UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
STAFF ASSOCIATION MINUTES

November 14, 2018

Discussion and Approval of Minutes from October 10, 2018. Minutes were approved from 10/10/2018 with the word change of “option” to “optum” under BAT.

Attendance: Ben Ide, Rachel Yacouby, Kelly Anderson, Laurie Fasciano, Barbara Dessureau, Donna Galen, Sally Henowitz, Carla J. Fuller, Pete Bergenholtz, Stacie Wentz, Shelli McMillen, Glandina Morris, Pam Masi, Ann Brown, Allison Poulin, Laura Heemskerk, Julie Spring, Janice Girouard, Katrina Mill, Stephanie Fengler, Laurie Granstrand, Laura Eldredge, Lydia Chiappetti, Jessica Nicklin, Christina Lapierre, Amy Kopec, Rebecca Lee, Bonny Taylor, Mary Boudreau, Lauren Farley, Cindy Oppenheimer, Ellen Levasseur, Linda Zigmont, Lisa Wollenberg, Donna Fleischer, Kate Marusa, Donna Clark, Tina Berrien, Lisa Belanger Buoniconti

University Committee Reports

- Budget Advisory Team – Randi Ashton-Prittning / Laura Heemskerk
  - Meeting was held on 11/1/18 and was led by President Greg Woodward. Greg explained that during his time as Provost of Ithaca College and President of Carthage College he organized a committee called “institutional effectiveness.” The goal of this committee was to view the university as a whole ensuring there were appropriate links between the mission, strategic priorities, assessment/operations, and investment/alignment of resources. Greg asked the BAT members if they thought this could be a viable format for University of Hartford, and the general consensus was that it could work. Greg also recommended that BAT strive to become more transparent to the entire university population and develop a formal way of communicating with constituents. The finance department has committed to have a firm FY2018-19 budget by the Board of Regents’ meeting on November 30, 2018. Finance will also develop a 3-year budget by the February BOR meeting.

- Wellness Committee – HRD, Lindsay McKeegan / Barbara Dessureau (on hiatus)
- Benefits Taskforce – Cindy Oppenheimer / Lynn Galvin – No report
- Presidential Commission for the Status of Women – Donna Clarke – No report
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Task Force – Christina Lapierre
  - HR will continue to review the manager/supervisor training.
  - Research of diversity/inclusion questions for staff pre-employment process and D/I questions have been added to hiring packet for managers.
  - Next meeting in December.

Staff Association Reports

- Web Advisory Committee – Barbara Dessureau
  - Committee met in October, and the University website is scheduled to go live at the end of February, 2019. Last minute changes with the template designs have started to collect content to prepare for the migration in January. The developers have also started programming which, also to be completed in January.

- Faculty Senate – Ben Ide
  - Faculty Senate Chair Anne Pidano is back from medical leave.
  - Provost Fred Sweitzer reported that the search for the next CETA dean is moving forward. He hopes to start doing airport interviews around winter break. The University’s relationship with Capital Education (CapEd) is up in December. We could renew or transition to doing online classes on our own. We are also having demos from three learning management systems (LMS), one of whom is Blackboard, our current LMS. The new course schedule won’t go into effect in fall 2019, as planned. It will have to be later (spring or fall of 2020). The initial trial period for the annual faculty evaluation process is over, and it’s time to review how it went.
  - President Woodward President Woodward gave some numbers that indicated how well we are doing: 802 applications, up from 600 last year; 64 applied for bachelors in nursing and they are from all over the world; also in new programs: 16 applied for business analytics, 3 for digital media journalism, 9 for pure finance, only 1 for computer science and engineering. We admitted 300 fewer students from the bottom range of academics, and 55% of those admitted were from the top of their academic school
standings, so trending upwards (35% of students from lowest end of academics will make it to their sophomore year). 53% of Hillyer students were retained first to second year, which is 3.6% up for retention from last year. 76.5% overall retention, and better retention is making up for lower enrollment. Retention numbers vary widely between programs, but Hartt, HAS, and student athletes at highest retention. 173 returning students got additional funds, which helped retention (43% changed their minds and stayed because of getting more money). Initially only six applied, so he went after deans to find students who needed it. Census numbers were not great: overall down 33 students and missed our budget target by 37 students. However, we are up 280 graduate students, mostly due to Cigna (the equivalency for income is four grads per one undergrad). The new University website rollout will be Feb 1 instead of Jan 1. The new site redesign will make a huge difference for admission next year since 70% of interaction for UH is entirely website-based.

• Jillian Maynard from the Harrison Libraries presented on the campus-wide initiative to boost open educational resources (OER) usage. OER materials include not only textbooks but any kind of educational materials. They are distinguished by their open copyright standards and, more notably, not being overpriced monsters from traditional textbook publishers. They can be customized by professors, some are peer reviewed, and they are accessed online or purchased in print format from the bookstore (for a nominal fee). So far, 2,230 students at UH have been using OER texts for a savings of about $220,000.

• The College Bookstore Manager, Melissa Elliot, talked about textbook rentals.

• I reported to the Faculty Senate about our fundraiser for financing staff professional development. Several Senators were surprised that the University didn’t provide funding for staff professional development. I cited the Harrison Libraries' practice of including a budget line for development funds for their staff and asked the Senators if their departments also reserved funds for their non-faculty staff. At that time, there was no firm answer from the Faculty Senators in attendance.

New Business

• Guest Speakers

Lisa Belanger-Buoniconti from HR spoke on the following:

• Updated employment manual. The word “staff” was deleted and now reflects “employment” for all employees at UHart.
• The new employment manual was sent via email to all employees to review which was emailed out on 10/23/18.

Jessica Nicklin, Vice President Student Success spoke on the following:

• Overview of “Who is our area” that is comprised of three people: RJ McGivney oversees retention; Jessica Nicklin oversees 1st & 2nd year programs, and Aaron Isaacs oversees pathway programs.
• The three work closely together to bridge all student concerns/issues to better support students throughout their academics as well as social and emotional.
• A new building will be built off the student ID office for a “1-stop shop” for students that will include SASC and professional advisors.
• Jessica is in the process of hiring 12-13 new people to fill the roles of Assistant Director & Advisors. These will be for internal employees only.
• The process will be Nov-Dec interviews; Decisions made in January, 2019 and staff will begin in April, 2019. This will give time to current departments to adjust to an internal employee potentially leaving and how to redistribute their workload.
• The professional advisors will be specific to each college and be “on the road” with their own laptops to better support the needs of their students within each college.