**Provost’s Report to the UFC for the September 23rd Meeting**

September 12, 2022

Submitted by Tim O’Donnell

Over the last few weeks I have heard about and witnessed a renewed sense of engagement and energy from our students. There is palpable enthusiasm about being on campus, engaging with each other, and participating in the restorative power of a vibrant community. It is a credit to you and all of our employees that we have reached his point. I am deeply grateful for your continued commitment to Mary Washington. Going forward, I am going to aim to provide UFC with written reports to conserve time in meetings. Here are the updates and news items for this month. Please reach out or stop by if you have questions.

**Faculty Early Retirement Incentive Program (FERIP)**: Multi-agency state level review has been completed and UMW is now approved to offer this program for those who meet the eligibility requirements and with to retire in May 2023. Further details about the application and review process, as well as resources for those considering this option, will soon be in your inbox from the Office of Human Resources.

**Equity Study**: Work continues on the faculty salary equity study with the firm we contracted with to complete this work. Efforts over the last few weeks have involved additional data collection, reporting, and significant cleanup involving multiple UMW offices, including IT, HR, OIAE, and the Provost’s Office. I am grateful for the efforts of our team, including Ben Kjar, Martha Link, Debra Schleef, and Beth Williams. The firm expects to have its preliminary work done later this fall.

**SACSCOC update**: UMW’s Compliance Certification Report has been delivered to the off-site review committee that will be spending the next several weeks reviewing our compliance with nearly 100 standards. We expect to hear the results of this first review and then we will have a very busy couple of months preparing for the next round of reporting. I am grateful to Nicole Crowder and the many hands that contributed to this effort. Our on-campus visit is scheduled for the last week of March and we expect that the visiting team will elect to speak with some of you, particularly if you chair a committee (e.g. Academic Affairs, General Education, Curriculum) or are a member of the UFC executive team. We will know their meeting schedule 1-2 weeks before the arrive on campus. Nicole, along with Susan Worrell, will be planning the details of the visit.

**Quality Enhancement Plan**: Progress on the development of our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) continues through the leadership of Jennifer Walker and Kimberly Young. It is anticipated that the QEP development committee will be bringing forward a set of student learning outcomes for UFC approval at the October meeting. This will offer the committee an opportunity to share the essential learning outcomes with our SACSCOC Vice President at a preliminary visit in late-November. The final QEP will be submitted in January in advance of our on-site visit.

**Public representation of our academic programs**: SCHEV has recently updated its guidance regarding the representation of approved degree programs and certificates to reflect the important distinctions. We have been reminded that according to the Code of Virginia, SCHEV-approved degree programs and certificates are the only approved programs. Therefore, public facing materials discussing programs should not elevate “sub areas” (concentrations, emphases, focuses, options, specializations, tracks or majors) to the status of standalone degree programs. The degree that graduates receive from UMW should be clear and is limited to only those which appear in our [degree inventory](https://research.schev.edu/degreeinventory/inventory_1.asp). This means, for example, that when we discuss Cybersecurity, we need to make clear that this major is a sub area under the Computer Science degree.

**New degree programs or certificates**: Colleges or departments planning to develop a new degree program or certificate should consult with me (our SCHEV liaison) about the process, timeline, and key dates (which is different for degrees and certificates) prior to initiating significant effort. All new programs should be first listed in our “six-year plan” which means that we need to plan multiple years in advance.

**Upcoming admissions dates**: Our first Open House of the year will be Saturday, September 24th and we are looking forward to hosting many prospective students and their families. My thanks in advance for your commitments to be present in support of our recruitment efforts. These campus visits make a difference.

**Student achievement information**: Our Student Achievement and Success [webpage](https://provost.umw.edu/student-achievement-and-success/), which resides at the Provost’s Office website, contains useful information about our goals for students and the way we measure their success. It has recently been updated to include some preliminary completion rate data gathered from the National Student Clearinghouse. Completion rates – the percent of students who begin at UMW but complete elsewhere within six-years – is increasingly being used to judge institutional success in supporting student degree attainment.