**D R A F T**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, February 4, 2021**

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

A meeting of the University Council was held on Thursday, February 4 at 3 p.m. via Zoom.

The following members and alternates were present:

**Officers:** President Michael Rao, Meredith Weiss and Holly Alford

**Administration:** Peter Buckley, Matt Conrad, Andrew Daire, Jean Giddens, Karol Kain Gray, Arthur Kellerman, Charles Klink, Tomikia LeGrande, Pam Lepley, and Constance Relihan

**Faculty:** Deidra Arrington,Sompop Bencharit,Michael Broda,Brian Brown,Paul Bukaveckas,Jason Callahan, Everett Carpenter,Ross Collin, Mariah Crilley, Rodney Dyer, James Ferri, Josh Galligan, Denia Lee Hing, Catherine Ingrassia, Aniket Jadhav, Nancy Jallo, Melissa Jamerson, Miriam Kuttikat, Hermine Maes, Jacqueline Smith-Mason, Tom McNulty, Edward Millner, Jonathan Moore, Lauren Pamulapati, Mary Pettiette, Christine Remmers, Valerie Robnolt, Scott Street, Dong Sun, Katharine Tibbetts, Christy Tyndall,StaceyWahl,Matt Wallin, David Webber, Christine Wynd, Wenli Yan, and Shijun Zhang

**Postdoctoral Scholar:** Sean Koebley

**Classified staff**: Delores Armstrong, Christopher Garland, Michelle Hawkins, Pamela Mason, Brian McNeill, Karen Mullins, Saher Randhawa

**Students**: Sydney Biondi, Dan Buth, Alex Chong, Jordan James, Udhanth Mallasani, Fatima Malik, Taylor Maloney, and William Markle

**Ex-Officio and Guests**: R. McKenna Brown, Gypsy Denzine, Rodney Dyer, Karen Helderman, Alex Henson, Melissa Jamerson, Alison Jones, Jacqueline Kniska, Teresa Knott, Karen McIntyre, Shannon Mitchell, Teresa Nadder, Aashir Nasim, Carla Nye, Carrie Petersen, Jennifer Pryor, Joan Rhodes, Susan Robb, Reuban Rodriguez, Veronica Shuford, Deborah Noble-Triplett, Stacy Wahl, and Samantha Wheeler

1. **President’s Report**

President Rao welcomed everyone provided a brief report that included the following highlights:

* He welcomed the new VP for University Relations, Grant Heston, who came to VCU from Florida.
* A provost search update was provided. The search committee is hard at work. Forums with faculty/staff and others have been held to collect input for the search committee. We are aiming for a new provost to be named in April. Dr. Rao thanked Dr. Hackett for all her contributions to VCU.
* The State of the University is scheduled for 11 a.m. on Thursday, February 11. It will be streamed and a link is forthcoming. We will use this time to celebrate sterling and heroic efforts of health care team members, faculty, staff and students during the pandemic. We will also look at what we’ve learned and gained and where it’s taking us in the future as we emerge stronger together.
* He noted that we are starting the new year with great accomplishments. Online grad programs are ranked among the best in the nation by US News & World Report. This includes: 1) School of Education: #10-third consecutive year of top 10 ranking; 2) School of Nursing: #32-up 13 spots; 3) School of Business-#51; and College of Engineering- #74 and #97
* We celebrated the opening of the Engineering Research Building. It includes lab space, makerspaces and workforce development resources, and is a place dedicated to collaboration and innovation across disciplines. We are proud of our faculty, staff and students who have infinite talent and drive to advance the human condition.
* Black History month at VCU provides an opportunity to continue important conversations, listening and learning from each other. VCU and VCU Health have a robost schedule of events, and many are virtual. The VCU Office of Multicultural Students Affairs also has an extensive calendar of events.
* A COVID-19 update was provided. VCU continues to follow best practices. Most of our courses are online only. We are following positivity rates and will reevaluate our RTC plan and hope to return to in-person and hybrid courses on or before March 8. VCU will continue to monitor decisions made by the commonwealth and will keep the VCU community updated.
* Dr. Rao thanked Meredith Weiss for leading VCU’s COVID response team, which is made up of practical leadership that is mindful of faculty, staff and student needs.
* With the General Assembly in session, we continue to remind them of VCU and VCU Health’s role in the commonwealth. This includes: 1) differentiation in state general fund support: >$10 million in the second year for E&G; 2) retain increase to student financial aid in Governor’s budget; 3) support acquisition of ABC parcel for Athletics Village (“in-state rate”); 4) Massey Center funding (>/=$17.5 million/year) in Governor’s budget; 5) $5 million for RISE at Wilder School to advance equity research and work; 6) working with UVA to ensure that the eligibility guidelines for poorest patients are appropriately updated for inflation and reflect today’s financial realities; 7) working the with the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association to ensure that Virginia’s trauma centers, including VCU’s Level Trauma Center, are adequately funded moving forward.
* Preliminary enrollment information includes: 27,500 enrolled for the spring semester; we have enrolled 94% of our fall enrollment—this is consistent with previous years; and increase in new transfers offset the nearly 100 undergraduates that did not enroll this spring. We are hoping to maintain these numbers. February 8 is the last day to drop classes, with the next day, February 9 as Census 1. There is a continued retention gap for the following: first generation students; Pell recipients; and men, men of color and underrepresented minorities.
* President Rao thanked everyone for their continued commitment to our students and patients.

1. **Minutes**

Minutes from the University Council meeting on December 3, 2020 were accepted.

1. **Committee Reports**

The Academic Affairs and University Policy Committee presented the following programmatic changes, and new and revised policy proposals:

1. Proposal to create a Baccalaureate Certificate in Outdoor Leadership—Dr. Rodney Dyer, Director, Center for Environmental Studies, VCU Life Sciences, discussed the proposal and responded to questions. A general discussion followed. With 98% “yes” votes and 1 abstention, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
2. Proposal to create a Graduate Certificate in Aging Studies**—**Ms. Jennifer Pryor, Program Director, Co-Director for Assisted Living Administration, discussed the proposal and responded to questions. A general discussion followed. With 100% “yes” votes, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
3. Proposal to reduce the credit hours for the Undergraduate Certificate in Spanish-English Translation and Interpretation*—*Dr. R. McKenna Brown, Senior International Officer, School of World Studies, College of Humanities and Sciences, discussed the proposal and responded to questions. A general discussion followed. With 98% ”yes” votes and 1 abstention, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
4. Proposal to reduce the credit hours for the Master of Science (M.S.) in Mass Communications*—*Dr. Karen McIntyre, Director of Graduate Studies, Richard T. Robertson School of Media and Culture, College of Humanities and Sciences, discussed the proposal and a general discussion followed. With 94% “yes” votes and 6 abstentions, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
5. Proposal to change the name of the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Clinical Laboratory Sciences to the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Medical Laboratory Sciences*—*Dr. Teresa Nadder, Chair, Medical Laboratory Sciences, College of Health Professions, discussed the proposal and responded to questions. With 95% “yes” votes and 3 abstentions, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
6. Proposal to change the name of the Master of Science (M.S.) in Clinical Laboratory Sciences to the Master of Science (M.S.) in Medical Laboratory Sciences*—*Dr. Teresa Nadder discussed the proposal and a general discussion followed. With 98% “yes” votes and 2% abstentions, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
7. Proposal to discontinue the Undergraduate Certificate in International Management Studies*—*Dr. Shannon Mitchell, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, School of Business, discussed the proposal and responded to questions. With 95% “yes” votes, 2% “no” votes and 3 absentions, a motion was made and seconded to accept and move the proposal forward for review and approval by the VCU Board of Visitors.
8. Proposal to discontinue the Post-baccalaureate Graduate Certificate in Teaching*—*Dr. Joan Rhodes, Department Chair and Associate Professor, Teaching and Learning, discussed the proposal and responded to questions. With 95% “yes” votes and 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.
9. **Constituent Reports**

Alex Chong provided a Student Government Association Report. He discussed highlights (i.e. constitutional changes and budget discussions) and a general discussion followed.

Nancy Jallo provided a Faculty Senate Report. She discussed faculty senate highlights and a general discussion followed.

Saher Randhawa provided a Staff Senate Report. She discussed staff senate highlights (i.e. the upcoming February Full Senate meeting; the March Career Development and Employee Appreciation events; the May Staff Senate Awards, and the June staff senate elections), and a general discussion followed.

1. **For Information**

Dr. Art Kellerman, Senior Vice President of Health Sciences and CEO of the VCU Health System, provided an update, focusing on the COVID vaccine, community outreach and preparing the VCU Campus for vaccinations. A general discussion followed and Dr. Kellerman responded to questions.

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.