

# President's Advisory Team Minutes

**August 13, 2021**

## **President's Advisory Team Members in attendance via Zoom:**

Charles Wight, President  
Humberto Aristizabal, Associate Vice President of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator  
Matt Groves for Eric Berkheimer, Associate Vice President of Facilities and Capital Management  
Anita Brown, Incoming President, Faculty Senate  
Vanessa Collins, Chair, Staff Senate  
Randall Cone, President, Faculty Senate  
Jessica Clark, Assistant Provost for Student Success  
Jason Curtin, Vice President, Advancement and External Affairs  
Gerard DiBartolo, Director, Athletics  
Susan Eagle, Associate Vice President of Marketing and Communications  
Dane Foust, Vice President, Student Affairs  
Teri Herberger for Clifton Griffin, Dean, Graduate Studies and Research  
Bea Hardy, Dean, Libraries and Instructional Resources  
Laurie Henry, Dean, Seidel School of Education  
Allen Koehler, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management  
Ken Kundell, Chief Information Officer  
Edwin Lashley, Chief, University Police  
Andrew Martino, Dean, Clarke Honors College  
Eli Modlin, Chief of Staff  
Karen Olmstead, Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Kara Owens, Associate Vice President for Planning & Assessment  
Maarten Pereboom, Dean, Fulton School of Liberal Arts  
Valerie Randall-Lee, Dean of Students  
Jason Rhodes, Director, Public Relations and University Spokesperson  
Matt Muller for Michael Scott, Dean, Henson School of Science and Technology  
Brian Stiegler, Assistant Provost for International Education  
Jessica Strange, President, Graduate Student Council  
Karen Treber, University Counsel  
Kevin Vedder, Associate Vice President for Human Resources  
Ani Mathers for Christy Weer, Dean, Perdue School of Business  
Joan Williams, Associate Vice President for Diversity & Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer

### **1. Welcoming and Opening Remarks – President Charles Wight**

- Dr. Wight welcomed the group, and stated his appreciation for this group's leadership over the last year and a half. It has been critical in our ability to maintain excellence as well as strong student support during one of the most challenging situations we have ever encountered.
- The University Health Team is closely monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and the more easily transmissible variants of the virus, and will adjust procedures and resources to create the safest environment possible.
- Dr. Wight recognized the legitimate concern that exists among our faculty, staff, students and families – particularly for those with compromised immune systems as well as those who are taking care of an elderly or otherwise vulnerable family member. There also is elevated concern among our students and employees who have children that are not yet eligible for the vaccine. He also noted that students and employees are experiencing “COVID fatigue” and so many of us are just

ready to put this pandemic behind us, as well as there are some who disagree with the measures that we've taken and believe that they've been unnecessary. He advocated that we join together in the fight against COVID – as a group.

## 2. COVID-19 Updates – Eli Modlin

- Eli provided an update on current vaccine mandate compliance.
  - a. The University System of Maryland mandate states: all eligible students, faculty, and staff who will be on our Maryland campuses this fall be vaccinated against COVID....we'll comply with all federal and state laws in granting appropriate exemptions for medical or religious reasons.
  - b. Compliance with the mandate means: 1) You are fully vaccinated and have provided SU with consent to record your vaccine status, or 2) You have received a medical or religious exemption from the vaccine mandate. Non-compliance could mean: 1) You have not received the COVID-19 vaccine (and have not received an exemption), or 2) You have not provided SU with consent to look up or securely record COVID-19 vaccination information.
- For information on COVID-19 testing protocols and non-compliance and quarantine/isolation protocols please see the COVID-19 webpage located at: <https://www.salisbury.edu/coronavirus/>
- Current mitigation strategies:
  - a. The deadline for return testing was pushed to September 30<sup>th</sup> to give the Health Team the opportunity to monitor the prevalence of COVID-19 among fully vaccinated students and employees.
  - b. Campus Health is offering N95 fit-testing and masks for interested students and employees.
  - c. Campus Health continues to offer the vaccine on campus and will coordinate additional vaccine clinics with the County Health Department as needed.
  - d. Divisional leadership will receive additional information to ensure mask compliance for unvaccinated employees.
  - e. Vaccinated students and employees who are symptomatic for COVID-19 may contact Campus Health for a test appointment.
- Factors informing decisions on changing current protocols center on the following
  - a. Level of Transmission among faculty, staff and students with an eye to local transmission.
  - b. This will be closely monitored through 2x weekly testing of all unvaccinated students and employees.
  - c. Fully vaccinated students and employees are required to take a return test. These tests will continue through September 30<sup>th</sup> to give us an idea of positivity and transmission among vaccinated students and employees on campus.
  - d. Capacity of Health Services and Housing.

- e. Our ability to effectively test, contact trace and safely house members of the campus community.
- f. Vaccination Rates among Students and Employees.
- g. Salisbury University's current vaccination rates are higher than the national and local averages. This puts us in a position where we should not see the same rate of transmission on campus that we do in some areas off campus.
- o Face mask requirements.
  - a. All unvaccinated students and employees are required to wear a face mask while indoors unless: 1) Alone in a private office or space, 2) Eating or drinking in a designated location, or 3) Participating in activity where the temporary removal of a mask has been approved.
  - b. Face mask usage will remain required in the classroom at the start of the fall semester.
  - c. Unvaccinated faculty will be required to wear a face mask in the classroom.
  - d. Fully vaccinated faculty may be permitted to wear a face shield.
  - e. Masking guidelines are subject to change based on new data and information.

### **3. Campus Governance Updates**

- o Faculty Senate – Drs. Randall Cone and Anita Brown
  - a. Dr. Cone stated that today was his last day as Faculty Senate president and Dr. Anita Brown will be taking over as the new president. He commended the Faculty Summer Advisory Committee (SAC) for working with the Provost on issues that needed attention before the beginning of the new academic year. Dr. Wight commended Dr. Cone for chairing the Faculty Senate in such a difficult year.
  - b. Dr. Anita Brown reported on the latest SAC update. She also noted that the biggest concern for Faculty now seems to be coming back to campus safely. Masking policies and a need for microphones in classrooms are of particular concern. Dr. Brown also noted that an Ad Hoc committee has been formed and has been meeting during the summer to develop bylaws language for the Faculty Senate to review to hopefully create a new standing Faculty Senate committee that will oversee the implementation of the new General Education requirements. After the currently approved requirements are in place, this same standing committee should continue to oversee the implementation of and possible changes to the General Education Program.
- o Adjunct Faculty – Tim Robinson
  - a. Tim was not able to be at the meeting, Dr. Wight read a statement on his behalf:

“Hello everyone, my apologies for being unable to deliver this in person but I am personally surveying the area where the Roanoke settlers arrived in 1587 to help refine my upcoming lectures.

First, I would like to extend my appreciation for the ongoing communication between myself and the executive staff of Salisbury University, I believe communication is key to any professional relationship.

I also want to extend my appreciation to the new Assistant Provost, Dr. Jessica Clarke for opening an incredible dialogue with me about the future of the adjunct community here at Salisbury University.

A couple of more highlights - last April we saw the University recognize Adjuncts who had completed 20 years of service here at Salisbury University, we are hoping to see that extended to adjuncts in other categories too. I also would like to recognize the efforts of Melissa Thomas and her staff who recognized the difficulties with adjuncts attending ID&D Trainings during daytime hours and began offering them in the evening.

With the communication theme - I have spoken with Provost Dr. Olmstead about some concerns and I believe I was heard.

I also must mention that I would like to find a way to recognize adjuncts who worked this past school year but were left out of Governor Hogan's bonus and the University's supplemental recognition.

As always, thank you for your time and I look forward to returning to the classroom in less than three weeks.”

- Staff Senate – Vanessa Collins
  - a. Vanessa introduced herself as the new Staff Senate president, and indicated that Joe Benyish is serving as second chair and Steve Blankenship is serving as third chair.
  - b. There will be a special election for the Secretary for the Staff Senate and they should take office by September.
  - c. The Staff Senate will continue with a Zoom option for future meetings until further notice.
  - d. Employee Appreciation Day was held on August 4 and was well attended by both day and evening employees. A special thank you is extended to Dining Services for providing exceptional service.
  - e. Snack and Chats will resume in September, with Steve Blankenship speaking on Identity Theft. October will be the Annual Benefits Update provided by Human Resources, and November will be about Civic Reflection.
  - f. This year, the Staff Senate will explore revising their Bylaws, which have not been updated since 2009.
  
- Graduate Student Council – Jessica Strange
  - a. Over the summer, the nominated members of the Graduate Student Council met and discussed initiatives for the upcoming year.

- b. The GSC hopes to continue with some of the service projects set up by last year's council and work with the disability resource center among other projects.

**4. Fall 2021 Academic Plans – Dr. Karen Olmstead**

- o Dr. Olmstead discussed some of the concerns brought up in the Academic Affairs Town Hall. One concern was the number of students who have not yet complied with the COVID-19 vaccination mandate and/or given consent for the campus to access this information. The Provost and VPSA/Enrollment Management will send another email to students describing what measures need to be taken to insure a safe return to campus and successful semester.
- o It was noted that many students will be in internships and clinicals that will require a COVID-19 vaccination; students may not be able to complete their programs on time if they do not receive the required vaccination.
- o Academic Affairs is working on several projects currently:
  - a. A working group is examining Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Tenure & Promotions Process and will make recommendations to the Faculty Senate early this fall semester.
  - b. The Faculty Handbook is being revised and moved to a more user-friendly platform on the Salisbury University website.
- o Dr. Olmstead expressed her appreciation to the Deans and Department Chairs for their tremendous work during this past, very trying year.

**5. Middle States Commission on Higher Education Accreditation – Drs. Karen Olmstead and Kara Owens**

- o The Provost and AVP for Planning and Assessment reviewed the timeline to our next Middle States accreditation. Everyone should familiarize themselves with the new MSCHE Standards and Requirements of Affiliation.
- o Salisbury University's next Self-Study will occur in 2024-25. To prepare, SU is currently reviewing the seven (7) standards to determine if we need to begin working on any gaps before the next Self-Study. We will begin to pull together a Self-Study team in Fall 2022. This group will begin to collect evidence for each standard in Spring 2023 with the hopes of having the final Self-Study completed and sent to Middle States by fall 2024.
- o Salisbury University's 2021 Mid-Point Peer Review (MPPR) has been delayed by MSCHE for one year. We will have our next MPPR in 2022. This usually involves a review of our student enrollment and success data as well as our financial data to ensure the viability of the University. They will also review our response to the two recommendations that we had from the last Self-Study (2016).
  - a. Recommendation #1: Standard 2 (Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal) and Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment). The team concurs with the Proposed Enhancement suggested in Chapter 8 of the Self

Study and recommends that the institution continue the progress made to systematically assess their University Strategic Plan, demonstrate how all plans are used to allocate resources and prioritize decisions, and also expand the System to monitor progress towards achieving institutional goals.

- b. Recommendation #2: Standard 11 (Educational Offerings) - Though it appears all programs (i.e., degrees) have student-learning outcomes, they have not been clearly provided to students in the course catalog. Some departmental web sites have articulated student learning outcomes specified for their programs typically in the context of their departmental mission; others are not clear. The University should communicate student learning outcomes at the program level to students and consider doing so using language and a delivery format that makes most sense to the intended audience.

#### **6. Telework and Leave Policies – Kevin Vedder**

- o Kevin updated the group on the status of teleworking policies at Salisbury University. Up until July 2021, teleworking was a special circumstance related directly to the COVID-19 epidemic. After the return to campus, HR along with the Executive Staff and University Council have updated the teleworking policy to meet the needs of the University.
- o Remote work arrangements are currently not an option at Salisbury University, and differs from teleworking in that the employee doesn't come to campus at all. Teleworkers come to campus periodically (e.g., 1- 4 days a week). The University System of Maryland is working with the Attorney General's office to assess remote work and the level of interest in offering this as an option along with compliance related considerations.
- o The Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) mandated by the federal government that provided up to 10 days of paid sick leave for COVID related situations expired June 30, 2021. Employees will need to use their accrued sick leave starting on July 1, 2021.
- o Dr. Wight praised Kevin for doing a great job, particularly during the COVID-19 epidemic, and wished him luck in his new position near family.

#### **7. Campaign Update and Events – Jason Curtin**

- o Jason provided an update on the current Capital Campaign which has acquired \$66,234,000 towards a goal of \$75 million dollars. Many contributors are faculty, staff and administrators like the individual members of the President's Advisory Team. The stable economy has been beneficial in maintaining and growing the investments managed by the Salisbury University Foundation. The campaign consultant, an SU alum, Jason McNeal, will be on campus to provide advice on how to complete the final goal.
- o As the campus opens up from COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, there are many events that will be happening on campus to include Sea Gull Century on October 9 and Homecoming/Family Weekend the week of October 18 through 24, 2021.

**8. Affirmative Action Plan – Humberto Aristizábal**

- Humberto provided a refresher course on Salisbury University's Affirmative Action Plan. An Affirmative Action Plan is a management tool designed to ensure equal employment opportunity.
- Affirmative action helps create a level playing field that gives everyone an equal opportunity to compete for a job and career. It ensures that no person is disadvantaged or treated unfairly during the hiring process because of their race, ethnicity or gender. It is about fairness and justice for all.
- Humberto provided an overview of placement goals. "Placement Goal" is a technical targeting term used exclusively by affirmative action planners who seek to apply good faith efforts to increase in the future the percentage employment of minorities and women in the workforce. Placement Goals are determined by comparing the demographic composition of employees as of December 15, 2020 to those with similar occupations in our recruitment area (based upon 2020 US Census results) by job group. Job titles are assigned to a specific job group based upon similar content or responsibility and pay.
- When an institution is chosen for an audit by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), they concentrate on hires and recordkeeping – and in particular – placement goals. SU's plan of action is to correct any deviation within twelve months to include conducting and documenting additional good faith efforts to attract and retain individuals within that protected group (females and/or minorities) through targeted outreach.
- *NOTE: a placement goal should never be considered a hiring quota; you must always hire the most qualified individual for the job.*

**9. The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.**