

VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS
9:30 A.M.; THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024
Gateway Dining & Events Center
(on the campus of Virginia State University)
(No Public Comment Period Scheduled)

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER..... Dr. Leonard Haynes III, Chair

ROLL CALL

INVOCATION (*Pastor Seth Ahmad-McQueen, Director of Campus Ministries*)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES (if any)

- April 25, 2024 Meeting Minutes

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS.....Dr. Makola M. Abdullah

CLOSED SESSION (if any)

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- New Student Policy Updates..... Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter
Vice President, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management
- Academic Affairs Updates.....Dr. Tia A. Minnis
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Fall Enrollment and Housing UpdatesDr. Alexis Brooks-Walter
Vice President, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management
- Safety and Security ReportChief David Bragg
VSU Police Department

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024
MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Leonard Haynes, Chair, called the Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting to order at approximately 9:45 a.m. The meeting was held in the Gateway Dining & Event Center located on the campus of Virginia State University.

ROLL CALL

A quorum was present.

Committee Members Present:

Dr. Leonard Haynes, III, Chair
Mr. Thomas Cosgrove
Dr. Robert Denton, Jr.
Mr. M. Peter McPherson
Ms. Daphne Meeks
Mr. Edward Owens (electronic participation)
General (Ret) Dennis L. Via
Dr. Valerie Brown, Rector (Ex-officio)

Mr. Edward Owens participated electronically from South Boston, VA due to medical reasons.

Board Appointees:

Professor Tracy Jackson, Faculty Representative
Ms. Jaila Walton (*sitting in for Yousif Omer, Student Representative*)

Other Members Present:

Mr. Victor Branch
Dr. Harold Green, Jr.
Dr. Joseph A. F. Chase, Jr.

Administration Present:

Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, President
Dr. Tia A. Minnis, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs
Mr. Kevin Davenport, Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration/CFO
Ms. Tonya S. Hall, Vice President for Advancement and External Engagement
Ms. Shawri King-Casey, Vice President for Institutional Integrity and Compliance
Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
Dr. Annie Redd, Chief of Staff/Director, Board of Operations & Relations

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INVOCATION

Chair Haynes invited Pastor Seth Ahmad-McQueen to offer the invocation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The committee approved the agenda by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The committee approved the previous minutes from the April 25, 2024 meeting by voice vote.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Abdullah welcomed and acknowledged the board members for their service. New board members were thanked and welcomed.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

New Student Policy Updates

Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter, VP for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, presented student policies, expression, and assembly updates. Modifications have been made to the student code of contact booklet where updates have been completed for the following: laws governing our students' violation of laws, new/updated regulations, and new/updated ordinances. The updates and changes are designed to give greater protection for our students. Questions were asked by the committee members on whether derogatory language was included and if there was sensitivity in judgment included in the student conduct policy. Dr. Brooks-Walter introduced Ms. Cathleen Braxton, Director of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices. Ms. Braxton stated that not only is derogatory language included but inappropriate attire is as well. As it relates to judgment, students are fairly judged case by case. Visitor Haynes asked if the code of conduct is reviewed by legal, and he also asked if the students have to sign the policy. Dr. Brooks-Walter responded that the policy is reviewed by our legal counsel; and although it is not signed, it is communicated through many platforms such as orientation, welcome week, in-dorm meetings, and training for student leaders.

About student assembly, A Visitor inquired about the wearing of masks and head coverings. Ms. King-Casey stated that there would be types of circumstances where masks could be worn. The Visitor also asked about the identification of students. The response is that there is language for students to identify themselves when asked. License plate readers have been installed for those coming onto campus. There is also signage posted to show (VSU) IDs. There was a question about riots and protests. President Abdullah stated that he had a meeting with all the University presidents and Governor Youngkin. Most institutions are quiet. The president is optimistic, especially with the changes in university policies. He acknowledged that most protests are against the president.

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A Visitor wanted to know if the attorney(s) looked at all this information. Ms. King-Casey stated that they had and the policy has been discussed at length. Language has been updated about Policy 5902 (Building Permits for Temporary Structures) and Policy 4200 (University Facility Use and Cost Recovery Policy). Policy 5902 had added language that prohibits the construction, occupying, or sleeping in tents or camping on university-owned or operated properties unless approved in advance by the university. Updates to Policy 4200 state that the university has the right to cancel or reschedule a scheduled event when it conflicts with University affairs or events sponsored by the University.

Academic Affairs Update

Academic affairs updates were given by Dr. Tia A. Minnis, Provost and VP for Academic Affairs. Provost Minnis gave highlights on the new programs. State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) and SACSOC (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) have approved: an MBA in Business Administration, an M.S. in Data Analytics, and a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering and the introduction of dual degrees in the Bachelor's degree program for chemistry and chemical life science engineering. The MBA program had over 100 applications and 69 currently enrolled. Provost Minnis thanked Dr. Omojokun and his team for their work in getting this program underway. She also thanked Dr. Haile for their 2 new programs. Provost Minnis recognized Drs. Shuford, Michelle Corley, and Dr. Robert Corley for their work on this. Currently, VSU has 67-degree programs, 19 graduate programs, 2 doctoral programs, and 9 certificate programs with 8 fully online programs. She shared information on our accreditation agencies and walked through why accreditation is needed for the university. Provost Minnis presented the committee report on the SACSCOC fifth-year Interim Review and the standards that the committee looked at specifically. There are next steps that the committee is working on as well as a quality enhancement plan for our students. She mentioned that VSU has the green light in accreditation for the RN to BSN in nursing, the master in social work degree, and the BA/BM in Music. For students, a component has been added for a degree plus which allows students to have accelerated degrees through Trojan2, multiple degrees through the BIS, and career experiences through badges, internships, and a new all-freshman initiative (internships) through IBM. She concluded this presentation with an overview of enrollment data trends and demographics of our freshman population.

Fall Enrollment and Housing Updates

Fall enrollment and housing updates were given by Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walter. Dr. Brooks-Walter gave an overview of the Fall enrollment and shared the numbers of enrollment. Fall 2024 applications and admissions have increased as well as the numbers for transfer students. Graduate applications and registration have also increased. Over 3,900 beds have been filled. Freshmen students were given care boxes. Initiatives are in place for our students to be successful.

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Safety and Security Report

Chief David Bragg presented his safety and security report to the Board. Chief Bragg reported on the incidents around campus and off. He reported the plans for the safety of the university as well as the measures that the police department is taking to make sure that the campus is secured. Discussion followed regarding whether salaries were competitive and incentives for students to report crimes. Chief Bragg continues to have safety training for his officers to be prepared to fully support the campus.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chair Haynes called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was properly moved and seconded. The committee voted by voice vote and the chair adjourned the meeting at 12:27 pm.

APPROVED:

Leonard Haynes
Chair

Annie C. Reed

11/15/2024
Date