

President's Advisory Council Meeting

November 2, 2023 at 3:30 pm – 5 pm

Location: Stallard Boardroom

Present: Andrew Yeagley, Haley Woznyj, Toni Sorrell, Kari Hampton, Lisa Kinzer, and President Taylor Reveley

Faculty appreciate...

Many people were working behind the scenes to make mid-year raises happen. Amidst the turbulent political scene, the pay raise was supported across political party lines. We feel really good about this support of higher education.

Raises

Raises are not retroactive and are based on this year's base salary. The pay will start December 10, 2023, and be reflected in our first pay in January.

Joan Perry Brock Center Ticketing

There was a concern about an increase in fees being assessed in ticket sales across campus with the new ticketing vendor. Not knowing much about this situation, President Reveley dug in to gather information. Before the change, there were multiple computer programs handling ticketing, whereas the new software is more functional and can handle all the tasks. The ticketing surcharge, which is \$1 plus 5% of each ticket, will not be passed along to event planners or ticket purchasers. It seems to be an accounting system for administration. It is a software system that might be compared to something like Banner. Paying for the system in this way should be more economical than paying a one-time fee in the future.

Academic affairs have indicated a desire to handle their own ticketing, but the President thinks a breakdown in communication has made the new system seem more problematic than it is. Departments are not responsible for how the fee is being paid, which was not properly communicated to the campus. In short, we should give it time and see how it works out. There likely are some features in the new software which could be beneficial as we move forward. There was also a concern about the lack of a physical box office. President Reveley said that is important and he would help figure out how to solve the issue.

Ensuring and Promoting Longwood's Academic Rigor

President Reveley addressed the question about reinstating the SAT first, saying there has been a lot of talk outlining the pros and cons. The national conversation will help us determine what to do; we should remain aligned with our peers. Requiring the SAT when other schools do not could put us at a recruiting disadvantage.

Regarding academic rigor, the President acknowledged that COVID accelerated the divide between strong and less strong students. He encourages faculty to continue to expect excellence from students while taking advantage of university's support systems to assist remedial students. When asked if there would be resources available for this type of work, the President cited the QEP, which is geared toward keeping students on track for careers post-graduation, as well as the retention task force, which has been assembled to examine our retention practices and make recommendations. He believes that the presence of strong students in our freshman class is a testament to Admissions' ability to recruit students who can meet academic rigor. He offered that the university website could do a better job of putting scholarly and intellectual programs on display. Currently, the Longwood website is geared towards 18-year-olds and

their parents rather than our peers. Faculty have ideas about appropriate content for the website but rely on the expertise of marketing to put that together.

Financial Concerns

In short, the President did not think Radford University's "free tuition" announcement would have much, if any, bearing on Longwood. We tend to compete more with JMU, VCU, and CNU.

Responding to general questions about our financial stability, the President recognized the health of our endowment, which has grown 50% plus over the past 4-5 years. The university endowment crossed the \$100 Million dollar mark in 2022. He compared William and Mary's Foundation which crossed this same threshold in 1993 and in 2019 crossed the \$1 Billion dollar mark. With the hope of continuing to grow through a variety of efforts on the Academic Affairs side of the university. Buildings such as JPB and, the new music building, and the events they host, will bring people to campus, and this is a catalyst for philanthropy. The state has been good to higher education; both political parties feel good about higher education. The relatively strong state economy makes the President optimistic about the state's continued support of higher education. In closing, the President said the health of our endowment and stable enrollment put us in good company among state schools.

Enrollment

While the President does not see a huge jump in undergraduate enrollment on the horizon, he stated that the university would be able to see such a phenomenon in advance and easily plan for higher numbers on campus (specifically regarding housing). He thinks our current enrollment numbers are in a good zone for us. Some growth would be good, but too large a population would compromise our identity. Applications to attend Longwood are doing well.

Financial Decision Making

Addressing equity in how resources are distributed across campus, the President reminded us that the basketball team's trip to Europe was a gift from donors. Last spring saw the largest number of tenured faculty in one year, and we are about to build the most expensive academic building Longwood has ever seen. Academics is the soul of the university; we should not feel in competition with athletics. Athletics does help drive the academic enterprise and will help to bring donors back to campus. He also reiterated that building some of the new academic buildings should aid academic philanthropy.

Diversity Strategic Plan Progress

There have been specific events that have addressed the objectives in the Diversity Strategic Plan. The Office of Multicultural Affairs has driven the events. At the heart of public safety is the requirement of having a good rapport with students, which Longwood's new Police chief, Angela Comer, has been developing by collaborating with a variety of departments. Student Affairs has promoted efforts also. The movement towards change is happening, though not perfect.

Regarding the events in Israel/Gaza, President Reveley shared that this is a very challenging topic to discuss, even with a vast amount of knowledge of the climate in the area, and knowing has yet to make it easier to address the topic. The university continues to work with students who are affected.

Additional Message from President Reveley

Things feel good on campus, even with how sideways things are in the world. We need to continue to be mindful of our students and of what they bring to the table. Spirits around town are also good as there is a recognition that there is something special about a Longwood Student.

