

Staff Senate

<http://www.staffsenate.vt.edu/>

June 18, 2020

12:00-1:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Minutes

Attendees: Amanda Villar, Amber Robinson, Amy Ingram, Angel Carter, Bruce Harper, Chris Whitlock, Hannah Parks, Harrison Blythe, Jackie Reid, Jamie Stein, Jennifer Early, Jennifer Pike, Jessica Pharis, Judy Alford, Justin Dalton, Katherine Wilkes, Kathryn Polidoro, Katie Meyer, Kelly Oaks, LaTawnya Burleson, Leigh Ann Flinchum, Leisa Shelor, Leslie Sullivan, Llyn Sharp, Melanie Darden, Raksha Sharma, Robena Hughes, Robert Sebek, Sally Shupe, Sandra Gabbert, Sarah Owen, Sarah Woodyard, Serena Young, Steven Nagle, Sue Teel, Tamarah Smith, Tasia Persson, Velva Groover, Zerita Montgomery

Excused: Lisa Bishop and Kimberly Ridpath

Speakers: Katie Polidoro, Title IX Coordinator, Harrison Blyth, Director of Compliance and Conflict Resolution, and Kelly Oaks, Assistant Vice President for Equity and Accessibility

Call to Order at Noon by President, Tamarah Smith

The agenda was electronically submitted to senators on June 16. With no additions, the agenda was approved at the meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes went out on June 16 so they will be approved at the next meeting.

Recognition of Presidential Award Winner: Ms. Smith
Congratulations to Robert Sebek on this prestigious award

Title IX:

- Constantly Changing
- Federal Law: any federal funded institution cannot discriminate on the basis of sex
- How to talk about and address sexual assault and sexual discrimination
- Changes with each administration
- Enacted Federal Regulations-Much more binding
- Need to change policies and procedures to enforce these
- Discrimination can happen in my different forms i.e. Harassment or Violence
 - Makes it impossible for you to work
 - Makes the environment hostile
- Individuals do not violate Title IX- the Institution Does
 - How the Institution responds to the issue(s)
 - How we hold individual(s) accountable
- The Office of Equity and Accessibility – all civil rights laws
 - Handles reports and investigations
- New Policies and Procedures to be sure that we are in compliance with the new regulations
 - Must be in Compliance by August 14th

- Some of the new policies and procedures may make sense but some may not and
- some we may not like but we have to do them to be in compliance
- Redefinition of what sexual harassment looks like
- Limited the Jurisdiction from what it used to be
 - For only on-campus programs and activities or held by a university group
- A requirement for live hearings for both students and employee cases
- A requirement for cross examination by each party's advisor
- Impacts Employee Handbooks and Student Code of Conduct
- President Sands has created a work group and asked for recommendations
 - Group consists of administrators and stakeholders and has representation from Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, Commission of AP Faculty Affairs, Student Government Association, and Commission on Student Affairs

Let the presenters know what you think, here is their contact information

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 Director of Title IX Compliance
 Title IX Coordinator
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 Director of Compliance &
 Conflict Resolution
 Deputy Title IX Coordinator
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Questions:

1. What is/are the rationale(s) for these limiting changes to Title IX? Were the cases the previous regulation enforced too broad for action?
 We need to find balance from not doing enough and from being too strict. Trying to do the right thing for people while still trying to make sure we have a sufficient process.
2. Do these new regulations still cover incidents that happen while outside of the US on a class field trip or while doing study abroad such as in the Steger Center in Switzerland?
 Does not cover this under the new regulations. However, it does not stop us from making the code of conduct apply to students abroad. It just will not be a Title IX issue; it will only be a code of conduct issue.

Ms. Smith:

- A report from each Chair has been submitted to Ms. Smith and she will be sharing them with the President
- Thankful that Staff has a voice and that the University is asking what we are saying and what we think
- Share with Tamarah things that we are hearing so she can share

Update on Brian Huddleston and Heather Parrish: Both employees are doing well following the kidney replacement! They have had a few bumps in the road, but they are both recovering very well.

Standing Committee Updates:

Communications: Bruce Harper-Set up for the Staff Appreciation Day but was not able to have it. The Web Site is up to date. Keeping things up to date on Facebook

Elections & Nominations: Tasia Persson- Successfully filled all of our positions. Filled six off cycle positions. Had a successful process. Stream lined the process to add bio and updated the bio questions. Tried to make the voting process easier for the end user. Tasia and Judy Taylor are co-chairing this next year. Please let them know if you have any suggestions so they can make the process better.

Policies & Issues: Judy Alford- 22 reviewed, 21 supported and 1 not supported resolutions. Good working committee and had a good year. This team incorporated a new process for this year and it was a success.

McCommas Leadership Seminar: Amy Ingram-we were so lucky that we were able to have this before COVID-19. Overall a great event. We need to have a sole person for the National Capital Region to help coordinate with. We need a better Caterer. If you would like to chair or know of who would please let us know.

Child Care: Robert Sebek- The Child Care Working Group has representatives from Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, the Provost's Office, HR, Business Services/Budget Office, and The Grad School.

We discussed the need for flexible work schedules going forward and Bryan Garey is working on communication on best practices and specific examples for supervisors to accommodate employee requests. Staff Senate will have a role in spreading that communication.

A lot of this will be driven by what's happening with the local schools. We will know more later this summer and will respond then.

Most area childcare facilities have opened or will reopen very soon. They will have lower capacity, which is a major concern.

Some facilities have continued to charge families even while they have been closed or only open to children of essential workers, to keep their spots. This is a financial burden on those families. Some faculty have said they stopped paying and gave up their spots, meaning they will be added to a wait list once facilities reopen, further straining the system.

As a group, we have asked the administration to fund a limited-duration position to coordinate childcare issues now that ABCS is shutting down.

There is still a plan for the \$500 stipend to be given to those making under \$35,500. This shocked me given the current budget situation. There was even talk of increasing the stipend and increasing the ceiling for eligibility.

The Grad School's Little Hokies Hangout child care facility will reopen July 8. It's mainly for grad student families and works on a cooperative model where parents contribute some time in exchange for using the service. Unused slots are open for staff to take. Families can pick time blocks and not entire days,

making it useful for employees using a flexible schedule who don't need day long child care. This can be a great option for staff this fall.

HR is still looking at backup care (for when your child/family member is sick and can't go to regular day care). Bright Horizons and Care.com are providers we're looking into, but they may not want to operate in our rural area.

Finally, there is proposed language in the next Covid relief bill for funding for child care operators to shore up their operations and ensure they continue to exist to provide services. Once we have a better understanding of that bill, we may ask employees to contact their legislator to support that part of the bill.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:59: Ms. Smith
Next meeting with be held on July 16th, 2020