**MINUTES**

**Thursday, September 3, 2020**

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

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

The following members and alternates were present:

**Officers:** President Michael Rao and Holly Alford

**Administration:** Peter Buckley, Cathleen Burke, Matthew Conrad, Jean Giddens, Charles Klink, Tomikia LeGrande, Pam Lepley, and Constance Relihan

**Faculty:** Deidra Arrington,Alisa Brink, Michael Broda,Brian Brown,Everett Carpenter, Ross Collin, Mariah Crilley, Rodney Dyer, Joshua Galligan, Denia Lee Hing, Nancy Jallo, Miriam Kuttikat, Hermine Maes, Milos Manic, Jacqueline Smith-Mason, Jonathan Moore, Nicole Omecene, Lauren Pamulapati, Valerie Robnolt, Scott Street, Dong Sun, Katharine Tibbetts, Melissa Tyler,Stacey Wahl, Matt Wallin, Christine Wynd, and Wenli Yan

**Postdoctoral Scholar:** Sean Koebley

**Classified staff**: Brian Artis, Valarie Carter, Michelle Hawkins, Pamela Mason, Brian McNeill, Alex McWhorter, and Saher Randhawa

**Students**: Sydney Biondi, Dan Buth, Alex Chong, Jordan James, Fatima Malik, William Markle, and Shabana Shaheen

**Ex-Officio and Guests**: Thomas Briggs, Kelsey Cheshire, Gypsy Denzine, Alex Henson, Magnus Johnson, Jacqueline Kniska, Teresa Knott, David Morefield, Susan Robb, Reuban Rodriguez, and Deborah Noble-Triplett

1. **President’s Report**

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

* He introduced several colleagues in new leadership positions, to include: Tomikia LeGrande, Vice President for Strategy, Enrollment Management and Student Success. Dr. LeGrande has served as Vice Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management since 2018 and will now lead strategic priorities for the President and Provost. She will also oversee the newly established Division for Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Success. Susan Gooden, who served as interim dean, is the new Dean of the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs.
* President Rao welcomed two new members to the VCU community: Dean Carmenita Higgenbotham, VCU School of the Arts, and Dean Jennifer Malat, College of Humanities and Sciences. Two additional members will join in October: Dean Daniel Bullard, VCU Graduate School, and Arthur Kellerman, Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and CEO, VCU Health System.
* Dr. Rao provided an update on the Make It Real Campaign, which closed on June 30. It broke records and is already providing needed funds to students and faculty. A final update will be shared the week of November 15. Celebrations will be forthcoming. Dr. Rao thanked Jay Davenport, Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations, and his team for all their hard work.
* Dr. Rao thanked faculty and staff for their exemplary work since March to take the courses online throughout the summer and for preparing for our safe fall return. All of this was accomplished while everyone was managing changes in their own lives.
* Dr. Rao discussed the process begun over the summer to transition our public safety model, which involves a transition from policing the community and refocusing on more equitable treatment. A Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee is being established and will include two co-chairs: Dean Andrew Daire, School of Education, and Sheryl Garland, Chief of Health Impact, VCU Health. This committee will operate independently from the VCU Police Department.
* Dr. Rao provided a COVID-19 update, noting VCU continues to monitor cases and work with healthcare professionals. Updates can be found on the VCU site, [together.vcu.edu](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cjmstillm%5CDownloads%5Ctogether.vcu.edu). He encouraged everyone to continue to take preventative measures, practice self-care, and monitor their health.
* In closing, Dr. Rao commented that we must never lose sight of our mission to provide a learning and healing environment that is equitable to all who come here to learn, live, create, collaborate and heal. Living in challenging times, we must remember to treat one another with humanity, respect free speech and our commitment to critical thinking.
1. **Minutes**

Minutes from the University Council meeting on May 7, 2020 were accepted.

1. **Membership Caucuses**

Attendees were sent to break out rooms with their respective groups (Administrators, Faculty, Students, and Staff) and to sign up for the following committees: Committee on Academic Affairs and University Policies, Committee on Faculty Affairs, Committee on Student Affairs, Committee on Classified Staff Affairs, and the University Council Bylaws Revision Committee.

1. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.