**MINUTES**

**Thursday, November 30, 2023**

**3:00-4:30 PM**

A meeting of the University Council was held on Thursday, November 30, 2023 at 3:00

p.m. in the VCU Cabell Library, conference room 303 and via Zoom. The following members and alternates were present:

**Officers:** President Michael Rao, Fotis Sotiropoulos, Meredith Weiss and Scott Street

**Administration:** Scott Breuninger, Jay Davenport, Jean Giddens, Aaron Hart, Grant Heston, Catherine Ingrassia, and Alison Miller

**Faculty:** Stephen Alcorn, Chrisa Arcan, Julie Arendt, Brian Brown, Sarah Jane Brubaker, Beth Bukoski, Amita Chin, Alexis Crawford, Katherine Dabney, Kostadin Damevski, Rob DiRenzo, Lindsay Evans, Hope Ginsberg, Kanako Iwanaga, Cassie DeSena Jacobs, Amie Knapp, Shillpa Naavaal, Bettina Peacemaker, Peter Pidcoe, VaCora Rainey, Roxanne Spindle, Maria Rivera, Valerie Robnolt, Michael Rosenberg, Christy Tyndall, Stacy Wahl, Larry Williams, Jeff Wilson, and Kim Zicafoose.

**Postdoctoral Scholar:** Eda Koseli

**Classified Staff**: Valarie Carter, Holly Dean, Melissa Burton, Hannah Steighner, and Katina Velentzas, Louise Putnam

**Students**: Lana Birdwell, Emerson Hernandez, Zachary Hodgen, Pratyush Narayen, Sincere Sade-Reading

**Ex-Officio and Guests**: Andrew Arroyo, Lisa Balance, Karen Helderman, Charles Klink, John Ryan, Mangala Subramaniam, Chineme Onukwughara, and Carletta Wilson.

# Minutes

President Rao indicated the minutes of November 2, 2023 did not need to be approved but any changes should be sent to UNIVCOUNCIL@VCU.EDU.

# President’s Report

President Rao thanked faculty and staff for the great milestones VCU has achieved. Specifically thanked Aaron Hart and Fotis Sotiropoulos for great work they and their teams have done to achieve largest freshman class and most application received. President Rao thanked Jay Davenport for setting the largest fundraising record and Dr. Srirama Rao for fundraising in research. First quarter results from the Health System shows great turnaround of about 89 million dollars. Marlon Levy was thanked for his great work.

APLU awarded VCU a national award for Innovation and Economic Prosperity-Talent.

The employment platform Handshake awarded VCU the Career Spark Award in two categories, Student engagement and Reporting, analytics, and First Destination Survey. He specifically thanked Samara Reynolds.

Enrollment numbers are up for freshman, transfer and masters. 121% increase in high GPA applications for guaranteed university admissions program. Dr. Rao thanked all faculty for this.

Many awards have been given and Dr. Jill Blondin received the prestigious Senior International Officer of the Year award from the Institute for International Education.

December 9, 2023 is commencement. Speaker is NSF Director Dr. Sethuraman Panchanathan.

Officially received NSF ranking 11/30/23 as #47.

VCU has more undergraduate students engaged in research than most institutions.

# Committee Reports

* **Academic Affairs Committee-**

**For Action: New Degree Program Proposals:**

* **Proposal to establish a new BA degree program in Computer Science-**Dr. Caroline Budwell, Associate professor and Undergraduate Director, Department of Computer Science, College of engineering is present to speak ifnecessary**.** With a 97.5% “yes” votes, 2.5% “no” votes and 2.5% abstentions, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
* **University Policy Committee-**

**For Action: New Policy Proposals:**

* **Use of Controlled substances –** Dr. Tina Cunningham, Associate Vice President, Research Administration, Office of Research; You Lee Kim. With a 79.5% “yes” votes, 0% “no” votes and 20.5% abstentions, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
* **Research Space Allocation-** Dr. John Ryan, Professor, Biology, AVP for Research Development; Tom Briggs, Associate Vice President for Safety & Risk Management. With a 82.5% “yes” votes, 0% “no” votes and 17.5% abstentions, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
* **Social Media Acceptable Use –** Donna Crawford, Manager, Social Media government Audit Quality, Audit and Compliance Services; Michael Porter, Associate Vice President for University Public Affairs, Vice President Marketing and Communications, Jennifer Carmean, Assistant Vice President for Content, University of Public Affairs; Saher Randhawa, Senior social media and Communications Manager, University Public Affairs.

Policy was open for comment and Donna Crawford responded to 30 comments from faculty. Edits were made to the policy where needed. Policy focuses on VCU administrators and representatives who are authorized to post, comment or message on behalf of VCU. Michael Rosenberg expressed concern over the definition of “social media”. Many things can fall into this and some are not appropriate such as Listserv’s. General discussion followed. Any further questions of Listservs can be addressed in FAQ’s. With a 60.5% ”yes” votes, 14% ”no” votes and 25.5% abstentions, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.

* **Faculty Affairs Committee-**

Voted on 2 items. 1 – add some wording to the VCU University Council bylaws regarding things faculty affairs would like more input on and will bring to the next meeting.

* **Student Affairs Committee-**

Met November 16, 2023. Discussed creating stronger transparency and communication between students, faculty and administration and doing more research. Bring back recommendation in the spring.

* **Staff Affairs Committee-**

First meeting scheduled for December 12, 2023, will elect a chair and have a report in February.

1. **Constituent Reports**

* Student Government Association-Pratyush Narayan-provided a report and a general discussion followed.
* Faculty Senate Report-Maria Rivera provided a report and a general discussion followed
* Staff Senate Report-Melissa Burton provided a report and a general discussion followed

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 PM