorialize enslaved people who worked on “former and current institutionally controlled grounds and property” and “provide a scholarship or community-based economic development program for individuals or specific communities with a demonstrated historic connection to slavery that will empower families to be lifted out of the cycle of poverty” by July 2022.
- She noted that previously the BOV offered apology for its role during the school closings, established the Moton Scholarship, and erected the monument by the Radcliff Admissions Building. Additionally, the Bicentennial Initiative that is underway focuses on contributions of Black Americans to the university. Identifying and memorializing enslaved workers is part of this work.
- She explained that the university was originally established as Farmville Female Seminary in 1839. In 1884 the institution became public, and was named the State Female Normal School—the first public teachers’ college for white women in the Commonwealth. Virginia State University was the first normal school for black women.
- Records at the university prior to it becoming a public institution are “scanty.” There are no records of labor practices in the early years of the institution.
- However, the book *Israel on the Appomattox*, which describes the free Black community in the county prior to the Civil War, describes common labor practices of the era. It is likely that whites, free Blacks, and enslaved people built the first building on our campus. There is much work to be done to identify enslaved people and their ancestors who worked on campus. She said we can start with Emancipation and work backwards. We have payroll records dating back to the late 1800s. The Moton Museum and the Greenwood Library have made connections with people who are descendants of those who worked here.
- Longwood, along with the other 4 colleges and universities, will work with SCHEV on the initiative.
- Larry Palmer asked how involved she will be in the research for the project. As a Civil Rights historian, Provost Smith said that she would like to be able to do some archival research over the summer.
- Polly Raible asked whether all schools will be asked to respond to the legislation identically or if each school’s response will be unique. Provost Smith said that SCHEV

understands that schools have different histories and she believes that schools will be given some flexibility and latitude.

- Pia Trigliani said she believes the BOV should take a lead role in forming the scholarship, as they did with the Moton Scholarship, to demonstrate their commitment to diversity and equity. Other Board members agreed.

### **Report from Faculty Representative to the BOV**

- I delivered my 5-minute report. Below are my remarks.
- *I'm sure you all agree that the pandemic can't end soon enough. For a year now, we all have been dreaming of when "life will return to normal." However, we all understand that the global pandemic has forever changed the world. Once the COVID-19 crisis subsides, a "new normal" will emerge.*
- *Despite the overwhelming losses and obstacles the pandemic has presented, it has inspired innovation and creativity and forced changes that we might want to incorporate into our vision of New Normal at Longwood.*
- *I asked faculty from across the university to share their reflections on what we have done and learned this past year will help make Longwood a stronger institution in the future. They responded with enthusiasm and offered insightful, thoughtful assessment of what has worked and been beneficial and what we want to avoid moving forward.*
- *As you might imagine, many of the comments focused on the use of Zoom (and other platforms) for teaching online.*
- *While in-person teaching is undeniably important, Zoom has had some pedagogical benefits.*
  - ***Students have greater access to course materials:*** *Students are able to access recorded class lectures and even participate live in a class when they cannot be physically present. Now students who previously would have completely missed course material and been reliant on a classmate for notes, such as traveling student athletes and those with family emergencies, can join class remotely or watch a recorded class. Students are less likely to fall behind academically. Additionally, even students who attend class in person are able to go back and review recorded class lectures.*
  - ***Online teaching options provide continuity of instruction:*** *The ability to teach virtually provides more continuity of instruction during faculty illness, inclement weather, and conference travel. The increased flexibility of being able to teach or take classes from home also encourages both students and faculty to stay home when they aren't feeling well and to avoid traveling to campus when weather conditions are dangerous.*
  - ***Online tools can increase student participation:*** *Some students are more willing to participate in class using online tools such as Zoom chat, Google Jamboards,*

*and Poll Everywhere. One faculty member said “I think their ‘texting brain’ just turns on.” Students also have more convenient access to faculty office hours for help outside of class..*

- *We have to keep in mind, however, that online teaching and hyflex blends of in-person and online instruction present problems that must be addressed moving forward.*
  - ***Increased workload for faculty** is one of the most significant concerns. Online teaching is more time consuming than in person teaching in many ways. More information has to be prepared and organized to be posted to Canvas. Zoom recordings have to be edited and posted. Hyflex classes, particularly labs, require extra work because faculty have to prepare two lab activities for each week—one for the students online and one for those in-person.*
  - *The teaching workload has **interfered with time for scholarly activities**, which is an issue that needs to be addressed in Tenure and Promotion and annual evaluation policies.*
  - ***Some students disengage** and intellectually “check-out” when in an online environment.*
- *The online environment **facilitates collaboration and connections outside the classroom**.*
  - *For example, this year the Office of Teacher Preparation set up meetings so that student teachers from across the state could meet with each other regularly and Longwood Pre-Service teachers were able to teach virtual lessons to children across the state and provide the cooperating teacher with a recorded lesson for future use. Faculty are able to collaborate with colleagues who live far away on research and presentations; guest speakers and campus presenters from around the world can bring their expertise to campus without the time and expense of long- distance travel. A speaker from Australia recently gave a presentation sponsored by the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies minor; without Zoom, we probably never would have been able to hear that speaker live on campus.*
  - *Faculty report that Zoom makes it easier for them to attend meetings, Blackwell talks, and faculty development workshops through remote access.*
- ***Classroom technology facilitates demonstration of content.** For example, cameras in the classrooms allow faculty to provide demonstrations of some techniques, such as hand movements playing a musical instrument, that all students in the class can see clearly. Digital whiteboards allow faculty to show how to work problems and then save the document so students can access them later.*
- ***Investment in live-streaming and production services and equipment in Jarman is essential.** Production equipment has allowed recorded and live-streamed musical performances to be made accessible to a wider audience. Such equipment facilitates online auditions that broaden recruitment and outreach efforts. Pam McDermott offered a vision of how increasing this investment can shape the university. She wrote, “Even when we return to live audiences for concerts and events in Jarman, we should invest in*

*retaining access to more remote audiences through live-streaming and web-based interfaces. Jarman could become our state-of-the-art facility for staging and broadcasting events to show the wider world, live and through professional recordings, even as students, families, friends, and members of the Farmville community fill the seats in the house. Imagine if any event in Jarman could also be live-streamed ... and we had the capacity to put that access behind a paywall when tickets are sold for in-person attendance. We have an opportunity to be more widely accessible and more widely known. For a university that is in a remote part of the state, this capability could make us much more visible.”*

- *As we plan for the Fall semester and beyond, it’s important to consider what we have learned from the pandemic and identify practices, policies, and technologies that will help make Longwood a stronger institution in the future. Faculty want to be included in planning a post-pandemic future for Longwood that is not “business as usual,” but “business better than before.”*

### **Discussion of Title VI Policy**

- President Reveley said that Jonathan Page and Cameron O’Brion would present the proposed Title VI policy and urged the Board to adopt the policy at this meeting if they believed it was in good order. He said this would be the first policy of its kind in Virginia, and perhaps the first at a public university in the country.
- Jonathan Page explained the Title VI policy is designed to create a process to address complaints of discrimination in a fair manner. In drafting the policy, the team researched policies at other universities and discovered that very few have Title VI offices or policies. They also reviewed the literature and consulted with other Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) colleagues across the country.
- The proposed policy is modeled after the current Title IX policy. He described features of the policy (see Board materials pp. 35-43). He said the strengths of the policy are that it promotes education on campus, proactively identifies issues with diversity and access on campus, and provides supportive measures even if no violation is found.
- Cameron O’Brion thanked Jonathan Page, Jen Fraley, and Sasha Johnson for helping to draft the policy. He said that unlike Title IX where the federal government provided over 1,000 pages of “guidance” for universities to follow in constructing their policies, with Title VI universities simply are charged with the obligation of developing such procedures.
- The proposed policy is written to be flexible and can be adapted as necessary.
- Larry Palmer asked, in light of the recent murders of Asian women in Georgia, to what the degree the proposed policy encourages the university to proactively reach out to underrepresented communities. Mr. Page responded that the Office of Multicultural Affairs stays in contact with diverse communities across campus.
- Michael Evans moved to approve the proposed Title VI policy; David Hallock seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- Polly Raible asked how people on campus would be educated about the policy. Mr. Page said his office is working to create printed materials, as well as web resources and social

media information. An active campaign with fall 2021 first-year students will begin over the summer. Student organizations will receive information through Lancer Link. Academic Affairs will inform faculty.

- President Reveley said the passage of the Title VI policy “is a proud step.”

## **Open Discussion**

- The floor was opened for questions at 12:05.
- Rector Hansen asked Louise Waller to discuss the financial summary, particularly addressing COVID-19 spending and CARES Act federal assistance. Ms. Waller said that if not for the payroll reductions, this year would “have been much more challenging.” COVID-19 expenses are tracking higher than projected, but vice-presidents are working to manage budget expenses. The university received \$5 million in CARES Act funding, 2 million of which had to go directly to students; the remaining 3 million are being used to offset COVID-19 expenses.
- While YTD scholarship expenses look high relative to what was budgeted, we will be on target with what was forecast. She thanked Jonathan Page for diversity training he did with her staff.
- Nadine Marsh-Carter asked Courtney Hodges to discuss how development efforts have been affected by the pandemic. Ms. Hodges responded that they stopped traveling to visit donors and they have not hosted donor events on campus. However, they have done virtual donor visits and events. She reported that some of the procedures they developed this year are likely to be retained, such as making first donor visits virtually. The visits have proven successful and are less time consuming for advancement staff and donors and are more cost effective.
- Ms. Hodges reported that she was pleased to report that the Family of Scholarship campaign launched in fall 2019 was successfully completed with all 90 opportunities funded.
- Polly Raible asked Tim Pierson about how counseling has been handled during the pandemic and whether there has been an increase in students seeking mental health care. Dr. Pierson said that CAPS now does triage with students who first come to the center and encourages group counseling for students with anxiety and depression. This approach has worked well. Zoom counseling rooms have been effective in working with student clients. The NSSE Pulse Survey gave his team good feedback on what students have been dealing with. RCL staff and RAs also have been reaching out to students to address needs.
- CAPS has seen an increase in the percentage of students seeking services. However, student involvement and engagement remain high as well as evidenced by the number of students involved in Greek life and running for SGA.
- Ms. Raible asked how the death of a student at VCU from a fraternity hazing incident has shaped Longwood’s approach to risk management. Dr. Pierson explained that Order of Omega consistently works with Greek organizations, including new and continuing members, to address risk management and hazing education. Furthermore, the national

Greek organizations are involved as well. The close relationship LU has with local landlords and law enforcement and the [Say Something](#) reporting tool allow Student Affairs to be proactive.

- Rector Hansen asked Victoria Kindon to talk about fall enrollment projections. Ms. Kindon reported that Admissions has continued with on-campus visits throughout the pandemic, although with strict social distancing and other protective measures in place.
- Although Enrollment Management predicted a 20% decline in year-over-year applications, there has only been an 8% decline.
- Currently, LU has received 5,500 completed applications compared to 5,900 at this time last year. The previous two years 2019 & 2018—before moving to the Common Application—we received 3,900 and 4,600 completed applications at this time.
- While completed applications are strong, there are uncertainties that provide challenges. First, fewer students have been able to visit campus. Second, as SATs have become optional at most schools due to the pandemic, applications at elite schools and large state schools have soared. Those schools have deep waiting lists, so students accepted to LU are not yet committing to us. Third, the financial situation for many families is precarious. The number of completed FAFSA forms has dropped across all high schools, but particularly those with high populations of students of color and Title I eligible schools.
- Departments across campus are doing more individual outreach with students, especially those who are undecided on a major. She said “the number of applications generated looks really good, but there are many variables that will affect students’ final decision.” She is “cautiously optimistic.”
- President Reveley said we should celebrate that both basketball teams made it to the semi-finals at the Big South tournament for the first time, and a statue of Barbara Johns was approved for Statuary Hall.
- Provost Smith pointed out that Dr. Little, Chair of Nursing, was in the meeting and asked for the resolution in honor of the nursing program to be noted. Rector Hansen applauded the nursing program and said that a large print of the resolution would be framed to hang in Stevens Hall and that nursing faculty and students would be provided with small print keepsakes of the resolution.
- The meeting adjourned at 12:37 to go into Executive Session.