

DRAFT

MINUTES

Thursday, December 16, 2022

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

A meeting of the University Council was held on Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 3 p.m. in the VCU Cabell Library, conference room 303 and via Zoom.

The following members and alternates were present:

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

Administration: Scott Breuninger, Matt Conrad, Jay Davenport, Karol Kain Gray, Aaron Hart, Grant Heston, Catherine Ingrassia, and Gary Tepper

Faculty: Stephen Alcorn, Brian Brown, Lisa Brown, Sarah Jane Brubaker, Paul Bukaveckas, Beth Bukosi, Everett Carpenter, Karen Chartier, Amita Chin, Kim Compton, Carrie Connelly, Carla-Mae Crookendale, Katherine Dabney, Kostadin Damevski, Marjolein Dewit, Rodney Dyer, Sarah Golding, Kanako Iwanaga, Susan Kornstein, Saltanat Liebert, Lathika Moharaj, Shillpa Naavaal, Bettina Peacemaker, ViCora Rainey, Maria Rivera, Valerie Robholt, Oliver Speck, Christy Tyndall, Yi Wen Wei, Jeff Wilson, Marjolein de Wit, Erin Zacholski, and Kim Zicafoose.

Postdoctoral Scholar: Apurva Tadimari Prabhakar

Classified staff: Delores Armstrong, Peyton Burgess, Teresa Dulaney-Dewald, Brogan King, Amie Knapp, Chris Straus, Jennifer Tennison, Katina Velentzas, and Carletta Wilson

Students: Hajera Ahmadi, Mary Barazanchi, Rachel Delgado, Christine Lee, Pratyush Narayan, Chineme Onukwughara, Anne Skelton, and Jacob Sztraicher

Ex-Officio and Guests: Chelyen Davis, Alison Jones, Carly Katz, Pam Lepley, Alison Miller, Aashir Nasim, Reuban Rodriguez, Mangala Subramaniam, and Deborah Noble-Tripplett.

1. President's Report

President Rao welcomed Council members to the fourth UC meeting of the academic year. Dr. Rao invited Council members to the Dec. 10 commencement, to honor those getting their degrees.

He announced that Kelechi Ogbonna has been named dean of School of Pharmacy, noting that he has served as interim dean since June.

Dr. Rao noted that he was recently at the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities annual conference in Denver. He was struck by seeing VCU's presence everywhere – from brand placements like door hangers ensuring that VCU was hard to miss, to two high profile recognitions.

Other announcements included:

VCU was a finalist for the degree completion award

- Recognizes public universities that are increasing degree completion rates while improving educational access, quality and equity.
- Speaks to our mission to increase access and deeply engage our communities.

VCU also earned APLU's [Innovation and Economic Prosperity University designation](#).

- The IEP designation is awarded to universities that are committed to significant and sustainable economic engagement.

These national recognitions further our mission of access and student success

- US News global university ranking in the top 22 percent of research universities in the world

While at APLU, staff and faculty mental health discussion

- American Psychological Association survey said more than a quarter of U.S. adults say they're so stressed they can't function.
- The APA says mental health providers are in increasingly high demand, as more people seek treatment for anxiety and depression than before the pandemic.
- He is very concerned by those statistics – and by the anecdotes he hears across campus and the health system that tell him our folks are stressed and anxious, too, especially at the end of the semester.
- Treat each other with empathy, civility, professionalism and respect.

As we finish our semester, state government is ramping up toward the General Assembly session that starts in January. In a couple of weeks, Governor Youngkin will announce his budget proposals.

Scott Street announced that the bylaws review of Article 8: Committees has been extended. There were not many responses received thus far, but those that were received, were well stated and provide a platform for next steps. Article 8 includes detailed information on membership and a brief description of the role of each of the four standing committees. Please review Article 8 and, based on your experience in serving on one or more of these committees or on the University Council in general, tell us what works, what does not work and your opinions and recommendations for University Council standing committees. The link and form were previously sent to Council members via email on November 3, 2022.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the November 3, 2022 were approved.

3. Cabinet Report

Matt Conrad, Vice President, Government and External Affairs, provided a government relations update. A general discussion followed and Mr. Conrad responded to questions.

Karol Kain Gray offered to share her recent presentation to the Op6 group at a future meeting.

4. Constituent Reports

Rachel Delgado provided an SGA Report. A general discussion followed.

Valerie Robnholt provided a Faculty Senate Report. She discussed faculty senate highlights and a general discussion followed.

Brogan King provided a Staff Senate Report. She discussed staff senate highlights and a general discussion followed.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.