



Salisbury University – Staff Senate  
Thursday, October 14, 2021  
GAC Board Room – AC401  
and Zoom

**Members in attendance:** Vanessa Collins, Joe Benyish, Jennifer Ellis, Isabella Chow, Lisa Gray, Jessica Scott, Paul Gasior, Steven Blankenship, Matthew Hill

**Absent:** Tabitha Pilchard, Candace Henry, Sara Heim, Amy Waters

**Executive Staff:** Eli Modlin, Dr. Janet Wormack

Chair, Vanessa Collins, opened the meeting at 10:18 am (delayed due to technical difficulties).

I. COVID Update – Eli Modlin

- a. Tracking 20-25 active COVID cases on campus right now (anyone highlighted yellow on the roster). Last year, the number would have been 150-200, so this is very low.
- b. Booster shots for Pfizer are available on campus. Watching for more info on Moderna and J&J. Will most likely be doing small clinics for future boosters.
- c. Have hired a new Chief Nurse in Campus Health, Natalie Booth. She will run point on vaccinations, fit testing, COVID testing, etc.
- d. Don't envision any changes in COVID protocols before the spring semester besides masking policy and likely requiring everyone to test upon return from Thanksgiving break.
- e. SU is currently conducting surveillance testing unvaccinated people on campus through twice-weekly testing, as they are more vulnerable. Results seen from unvaccinated give us a good indicator of infection levels, so random testing on vaccinated is not deemed necessary. Testing is available for vaccinated individuals both asymptomatic or symptomatic currently. Testing kits for asymptomatic include 2 tests to follow the 36-hour testing protocol that is recommended. We also have PCR testing still available for backup to the rapid testing.
  - i. Testing after Thanksgiving cannot be through take-home tests due to issues with being able to track results and the desire to make sure that tests are being administered correctly.
- f. Shared governance will be involved in the Presidential Search. Will be an opportunity to submit names for both the search committee and presidential candidates. Open session with the Chancellor regarding the search will be November 11<sup>th</sup> to coincide with the Board of Regents meeting on campus that week.
- g. Will be having a Hot Dog Happy Hour on October 25<sup>TH</sup>. Everyone is encouraged to share the invitation with other employees; trying to find new ways for individuals to engage with each other since COVID has made this more difficult. Thanks to Admin/Finance and Catering for supporting the event.
- h. Cultural programs & events are going to be overseen by President's Office and Student Affairs while Joan Williams transitions away from a student-facing role. Any questions regarding Diversity & Inclusion can be emailed to Eli. Will be meeting with various committees in the near future.

II. Reports – Dr. Janet Wormack

- i. AVP of HR candidates coming to campus in the upcoming week. Dr. Wormack asked everyone to please attend and ask questions regarding supporting shared governance, as the HR AVP holds an important role for staff. The new AVP will be implementing Workday as well as the climate study and the resulting actions. Would like to have them on board by January 2022 at the latest.
  1. Wendy Ringling is currently taking the lead in designing business processes in Workday, with an aim to launch in July 2022. Will need to have subject matter specialists when Workday is launched to help develop specific portions.

2. HR is currently searching for a Total Rewards Specialist to handle matters of compensation, classification & employee recognition. Also hiring an Organizational Development Specialist for onboarding new hires, essential training (to include basic job processes), and developing new job descriptions and career paths for employees.
- ii. Administration looking into segueing from Zoom to Microsoft Teams due to the increased functionality and the integration capabilities. Ken Kundell will be talking to executive staff this week to discuss the transition in platforms.
  1. Office 365 puts everyone involved on the same platform, so students would have direct access to faculty & staff in communication channels. This change from the current, more sectioned-off student access has caused some faculty concerns.
- iii. The budget is looking very tight. Planned for a 6% decline in enrollment; however, we are currently at an 8.9% decline. An area of concern is that students we normally would have waited to accept in the spring have been accepted in the fall, which could mean a larger decline in the spring than usual. Not making changes to the plan yet; will make decisions based upon spring enrollment in December.
  1. Units should start determining their priorities and how to make their operations more efficient because that will need to be addressed by everyone soon.
  2. Possible minimum wage increases by the Governor could impact the budget. Have already budgeted for the planned increase in January, but if Governor makes additional increases, it will be problematic, especially in departments that rely heavily on student employment. This will also affect current compression issues as well.
- iv. The rollout of SU's new marketing campaign is an opportunity for shared governance to encourage employee engagement. Can reach out to Sue Eagle & Jason Rhodes with any ideas.

### III. Old Business

#### a. Standing Committees - Updates

- i. Human Resources - Candace Henry can no longer fill this role; Jessica Scott will be the new chair.
- ii. Communications/Snack and Chat – Jennifer
  1. Last Snack & Chat – all were very impressed and got a lot of good information from it. Will post slides from the meeting on the website on the Snack & Chat tab for those that were not able to attend.
  2. Next Snack & Chat with HR (Benefits) already has 35 RSVP'd; will be recorded for those that cannot attend.
- iii. Consortium Committees
  1. Cultural Diversity & Inclusion Consortium Committee – Jennifer Ellis will volunteer since the Inclusive Excellence Committee will most likely not proceed.

### IV. New Business

#### a. President Wight's retirement announcement

- i. SU Town Hall on November 11, 2021
  1. Will try to have a meeting before Town Hall to develop questions for the Chancellor. Priority to show Staff Senate as a cohesive unit with specific concerns separate from other shared governance groups but still as important.
- ii. Staff Senate's role in Search for SU's 10<sup>th</sup> President
  1. Had advocated in the previous search to include a Staff Senate representative on the search committee, but that did not happen.
  2. Will draft a letter to request representation in the search, as well as putting forward candidates for the committee.

#### b. Announcement regarding Chief Diversity Officer

- i. Joan Williams will be moving away from a student-facing role, be working more with HR. Duties will be distributed among President's Office & Student Affairs at present.
  - c. SPBC Strategic Plan Updates – Governance Groups
    - i. Summary of Suggestions | Questions or Comments
      - 1. Updates were emailed to all Senators; any comments can be emailed.
  - d. Staff Senate Suggestion Box
    - i. Question regarding accessing the Staff Lounge: lounge was previously locked due to COVID, but is now open for all employees to use.
  - e. New Committee Memberships:
    - i. Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan Committee – Due to the change in D&I staffing, this committee will most likely not proceed.
    - ii. Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Consortium Committee – Jennifer Ellis will be the new representative.
  - f. PAT, SPBC, and President's Cabinet Updates
    - i. Already covered in retirement news and announcement regarding Chief Diversity Officer.
  - g. Ideas for Recommendations for...
    - i. Retired Staff – Emeritus Standing (Dane Foust request)
      - 1. Question as to whether or not there would be any benefits beyond the current retired position benefits. Recommend that this be something that the new Total Rewards Specialist within HR focus on once they are hired.
  - h. CUSS Update – Paul Gasior
    - i. Meeting was hosted by UMB.
    - ii. President of UMBC, Dr. Freeman Hrabowski, retiring at the end of the academic year.
    - iii. Benefits open enrollment is set to start on October 18<sup>th</sup>, as well as National Health Education Week.
    - iv. CUSS committee structures have changed; reps met with new groups for the first time.
    - v. Next meeting is October 19<sup>th</sup>, hosted by Frostburg State.
  - i. Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Consortium Committee – Joe Benyish
    - i. Have had one meeting; no actionable items as of yet.
    - ii. New branding rolls out on Monday; would like everyone to wear the new branding tees next Friday for Homecoming.

V. Approval of the September Meeting Minutes

- a. Motion to approve: Lisa Gray
- b. Motion to second: Jessica Scott

VI. Additional Items

- a. "Other duties as assigned" is being used as a catch-all in staff contracts, resulting in many being assigned excessive additional duties without corresponding compensation. Minimum wage increasing likely will result in a significantly decreased wage gap between staff and the students & contingent employees in their departments. This will make hiring and retention extremely difficult, as we cannot maintain competitive in the developing job market. Losing institutional knowledge and overloading remaining employees under current policies is a serious concern going forward.
- b. Need to develop a strategy for requesting holistic budget review within SU, as well as ways for staff as a whole to communicate their concerns to Staff Senate so that we can effectively represent their interests and determine areas that we can better represent staff voices and concerns.

VII. Adjournment

- a. Next Meeting – November 11, AC 401 GAC Board Room with Zoom (or Teams) option.

Submitted by: Isabella Chow