**MINUTES**

**Thursday, October 1, 2020**

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

A meeting of the University Council was held on Thursday, October 1, 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, Andrew Daire, Jay Davenport, Karol Gray, Charles Klink, Tomikia LeGrande, Pam Lepley, Susan Parish, Mary Pettiette and Constance Relihan

**Faculty:** Deidra Arrington,Sompop Bencharit**,** Alisa Brink, Michael Broda,Brian Brown,Jason Callahan,Everett Carpenter, Kelsey Chesire, Ross Collin, Mariah Crilley, Rodney Dyer, James Ferri, Joshua Galligan, Denia Lee Hing, Nancy Jallo, Melissa Jamerson, Miriam Kuttikat, Hermine Maes, Jacqueline Smith-Mason, Tom McNulty, Jonathan Moore, Nicole Omecene, Lauren Pamulapati, Christine Remmers, Valerie Robnolt, Scott Street, Dong Sun, Katharine Tibbetts, Christy Tyndall**,** Matt Wallin, David Webber, Christine Wynd, and Wenli Yan

**Postdoctoral Scholar:** Sean Koebley

**Staff**: Delores Armstrong, Brian Artis, Valarie Carter, Holly Dean, Christopher Garland, Michelle Hawkins, Pamela Mason, Brian McNeill, Karen Mullins, and Saher Randhawa

**Students**: Sydney Biondi, Dan Buth, Alvin Chang, Alex Chong, Jordan James, Fatima Malik, Udhanth Mallasani, Taylor Maloney, and Shabana Shaheen

**Ex-Officio and Guests**: Karen Belanger, Chris Burdett, Nicole Damico, Gypsy Denzine, Alex Henson, Catherine Ingrassia, Allison Jones, Jacqueline Kniska, Teresa Knott, Alison Miller, Susan Robb, Reuban Rodriguez, Veronica Shuford, and Deborah Noble-Triplett

1. **President’s Report**

President Rao welcomed everyone and thanked them for doing an amazing job as educators and mentors. He provided a brief report that included the following highlights:

He thanked Provost Hackett for her successful, groundbreaking six years with VCU as she retires at the end of the academic year, June 30, 2021. We are grateful for her work to diversify the Provost’s Office. She attracted world-class talent to every area of VCU and sharpened our focus on student success. We plan to welcome Gail’s successor to VCU by the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic year.

President Rao announced that we are close to opening a search for the Vice President for University Relations. Pam Lepley, the current VP, has joined the President’s Office as an advisor. A search for Pam’s replacement will start soon.

VCU is looking for an international expert in higher education communications and hope to have someone in place early spring.

An update on the VCU Safety and Well-being Advisory Committee was provided. The committee held their first meeting earlier this week and is being chaired by Sheryl Garland and Andrew Daire, who both have national expertise in social justice and health equity. The committee will work independently of VCU Police; transitioning from a public safety model that polices communities; and the focus will be on equitably and holistically fostering safety and well-being of the diverse communities that form VCU.

A COVID-19 update was provided. VCU is proud of our students for practicing physical distancing and other preventative measures. We understand this is not the collegiate experience they want or deserve and encourage them to continue to take care of yourself and others. A dashboard with metrics can be found on the One VCU: Responsible Together website. It has been updated to answer common questions. Testing is ongoing, to include conducting asymptomatic prevalence testing and entry testing.

December commencement will be remote. Regulations still prohibit large crowds. VCU will still honor our graduates in meaningful ways and is grateful for the work done by our events staff to make sure graduates are properly celebrate their achievement. Additional details will follow.

President Rao noted that he is pleased by the BOV vote on monuments and commemorative items at VCU.We are a 21st century public research university dedicated to everyone who comes here to learn, create, collaborate and heal, and our environments need to reflect that. Monuments and commemorative items dedicated to oppression contradict our values. Removal and renaming are a step in the right direction. We need to continue to work to be an even better place for all.

President Rao noted that November 3 is a holiday and encouraged everyone to vote. He is proud of the work done by VCU Votes to educate and encourage students and community members to be more civically engaged and vote and referred to their site for educational resources.

1. **Minutes**

Minutes from the University Council meeting on September 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 discontinue the Master of Science in Nurse Anesthesia---Dr. Nicole Damico, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Associate Professor, Department of Nurse Anesthesia, College of Health Professions, discussed the proposal and responded to questions. With 59 “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.
2. Revised Honor and Standards of Academic Conduct Policy (Board of Visitors)---Dr. Reuban Rodriguez, Associate Vice Provost and Dean of Students, Division of Student Affairs, discussed the proposal and shared a power point presentation. A general discussion followed and Dr Rodriguez, Chris Burdett and Karen Belanger responded to questions. With 50 “yes” votes, a motion was made and seconded to postpone the vote on this proposal to allow time for additional review by the Student Government Association.

Taylor Maloney provided an SGA Report. She discussed the inauguration of new officers and the recent review of the SGA constitution. She noted that an update will be provided at the next meeting. A general discussion followed.

Nancy Jallo provided a Faculty Senate Report. She noted that she is truly honored to represent faculty senate and thanked Kim Case for her assistance with all things teaching. She also noted that the faculty senate felt it was important to develop an anti-racism statement. After review and approval by various constituencies, the statement has been incorporated into the 2020-2021 faculty senate goals. The faculty senate will continue to focus on shared governance. A general discussion followed.

Saher Randhawa provided a Staff Senate Report. She reported that the academic year is off to a great start. All staff senate meetings have been held virtually and planning is underway for employee appreciation week in March 2021. A general discussion followed.

1. **For Information**

Tomikia LeGrande, Vice President for Strategy, Enrollment Management and Student Success, provided an update on current enrollment and discussed highlights. A general discussion followed and Dr. LeGrande responded to questions. Susan Parrish thanked Dr. LeGrande for all of her hard work and making this information easier to understand.

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.