

President's Advisory Council Meeting

November 12, 2024, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Location: Stallard Boardroom

Present: President Reveley, Lee Bidwell, Kari Hampton, Eric Hodges, Lisa Kinzer, Benjamin Topham, Haley Woznyj

Faculty are excited about...

The success of the Virginia Children's Book Festival

Andy Taylor Center Reopening

Election Day is over

President Reveley mentioned the successful Homecoming events and indicated that the admissions cycle looks promising and visits are high. With regard to the election, various members of the committee shared that there have been mixed reactions (and sometimes no reaction) from students. The resources shared by CAFE have been valuable. For many students, this was their first time voting in an election.

Update on Local Funds Sweep

How much of the original \$3.1 million dollars swept from department accounts will be restored?

President Reveley explained that the money that was swept in June came from two sources of donated funds: Local Annual Funds and Endowment Yield funds. The funds that are being restored are the Local Annual Funds that were swept in June, which amounts to \$600,000. For Local Fund Accounts in which less than \$10,000 was taken, the entire amount will be restored this semester. Local Fund Accounts in which \$10,000 was taken will be restored in two installments—one this fall and another during the spring semester.

Where is the money coming from that is being used to restore local fund accounts?

President Reveley stated that there has been good philanthropic fundraising. We're in the midst of a period of top-line dollar fundraising. Lee inquired about using new money to backfill the local funds. President Reveley clarified that the money being used is from unrestricted money coming in, not from new funds being raised by departments.

Presidential Strategic Vision, Financial Priorities, and Positions

Can you explain your strategic vision for the university and how spending priorities are being made to achieve these goals?

President Reveley began by noting that much of the country is critical of higher education. However, 90% of LU alumni think LU is on the right track - we are doing things well as an institution that resonates with students and alumni. He said he has two strategic priorities: (1) Making LU a place where faculty want to make a career, and (2) keeping student costs low. We are increasingly distinctive with regard to the first priority - we have one of the highest percentages of full-time faculty in the state. Balancing these two priorities is difficult, but philanthropy helps.

Lisa asked for suggestions about how to market what LU is doing well so that others recognize the value of a residential, liberal arts education. President Reveley said that this has started to happen and cited a *Washington Post* article from last December about Civitae as an example. We are also recognized among other institutions, such as Johns Hopkins and Purdue, who are training students to be good citizens. He continued that a critical part of attracting students to LU is to get them to visit campus, which is a focus of the admissions team. Ferg is also working hard to make connections with counselors. Furthermore, Longwood needs to do its part to help Farmville to be a thriving college town. He noted that the relationship between LU and Farmville offerings is an important part of this process. He cited ATC, Moton, LCVA, SEED Innovation Hub, High Street Theatre, and athletics as ways LU is helping to make Farmville attractive to students.

What is the purpose of the writer-in-residence and artist-in-residence positions?

What value do they bring to the university?

What was the process used to hire these positions?

How can the salaries and benefits associated with these positions be justified when funds have not been allocated for faculty merit raises, to fill open positions, and repair campus buildings?

The President suggested that these positions are part of his strategic priority of making Farmville attractive and bringing positive attention to the University. President Reveley said that he played a different role in each of these positions. The High Street Theatre was at an inflection point with an opportunity to gain traction (or not). The artist-in-residence will bring an art house vibe to our campus. He added that families see the Theatre on visits and are pleased to see such a space in a college town.

Hiring a prominent sports writer to do basketball commentary will be exciting for alumni and will bring attention to LU. For Athletics, this was an opportunity to recruit talent and Mr.

Feinstein will also teach a class in the Honors College. When asked if he'll be writing about the basketball team, the President said he might.

Lisa asked about the optics of hiring individuals that appear to be friends. President Reveley said that he did not have close relationships with these individuals before their arrival at LU, but that he does his best to bring talented people to LU. Lee pointed out that on his Wikipedia page, the artist-in-residence (Mr. Mullins) is listed as a "childhood friend" of the President and that they worked on a film called *Doomsday* together. The President said that he does have many connections and he can use them to bring talent to the University. Eric asked about plans for the Theatre, to which President Reveley responded that there are films lined up for the next few months.

Part of the decision to add these positions is due to the different pots of money funding them. Another part is relative scale. For instance, the artist-in-residence and writer-in-residence positions are a small chunk compared to the large and rising cost of benefits. President Reveley said that regular salary increases have been a source of pride, which has made this past year particularly difficult for him. Raises will be a forefront priority next year. Lee mentioned that regarding the values and strategic priorities that the President mentioned earlier - we can't keep faculty if we aren't getting raises. She also commented that the big picture includes low salaries, not just raises, as well as working conditions including building maintenance that will be discussed later in the agenda. President Reveley stated that it is important that average salaries and the number of full-time faculty be considered together.

How were decisions made to give promotions and significant raises to administrators over the summer when department accounts were "swept" and funds for raises for faculty were unavailable?

The President did not answer this question directly, but Lee told the President faculty are concerned about spending on these promotions and the "in-residence" positions when faculty did not get raises and campus facilities need attention.

Please update us on the status of the search for Director of Assessment, a position to help in the Academic Affairs Budget Office, and the status of approvals for faculty lines.

President Reveley said that the position for Director of Assessment is moving ahead and may have already been posted. Lee asked about information related to plans for the AA Budget Office involving a reconfiguration of a position someone is retiring from instead of a new position. The President did not have any information on those details yet. He stated that postings for approved faculty lines would be coming soon - Lara will likely share that information soon. Kari inquired about the timeline and asked if this could be done sooner in the year. President Reveley accepted responsibility for this delay and explained he was being overly cautious considering all the variables in higher education right now, particularly at the federal level. Eric asked the President

what variables in particular he was concerned about, and the President mentioned national issues, including the FAFSA problems.

Why are students being charged the full comprehensive fee for winter-intersession this year? Will the practice continue in summer sessions as well?

President Reveley said he would have to check on this. It was suggested that this may be related to the billing cycle and how intersession and summer sessions are now being grouped relative to the fall and spring semesters. President Reveley mentioned that he regularly meets with students for lunches and that the costs for students is always on his mind. Kari and Lee pointed out that often students must take classes over winter intersession or summer to meet degree requirements in a timely manner. Charging high comprehensive fees during these extra terms creates financial burden for students, and ultimately may discourage enrollment, which lowers E&G tuition revenue.

Campus Facilities

Please discuss the plans that are in place to address the ongoing maintenance problems in campus buildings. The state of the deteriorating facilities, including Chichester, Rotunda, and Hiner, are interfering with student learning, course delivery, student and employee health and safety, and recruiting.

Lee read comments from an email from two faculty members that cited specific examples of serious problems with leaks and HVAC in Chichester and Rotunda. Haley pointed out some of the problems in Hiner. President Reveley noted two separate issues. Housekeeping continues to be an issue that is difficult to solve. He plans to rededicate himself to improving and finding solutions in the near term—by next semester. Building maintenance is a separate issue that is complicated by the involvement of the state, as the state wants building maintenance to be paid for with their dollars. Lee mentioned that if we can't do our core academic mission in our buildings (e.g., canceling classes due to leaks), that's an issue. He admitted that he was not fully aware of all of the issues described but that he would prioritize addressing these important concerns.

The new music building came up in discussion and the President outlined plans for Facilities to move out of Bristow to Charter Hall over the holidays. A groundbreaking for the new music building will be planned once the Bristow is demolished and cleared.

Real Estate Foundation

Please describe how the LU Real Estate Foundation operates and how decisions are made by that body about which, when, and for how much University properties should be sold.

How can employees purchase properties from the Real Estate Foundation? Can you address the rumor that the Real Estate Foundation sold a property to a Longwood employee well below assessed market value?

President Reveley described the Real Estate Foundation as operating according to rigorous standards, led by John Daniel. Decisions are made in connection to the Master Plan, and properties are never sold below market value. The only exceptions would be when transactions involved the state of Virginia.

The meeting ended with a discussion about how students are doing and an open discussion about AI.