

## Meeting Notes



**Date:** 2/19/2026

**Time:** 959AM

**Attendance:** Joe Benyish, Candace Henry, Heather Kidd, Lindsey Ward, Lisa Gray, Steve Blankenship, Frank Bowen, Dave Gutoskey, Shannon James, Kelly Cowger, Mary Katherine Taylor, Donna Knopf, Anthony Sanchez, JJ Remo, Cyndi Funkhouser

**Location:** GAC 401

**Approval of January Meeting Minutes;** approved Donna motioned, Frank Second

### **Staff Senate Reports:**

SS President-Joe Benyish

- Submitted strategic plan feedback yesterday
- Consortium committees' email went out to all staff; committees will sunset July 1. Adhoc committees will be created as needed
- SU Advocacy Day-March 4<sup>th</sup>

VP Candace Henry

- Must be digital accessible by April 24<sup>th</sup>
- Website must be cleaner, accessible and accurate

### **CUSS Report: Shannon James/Frank Bowen/Lisa Gray**

- Advocacy day went well
- Legislators will vote in favor of USM
- Want to know higher ed value to the community
- Research grants

### **Committee Reports:**

HR Committee-Lisa Gray

- Met with Michael regarding manager training, anxious to see it rolled out
- No onboarding for C1-possibly abbreviated version
  - How to determine what C1's need to attend orientation, possibly something on the contract to indicate the need for onboarding

Engagement-Kelly Cowger



- Snack& Chat-Teams with IT went well. Over 40 people in attendance
- April 6<sup>th</sup>, Campus Safety-next Snack & Chat, will send out emails in early March. Email will include day of service, and happy hour at Hoppers
- Viva Engage-Ernest and Eric had questions regarding policing and communication, maybe push roll out to next academic year, or kick off for employee appreciation day, competing with staff who soar? Will it be a burden on SS to manage the viva engage platform? NO VIVA ENGAGE! Viva Engage is on hold until further discussion
- June 8-EAD-Morning activities in Fireside Lounge (830-11), lunch 1130-1230, Bingo in the afternoon (2-4). Evening shift dinner-6-7PM.

### **STAFF SENATE**

#### Outreach- JJ Remo

- Town Hall-April 23<sup>rd</sup> 10am-12pm in Wicomico room

#### Membership & Elections-Steve Blakenship

- Email out to staff will ask for blurb of why you want to be on SS
- Committee will assist with elections
- Open session for staff interested in running TBD
- Weeklong election

#### Special Guests:

- **1030 – Aurora Endenhardt-Pepe**
  - Budget-internal process budget office has started holding logistical meetings; broad announcement has not been made. Budget will be completed as a workbook; commitments are new to complete the whole picture. Workbooks will include the O1 tab this year. Two new pieces, O1 tab and commitments for the year. Zero based budgeting again. Internal process varies by unit and if departments want a more interactive process will have to work with budget office. A&F does not mandate how departments manage budget; they mandate how it is turned in at the end. Open office hours throughout the season; workbooks are due on May 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Finance will review prior to final review by president and VPAF
  - University is budgeting flat
  - Expecting a 3 million cut, hoping enrollment and other costs will balance out
- HR
  - Opening search for AVPHR, Justin Wisor is chair, March 3<sup>rd</sup> is first meeting with search firm
    - Person should have confidence in making decisions on policies, etc.
    - Need to develop internal policies from scratch
    - Need to have understanding of full campus



## STAFF SENATE

- o Many open candidate
- o Freshman cars on campus, is it being reconsidered to not allow freshman to have cars first year. Used to be a policy that freshman could not have cars, EM pushed for change in policy. Maybe variations can be made, ex: first semester. How many freshmen have parking passes currently?
- o Class scheduling could also have an impact on parking
- Blackwell Hall
  - o Health corridor change, Dean of Students/Counseling was to be on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, now bookstore will be on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Dean of Students, Counseling, and Health Services will be in Commons in health corridor (where bookstore currently resides). The bookstore will have 4 locations around campus (GSU, Blackwell, books portion in GAC). Student Success will go into where Dean of Students was going.

- Expected summer start date
- positions in HR, if you know send to application

### 11:00am – President & Eli Modlin

- Strategic plan steering committee meeting tomorrow to review feedback
- Legislative session-Eli in Annapolis every other day, president will testify on operating and capital budget for SU. Have had dinner with committees thanking for support, funding for performing art center is on CIP. Ask legislators to keep it in the budget.
- Bill for certain groups of people to unionize, who don't currently have union representation. If passed, it would have an impact on shared governance, mostly driven by UMCP. Very possible to pass for faculty (full time non-tenured track). Not all institutions have the same definitions for full time non-tenured track faculty. If the ability to unionize passes, it doesn't mean institutions will follow through.
- Advocacy Day-March 4<sup>th</sup>. Opportunity for students, faculty and staff to advocate for SU with legislators. Asking specific groups to attend. Leigh Ann will share itinerary. SU budget hearing happens on the same day.
- Cabinet level positions-general counsel and VP of student affairs offers are going out for both, hopeful for announcement in the coming days
- Student incident-Thankful to Dave for assisting student who is back on campus, and Kelly for organizing events for campus. Positive feedback from students on events and flexibility on class attendance. Possibility of small group to have meetings on how to prepare or what to do in the instance of a tragedy.
- Enrollment-spring census UG 5592, graduate enrollment-712
  - Year over year enrollment up 1%
  - Total enrollment 6704, increase from last year

- Athletics



### **STAFF SENATE**

- Women's swim won NJAC
- Men's swimming finished second
- Men's lacrosse-2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation
- Women's lacrosse ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation
- Baseball 5<sup>th</sup> ranked
- Posters on the Bay-February 24<sup>th</sup> 330-7PM
- State of the University, March 11<sup>th</sup>

### **Old Business**

- Website-updated, working on accessibility
- Maroon & Gold Friday's-few sent pictures, working out trade in t-shirts
- Gull Patrol-should consider a check box for celebration type, introverted or staff with sensory sensitivities, may not appreciate loud or cheering group of people
- Staff who Soar-great idea, like the checkbox idea

### **New Business**

- EAD-morning 830-1130-free open game space, tie dye shirt and sand art, potential petting zoo also in morning, any give a ways will also be in fire side lounge, air brush tattoo, paint class, arboretum walk, yoga in room 206, presidents' office event (1030-1130), line dancing.
- Lunch-no outside catering too expensive, dining will provide limited menu with hood project
- Afternoon 2-4-bingo (what kind of prizes can be given out?) Contact Lynn.
- Raffles-Lisa will head up

### **Staff Concerns & Suggestion Box**

- Job security and morale
- Meeting minutes

### **Other Topics**

- None

**Adjournment: 11:59AM**