

Re: 2020-2021 Annual Report (University Lectures Committee)

Date: 13 July 2021

Committee Members:

Chelsea Adams

Tamia Daniel

Ian Danielsen (Chair)

Emmanuel Diala

Julian Dymacek

Tim Holmstrom

Katelyn Housler

Chris Labosier

Meg Meng

Vicki Palmer

Dorothy Suskind

In fall semester of 2020, the committee met via Zoom on September 4, October 2, and November 6. Chris Labosier agreed to serve as Secretary, which included taking meeting Minutes and posting them to a Box folder designed for committee documents. Students Tamia Daniel, Chelsea Adams, and Emmanuel Diala were recruited to the committee to represent their respective colleges. Committee members agreed by consensus that an interest survey should be developed and disseminated to students, faculty and staff, to discern topics of interest and the preferred format of a future event. Dr. Meng, Dr. Suskind and Emmanuel Diala collaborated to create and disseminate the survey. A goal was set in the November meeting to hold an event in spring semester, based on survey responses favoring a panel presentation of experts discussing the COVID-19 pandemic and social justice implications for the future.

In spring semester of 2021, the committee met via Zoom on January 8, February 5, February 19, March 5, March 19, March 26, and April 30. Emmanuel Diala informed the committee he needed to withdraw and student Katelyn Housler agreed to join to represent the College of Business and Economics. As part of preparation for the panel presentation event on April 6, program and logistics subcommittees were formed, chaired by Drs. Suskind and Meng respectively. Support for the event was provided by the Office of Academic Affairs, University Events, User Support Services, and the Digital Education Collaborative.

The panel presentation was titled, *Voices from the pandemic – the impact and overlap of stories of racial injustice, poverty, health and politics*. Panelists were Dr. Lee Bidwell, Professor of Sociology at Longwood, Dr. Ryan Carson, Professor of Economics at Hampden-Sydney, Dr. Sulola Adekoya, Interim Health Director of the Piedmont Health District, and Ms. Rhonda Pruitt, Chief Epidemiologist of the Piedmont Health District. Ian Danielsen served as panel moderator, with opening remarks by student Katelyn Housler and closing remarks by Provost Dr. Lara Smith. The event was held before a live audience in Jarman Auditorium and also virtually on Zoom. Dr. Meng developed and disseminated a post-event evaluation survey.

The committee met again on April 30 to review results of the survey, which were favorable overall. The committee agreed that if future events include a virtual option, that audio-visual problems would need to be resolved. The committee agreed by consensus that the model of using interest survey research to inform event-planning was an effective approach. Members remaining on the committee also agreed to resume meeting in September, 2021.

A link to the promotional flyer for the panel presentation is posted below...

[Voices From the Pandemic -- Flyer.pdf](#)