**UFC Meeting**

**Wednesday, September 20, 2023**

**Online (via Zoom)**

**UFC Members Present**:

**Kate Haffey (CAS, Arts & Humanities)**

**Mara Scanlon (CAS, Arts & Humanities**

**Michael Benson (CAS, Arts & Humanities)**

**Ian Finlayson (CAS, Health, PE, & STEM),**

**Davis Oldham (CAS, Health, PE, & STEM),**

Alex Hinsey (CAS, Health, PE, & STEM)

**Mindy Urchull (CAS, Social Sciences, UFC Parliamentarian)**

**Melina Patterson (CAS, Social Sciences, Secretary),**

**Holly Schiffrin (CAS, Social Sciences),**

**Rachel Graefe-Anderson (COB, UFC Chair),**

Alex Dunn (COB),

**Kim Kinsley (COB),**

**Melissa Wells (COE),**

**Christy Irish (COE),**

Jennifer Walker (COE),

Chris Ryder (CAS, At-Large),

**Patricia Orozco (CAS, At-Large)**

**Jonathan Levin (CAS, At-Large)**

**Proxies:** Christy Irish for Jennifer Walker

**Guests**: There were approximately 30 people logged into the meeting including **Troy**

**Paino** (UMW President, UFC Ex-Officio), **Tim O’Donnell (UMW Provost**, UFC Ex-Officio), **Keith Mellinger (Dean CAS)**, (Dean COB), Pete Kelly (Dean COE), and **Jeff McClurken (Chief-of-Staff)**

A recording of this meeting can be viewed at <https://ufc.umw.edu/recordings/> (UMW

login-required).

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM.
2. The minutes from the last UFC meeting on August 22, 2023 were approved with 16 yes votes and 1 abstention.
3. Reports:
   1. President Troy Paino – Troy suggests that some people have thought that his opening presentation this year was overly optimistic. We do have a lot to celebrate compared to Fall 2020: we are now approaching a sustainable level in student population, retention is respectable, we are okay fiscally given the difficult state of affairs; we did pretty well in Richmond (more raise money, additional 2.1 million in operating budget), honors program continues to help us attract a strong bunch of students. BUT there are some troubling trends. We are now in 5 year trend of declining applications; our admit rate continues to go up, which makes us look less selective; increased costs in discounting tuition; families increasingly question value of higher ed; specific programs in humanities and social science have declining enrollment and are at risk of dipping below SCHEV thresholds; our brand is perhaps associated with a political identity which might pose challenges in a polarized environment. We have limited liquidity and we are facing difficult trends. We operate in an expensive region and have a hard time recruiting and keeping faculty. These are local, state and national difficulties and Troy wants UFC to know that he wants us to work together to address these issues so that we don’t solve them like West Virginia. Admin needs to work with faculty to come up with solutions that revitalize programs and reverse trends of declining enrollments in academic programs.

How do we work together to develop creative solutions? Paino says it is an invitation to come up with solutions before they are imposed on us from SCHEV, etc. Troy wants faculty to understand that he supports faculty and doesn’t have a plan that he will impose at the end of this process.

Op 6 has made it clear that if we have a plan we can likely weather these challenges. Administrative officials have laser focus on enrollment at institutions and programs and questioning us about “what we are going to do” about enrollment trends at the institution and in programs. What is our plan about specific programs? What is our plan to appeal to students? At SCHEV meeting, some discussion about smaller schools (CNU, Longwood, UMW) are facing headwinds while larger schools continue to grow. What should SCHEV do? Some people think there should be a cap in enrollment at larger schools, others think that smaller schools should lose funds. Paino suggests that investment in UMW will lead to success.

* 1. Provost Tim O’Donnell

Encourages people to read BOV report.

Acknowledges that people feel fear about the restructuring plan.

Tim offered a timeline of how this discussion/plan to reorganize has developed over the last four months. Dates were included, but I didn’t write them all down. The gist is that he met with chairs in the spring, again in the summer. Clarified that the UFC isn’t really going to have a role until the report from the committee is presented. The committee report will include recommendations and then faculty (the UFC) will have a role.

Addressed how working group was put together. Had suggestions of membership before he reached out to UFOC. Says the group is very qualified so even if we have quibbles with Tim and his process of choosing who was on it, we should believe in the working group.

Tim feels like the charge of the committee is narrow and therefore it is not impinging on faculty governance. Says that the faculty handbook doesn’t imagine a committee that will do the work that this group is doing. He doesn’t think that elections would have added value in part because he didn’t want people who wanted to serve as representatives of their departments or disciplines.

Repeats Troy’s assertion that there is not a plan that administrators have already settled on.

Committee has a charge to have lots of opportunities for participation, weekly communications (so any recommendations should not be surprises to anyone who is paying attention), and make sure that all faculty (especially junior faculty) have opportunities to be heard.

When report is delivered (Dec 1), some recommendations might be things that Provost can act on, others will be for the faculty to consider, others for the President and Board of Visitors. The report is just recommendations and then we’ll figure out what to do.

Jonathan Levin asks for clarification – is the focus of this about large organizational structures or new degree programs. The answer suggests that the committee might have recommendations, but they don’t have the authority to establish new programs. The goal is to recommend a way to organize ourselves so that we can then think about new programs (??? Is this what he said?) The focus of the working group is about organizational structures, not how to develop new programs (your secretary is floundering here).

Mara Scanlon was funny and then noted that the roll out accounts for faculty and staff’s feelings (freaked out). Argues that chairs have become de facto leadership but there are no official minutes from chairs meetings with CAS Dean, which causes real problems in terms of communication. This makes people very uncertain about the goal of this group is because different people hear different things from their chairs. Also asks “are we really going to move people around.” What are “structures” in this discussion/process?

Tim’s answer is that there is inequality in the structure of three colleges; some humanities might want to “co-locate” with each other. Process is about finding ways to improve our work, work lives, and the attractiveness of the institution.

Mara: How does this relate to the problems laid out by Troy?

Tim: COB and COE raise more money because they have identities. How can we create stronger identities?

Me: Student have strong identities with their majors, but we are being told not to be overly committed to our majors. And I agree with what Mara said about not seeing how the committee’s charge connects to the problems identified by Troy.

Tim: Then the recommendations won’t be ones we want to pursue; but maybe we will find a way to organize ourselves in ways that are more interdisciplinary.

Ian asked for clarification about how the organization will lead to solutions identified by Troy…

Tim thinks that reworking the organization will help us communicate effectively with each other and with prospective students. Tim argues that we won’t innovate by staying within our academic homes and trying to innovate in the classes that we currently teach. But it is not a panacea.

Rachel Graefe-Anderson: The working group is about developing a viable plan to figure out how we are going to make changes going forward but also that we can have a plan to present pretty soon.

Tim O’Donnell makes reference to something Mara said in the chat, which I think was about team teaching (which faculty have been asking about for 1000 years).

* 1. COE Dean Pete Kelly no report
  2. CAS Dean Keith Mellinger – written report
  3. COB Dean Ken Machande – written report
  4. SGA Representative (Jaylyn Long): No report.
  5. USC representative (Sarah Appleby): No report, but appreciates the discussion. Reminds us that reorganization will affect support staff in significant ways.
  6. UFC Chair (Rachel Graefe-Anderson): written report.
  7. UFC Vice Chair (Davis Oldman): No report.
  8. Faculty Senate of Virginia (Chris Ryder): October 28th is the date for the fall meeting of the Faculty Senate of Virginia. Would like a 3rd person to attend/participate.

1. Associate Provost Debra Schleef – This year there will be an administrative survey of the president’s office and all other administrative offices on campus; all faculty and staff will be able to complete a survey.

More important: Campus climate survey for students will happen this year. Survey will go out Oct 2nd and administered for 3 weeks. Faculty are asked to encourage students to complete it or to offer time to complete it.

1. University Committees: Minutes

Question about UFAC minutes about the equity study and the final report. Jessica Zeitz says that UFAC has not received the final report. Provost O’Donnell “steps in here” to say that there is a report with recommendations and HR is working through the recommendations. The last round of actions were taken with BOV last Friday. He would be happy to attend the next UFAC meeting to talk about the report. There is a discussion about what can be shared out and what can’t be because of the personal/personnel nature of the findings.

After another question, Jessica Zeitz reports on the process. UFAC committee members asked difficult questions about the process. Tim suggests that the firm did what they were asked to do, but that these studies are difficult and incomplete. Jessica Zeitz says that the minutes ask for a final report because we (UFAC) haven’t received the report, but it sounds like we (UMW Admin) have received the report.

Davis asks if there was something missing. Tim says, no their recommendations are complete. Next step is thinking about market (market refers to academic market) beyond equity. This means studying discipline-specific markets.

* 1. The minutes for the reporting committees are approved with 17 yes votes and 0 abstentions. Links to the committee minutes can be found on the agenda: UFC Draft Agenda Sept. 20 [link].

1. University Committees: Action Items
   1. The action items for the reporting committees are approved with 17 yes votes and 0 abstentions. Links to the action items can be found on the agenda: UFC Draft Agenda Sept. 20 [link].
2. Unfinished Business

UFC Chair Rachel Graefe-Anderson suggests that we take up the UFOC Reports in the October meeting.

1. New Business
2. Announcements

UFC Executive committee will be meeting with the BOV October 18th before the next UFC meeting. Please share anything that you want the BOV to know about us.

The next UFC meeting will be October 18th at 4:00 pm in person. Location TBD.

1. The meeting adjourned at 5:37.

Respectfully submitted by Melissa Wells