

Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Business Meeting Minutes

October 11, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

McConnell Library 170/ RUC 3rd Floor Board Room

Present: Staci Allen, Sandra Bond, Ashlee Claud, Emily Fitzgerald, Mary Francis, Stephanie Hovsepian, Kay Johnson, Mark Lambert, Eric Lovik, Jessica Rothe, Deana Sentman, Scott Shull, Malinda Tasler, Juan Urista, Meghan Viet

Not Present: Tom Bennett II, Vanessa Conner, Charles Cosmato, Heather Hollandsworth, Chad Hyatt, Debra Johnson

Guests: Avraham Boruchowitz, Lee Blackwell, Brandon Cohen, David Halpin, Rob Hoover, Jenene Lewis, Margaret McManus, Connie Phillips

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by President Ashlee Claud.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from September 13, 2023 were approved.
3. **Guest Speaker:** Rob Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration.
VP Hoover started on March 1, and is the third most senior VP at Radford University. He said, “We are not doing things the old way, because we don’t know the old way.” We are currently wrapping up the 5-year strategic plan that ends this December and thinking of the next step. Because of the transitions in leadership, especially of the President, we are setting two years or priorities in motion. The Board of Visitors have approved the plan, and now we are working on the details. Virginia requires a 6 year plan every two years, which Radford submitted this year. Radford incorporated what we have already looked at by divisions to tie to the 6-year plan. Instead of a 30-page brochure, it is a framework giving a reference point on what we are doing and why.

Radford University’s themes (priorities) in the 6-year plan:

- Defining our distinctive nature – Angela Joyner’s branding is part of this.
- Stabilizing Enrollment – We’ve seen a decline over 10 years, but hit a plateau of sorts this year. We are working with Dannette Gomez Beane to stabilize undergraduate enrollment and grow graduate enrollment.
- Maintaining affordability – Includes tuition, but also right-sizing areas where we have redundancies and finding efficiencies. We are looking at faculty and staff and vacancies. Not all areas can be cut back, but we may need different positions in some areas. A lot of planning steps still need to happen, which you may have seen more of on the academic side.
- Enhancing economic development and outreach – Local, regional, and state. We are a connection to the community and a driver of the economic engine of the area; all are tied together with other.

All of the Vice Presidents have been asked to bring divisional goals. The Finance Division fits under the “Maintaining Affordability” theme, but impacts every theme.

- Budget Process – A new level of transparency and planning. Data is out there for everything. We are looking for people to bring new ideas. The best decisions come from the most local level.
- Comprehensive plan for physical space – We have a beautiful campus, and some state-of-the-art buildings. Some areas are dated, like Muse Hall, which we are planning to take offline. The Roanoke planning process has begun. We took a step back and are doing visioning of Roanoke, and what it will look like in 5 years, 10 years, etc. This will give us a better road map on where we are headed, and what types of spaces are needed.
- Integrative workforce development – What will these programs look like? How do we improve hiring and keep the best employees. What unique programs are at Radford? We are looking and training, and have a new training and development staffer. We want staff to grow in positions, offer opportunities to people, and make them more mobile, including in leadership and management positions. We are building career ladders and succession planning. A lot of positions in smaller units do not have next positions until someone leaves. We can build in incremental steps. What drives people to feel empowered? Dr. Hoover loves that people want to contribute more. Ashlee Claud added the need for professional development was indicated on the recent AP Faculty Morale Survey.

Q&A and Further Discussion

- Q. What is happening with raises? A. In December, we will get a 2% raise, that was passed by the legislature in the current Virginia budget. The increase is based on performance.
- Claud raised that communication is of concern on the AP Faculty Morale Survey, and it would be great to communicate the raise better, such as through Radford University Connected. Hoover said the budget with raise is fairly recent, and we will try to be better with communication.
- Q. What is the Budget Steering Committee? A. Membership is 25 people intended to be a representative advisory body on budgeting and planning. Facilities planning is taken to this group, and the President leans on them holistically at a voice for priorities. The group meets monthly. Ashlee is a member of the Budget Steering Committee and will be consulting with the Senate. Half to 75% of the group are AP Faculty.
- Q. What’s going on with the salary survey? A. This was a compensation evaluation looking at the market instead of individual positions. We wanted to compare us to our peers. We are close to getting recommendations; early November is the target. It’s unknown whether there will be salary adjustments, but there may be some. They are looking at salary compression.
- Q. The pay adjustment for classified staff meant some staff are closer in range to their supervisor’s salary. Is a salary adjustment for AP Faculty being considered? A. Absolutely. We will look at that thoroughly. (Note, the staff have had at least 2 adjustments with all staff salaries examined, and then setting a minimal salary of \$15

an hour.)

4. **Morale Survey Update:** Ashlee Claud reported the committee met and looked at the comments. Tom Bennett put them through AI analysis. This won't be the final version; the committee will dig deeper. Themes include contract and job anxiety, professional development and communication. A draft of the executive summary will be presented to AP Senate.
5. **Administrative and Professional Faculty Recognition:** Stephanie Hovsepian reported the group met, which includes Staci Allen, Jess Rothe, and Ashlee Claud, and drafted two awards:
 - I. The **Administrative and Professional Student Support Award** recognizes an AP employee who has made a significant difference in the lives of students by going above and beyond in order to provide a culture of care where students can thrive. This award recognizes service, dedication, and contributions to students that go beyond the requirements and expectations of their position.
 - II. The **Administrative and Professional Excellence in Collaboration Award** recognizes a group of Administrative & Professional Faculty that demonstrates an outstanding ability to work together to complete a goal, project, or initiative within and across divisions or the greater Radford community. The collaboration should demonstrate the following:
 - A lasting and positive impact on the success of students at Radford University
 - Inspiration for future collaborations within Radford University
 - Exceptional teamwork and partnership at Radford University

The Senators raised questions about the Collaboration Award. Can it go to a group? Does it go to the people spearheading the collaborative group? What sort of collaborative awards to other institutions give? The Senate supports a collaborative goal, and advised the group to come back with a revised draft.

6. **Senator Nominations:** We still need nominations for RUC and Central Administration. Ashlee will consult with faculty.
7. **Upcoming Events:**
 - Radford Highlanders Festival: Saturday, October 14 – Ashlee. Manning clock plaza stage. Sandra – our students will be here. Dalton will have Scottish theme foods. Lot DD and Dalton for food. Furry cows, shepherders, inflatables, highlander games – some professional athletes we haven't had before. Celtic Music in Dalton, Scottish dancers. Kay – Annular Celebration – Center for the Sciences.
 - Humans of Radford 10th Anniversary: Monday, October 16, noon-5pm; McConnell Lawn
 - Homecoming: October 19-21 – great turnouts for homecoming. People excited about band, Mini tents, you can join in. President will have state of the University and unveiling of new branding (October 20). Bondurant Auditorium.
 - Admissions Open House: Saturday, October 28, November 11, 10am-3:30pm, RUC is November 4
 - Day of Gratitude: Friday, November 3
 - Wicked Festival: Thursday, November 9, 5pm – 7:30pm; Kyle 340

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- Giving Tuesday - Highland 10 Challenge: Tuesday, November 28
- Monday Music – Bird Room. The Kind.
- Ribbon cutting for the Hub – Economic Development Dept. on first floor, on Oct. 17 – 1:00-3:00. Will be doing trick-or treat on Oct. 30. Russell Haunts – 7:00 pm ghost stories (October 30). CVPA – Putting on Spooktacular. On par with Pink Floyd event. They plan on selling out tickets.
- Men's soccer – 7:00 PM Pride Night wear white, free cupcakes. Oct. 29 – Big South Cross Country Championship. We're hosting in Salem, Green Hill Park, 7:30 and 10:30.
- Faculty staff show for Fine Arts. October 25, Tyler Gallery at 5:00.
- October. 18th – painting with Lee.

8. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:07 pm.

Future Meeting Dates:

- November 8
- December 13 – Provost
- January 10
- March – President.