**Faculty Senate of Virginia**

**Saturday October 28, 2017 - Virginia Commonwealth University**

Present: Anand Rao (UMW), Suzanne Sumner (UMW), Chris Allgyer (MECC), Carmen Rodriguez (VCU), Mark Piper (JMU), Leah Shilling (Longwood), Peter Brunjes (UVa), Richard Meagher (RMC), Bethany Letiecq (GMU), Jessica Rosenberg (GMU), Shannon Melideo (Marymount), Dirk Burruss (Reynolds CC), Jill Caporale (NVCC)

Faculty Senate of Virginia: Brief Introduction

* Holds three meetings throughout the year: a fall and spring meeting as well as a meeting during Virginia Higher Education Advocacy Day (VHEAD).
* Legislative efforts to advocate for issues of concern to faculty and higher education.

Treasurer’s Report: report was presented by Suzanne Sumner. Overall FSVA has a strong budget. Bills are sent to institutions with Faculty Senates.

* Community Colleges pay $100 in dues
* Universities pay $300 in dues

Issues of concern to some institutions

* DACA – many institutions have passed resolutions regarding DACA.
  + General Assembly has not advanced legislation
* Issues related to free speech
* Incident in Charlottesville – JMU and UMW passed resolutions in support of the Charlottesville community and UVa
  + Representative from UVa mentioned that UVa has had a difficult time following the incident. Students are afraid. Impact on ability to hire faculty and staff. Many activities on campus to come up with ways to deal with hate groups coming to campus.
* Concerns about open carry laws in Virginia
  + Representative from UVA: guns are not allowed on university facilities. UVA grounds have been designated as “facilities”
* Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
  + George Mason University - GMU students have sued the school and a private foundation (GMU foundation) seeking records related to donations received from the billionaire Koch brothers.

Special Guest Speaker: Matt Conrad - Executive director of Government and Board Relations at VCU

* Matt provided brief overview of the last few legislative sessions as well as issues to consider for the 2018 session:
  + 2016 session – investment in financial aid; historical capital construction projects; but on about June 30, 2016, general fund revenues took a nose-dive
  + 2017 Session - Modest reductions; 2-3% salary increases
  + 2018 Session - Focus on Budget
    - 60 day session (on even years; long session)
    - Outgoing governor will introduce budget that successor will have to work under.
    - Members of the General Assembly will consider the new budget
* Matt Conrad does not expect a major shift in the house of delegates
* Speaker Bill Howell is stepping down and Kirkland Cox will be the new speaker
* Office of Attorney General is very important for Higher Education
* Virginia has issues forecasting revenues.
* Matt shared information from JLARK report: Summary of the JLARC Higher Education Reports and Status of the Recommendations (July 26, 2017) - The report states that Virginia faculty salaries are below state and national benchmarks

<http://sfc.virginia.gov/pdf/education/2017/2017%20Interim/072617_No3_JLARC.pdf>

* Revisit Higher Ed restructuring autonomy; Some institutions have more levels of autonomy
  + Increase graduation rates in return for more autonomy

Guest: Rich Meagher from the AAUP of Virginia (stepping in for Brian Turner). Discussed issues that AAUP will focus on:

* Writing a bill that will enable tuition remission for faculty dependents

VHEAD planning

* Meet at Theater Row Building
* Schedule reception to give Harris award to Peter Blake
* Discussion about position papers; Prepare two position papers
  + One paper will focus on budget
    - increase faculty salaries
    - student financial aid
    - VA higher education is falling behind
  + Second paper can focus on other issues:
    - enabling legislation for tuition remission for faculty dependents
    - adjunct and contingent faculty salaries
    - Public comment at Board of Visitors – there was discussion as to whether or not this is something that FSVA should include in position paper
* Get more students to attend VHEAD
* FSVA will provide Travel Grants (up to $2,000) to cover travel expenses (rent van, parking) to VHEAD. Submit request to Anand. Funding decisions will be made by Anand and Suzanne.
* $600 will be set aside to pay for VHEAD reception (for award recipient) and splitting expenses with VCU Faculty Senate
* Should make effort to visit with legislators before VHEAD meeting. A Google doc can be made available so that faculty may list the name of representative visited and include comments regarding the visits.

FSVA Spring meeting: Two options

* George Mason University – The GMU Chapter of the AAUP will have a meeting on Saturday April 7th. FSVA may be able to meet on the same day and then have joint meeting with AAUP.
* James Madison University – Recently joined Campus Compact. Campus Compact is an organization comprised of a coalition of Colleges and Universities dedicated to community and civic engagement in higher education institutions. For more info: compact.org

Minutes respectfully submitted by Carmen Rodriguez