

CPAC Attendees: Greg Dieringer, Stephanie Kiba, Cora Moretta, Jeanette Carson, Laura Conley, Courtney Johnson-Benson, Kimberly Beyer, Chris Stimler, Sonya Wagner, Nate Meeker, Eric Veigel, Thad Doyle, Abbey Shiban, Dorothy Gruich, Alan Parker, Taylor Sminchak and Alison Doehring

Excused:

1. Open Meeting:

- a. Stephanie Kiba, Chair of CPAC, opened the meeting calls at 3:32pm

2. Approval of the Agenda:

- a. (Motion) Alan, (Second) Dorothy; no opposed.

3. Approval of the Minutes:

- a. (Motion) Cora Moretta, (Second) Laura Conley; no opposed

4. Budget Report

- a. \$106 expenditures - \$3761.33 in the budget. Need to start spending in spring semester, specifically for professional development and socials.
 - A meeting will be scheduled with SEAC to bring both groups together to plan a social or professional development.

5. UC Committee Updates:

- a. **Budget & Finance (Abbey Shiban):** No updates – meets tomorrow, December 15
- b. **Communications (Nate Meeker):**
- c. **Information Technology (Cora Moretta):**
- d. **Institutional Advancement (Sonya Wagner):**
- e. **Physical Environment (Dorothy Gruich):**
- f. **Recreation & Wellness (Chris Stimler):**
- g. **Student Engagement & Success (Greg Dieringer):**
- h. **Talent Development & Human Resources (Laura Conley):**
- i. **University Council (Courtney Johnson-Benson & Jeanette Carson):** Meeting was December 7 – discussed ERP system – UC is looking to ad hoc committee for social engagement committee, such as food truck. If you are interested, you can email Heather Longley or Jeanette
 - Concerns with timeline – 90 days. There is a lack of staff in several areas that will be implementing new system.
 - UA does not have IT staff to implement this like we did 20+ years ago

6. New Business

- a. Summer Hours: 3:00pm-4:30pm – Jeanette, then Alan seconded – Brittany will correct meeting invitations
- b. Q&A with President Miller | see next document

7. Other Comments/ Announcements

8. Adjournment from CPAC

- a. Stephanie Kiba, Chair of CPAC, adjourned the meeting at 4:59pm. (Motion) Alan Parker, (Second) Eric Veigel; no opposed.

CPAC & President Gary Miller | Q & A
December 14th, 2021

Introduction from President Miller

- University of Akron is in a period of transition. President Miller shared that UA is not in danger of going away or defaulting but we are in a situation because of financial challenges. However, our path to posterity is clear but narrow at the same time.
- The ERP system organizes our daily activity in the workforce. It shows who is doing what, when, and where. Several of CPACS questions suggest that UA is behind and President Miller agrees. Due to the large cuts in 2015, UA hallowed out several large parts of the institution and was never able to rebalance after that.
- President Miller stated that he does anticipate compensation adjustment as we start hitting enrollment numbers. Long term survival is the correct implementation of this ERP and enrollment. He doesn't anticipate a huge deduction in staff but compensation is limited for the next couple of years.
- UA is currently \$360 million in overall debt, which is equivalent to \$32 million in debt service each year. Once we hit closer to 20,000 students, UA will have a financial model that is closer to stable. The next 3-4 years UA will focus on enrollment as we currently have below 17,000 students enrolled.

Raises/FWA

- Will the Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA) continue going forward?
 - It isn't just about remote work but also about adjusting/flexible schedules. We do plan to continue this arrangement. There are some areas in the university that we are unable to use this policy because they are student facing departments and those areas are more reluctant to approve those arrangements. We do plan to continue this and we do not believe it is being abused.
- Is the university looking to give a general raise in compensation to contract professionals due to inflation?
 - In the next year or 2, we do not have in the budget for compensation. If the enrollment targets are met, everybody would receive increased based compensation.
 - Every institution has different financial situations and history. We do not have a systematic plan to give everyone raises. We don't want to do this until we get ERP implemented and do the compensation study out of Human Resources. We want to make sure that positions deserve the money that Kent State is paying. For example, are they paying someone because they have a larger budget or that position deserves that amount of money?

Hiring/Employee Retention

- Some offices have lost about 40% of their workers and are struggling to hire competent staff. What will the administration do to ensure that they will continue to offer competitive compensation (pay, benefits, flexibility)?
 - This is truly a national challenge – everyone seems to be having this issue. We handle on those for case by case basis and we have better benefits compared to private entities. For example, the physical plant is having difficulty hiring.

COVID

- There are concerns within departments about the mandate that all employees be vaccinated. We understand that most employees are vaccinated, while others are not because of religious beliefs or other objections. Many contract professionals fear they will lose dependable employees because of the mandate. Do you foresee any changes to the vaccination mandate?
 - In the State of Ohio, we cannot mandate vaccines. It is against the law and we can't mandate testing if you don't have a vaccine. We also have to give exemptions.
 - Executive order – personal conscious one—it is important to get people vaccinated but very little we can do.
 - No school in Ohio has a different vaccination policy.
 - 70-80% of students are vaccinated and that is a similar percentage to faculty. UA's case rates have been relatively low. We do believe our vaccination percentage is higher because some students don't want to share their vaccination status with us for a variety of reasons.

Morale/Burnout

- Many contract professionals have taken on additional duties, sometimes the work of two to three positions without a change in compensation. Often this leads to employees working over a 40-hour work week, feeling unable to take earned vacation, and burnout. When CP's continue to overwork, the administration is unaware a problem exists. What is a realistic way to address this concern as an institution, at the departmental level, etc.?
 - If you are not allowed to take your leave, you need to report it. Supervisors are responsible for two things: completing work and permitting leave.
 - President Miller believes it would be a good idea to schedule visits with non-academic areas for listening session, which would include him and Provost. He asked Stephanie Kiba to start making a list that makes sense for them to visit.
 - As a UA community, don't forget to give others morale support.
 - A CPAC representative suggested faculty, staff, and CPs receive 2 free tickets to an athletic game as one morale boost across campus. President Miller suggested us to email Charles Guthrie.

Physical Environment/Safety

- We are excited about the campus updates, including the new cameras and infrastructure. However, we often see our current and visiting students tripping and falling over the broken or missing bricks on campus. Can we get the bricks fixed on campus?
 - President Miller stated that it is part of 6 year capital plan that UA just submitted to the IUC for the Capital budget. \$16.5 million was requested and quite a bit of that will go to the project for Buchtel Common.
- What updates do you have regarding safety on campus?
 - Kari Jackson is doing a great job. We need to step it up and make campus safer.
 - A CPAC representative shared information about the past Campus Escort Service, which were previously trained by UAPD and helped transport students. This was a great opportunity to provide internships for Criminal Justice majors. This representative asked if this was something UA was willing to bring back?
 - We've had some preliminary conversations with Undergraduate Student Government and will put on the agenda with Grace, Undergraduate Student Government President.

- Off-Campus, particularly south of campus, will have block by block escorting services.

Technology

- Contract professionals expressed several concerns with the new ERP system, particularly regarding staffing levels in IT Support. Students and staff have reported long wait times for tickets to be resolved. Is there a plan to hire and support the IT department on campus?
 - Yes, it is. This budget includes additional staffing for IT.

Enrollment

- What plans are in the works to better advertise and showcase the faculty/program strengths here at UA?
 - Every college has an enrollment team and goals. Provost and President have visited them all. The Associate Vice President of Enrollment is a new position and one we haven't had in a while. 9600 applications is the very optimistic goal for January 2022. We are currently on track to receive 9,000, which is 5-6% increase.
 - UA is currently increasing marketing efforts, such as television, print ads, and focused a lot of market on areas we have lost previously. Areas include Pittsburg, Western Pennsylvania, Cincinnati, and Columbus. We have received increased interest due to these marketing efforts.
 - In January, we will shift our focus from applications to future Zips committing to UA.
 - Kennedy and Company has reviewed and restricting our scholarship foundation. Currently, we are giving a lot of money to kids that already have a lot of money. This restructure will be ready in spring.
 - President Miller recommended that CPAC has the Provost and Cher at a future meeting to discuss enrollment and how CPAC can assist.

General Ideas

- In the past, UA had several wear college colors days on campus like "Roos wear Blues." Can we create a culture or campaign for Blue and Gold Fridays again? Can we make it easier or cheaper for employees to get Zips apparel?
 - We already do that and was announced at the beginning of the fall semester. Our team can do a little better to advertise. Everyone in Buchtel wears blue and gold on Fridays.
 - It has been difficult receiving new Nike apparel due to supply chain issues.
- How can UA work with other institutions?
 - Ohio doesn't have a university system like New York, North Carolina, etc.
 - There are larger conversations being had about IT security and sustainability carbon footprint but in a more informal manner.
 - If you have ideas, please send to President Miller, Dallas Grundy, or the Provost.

Additional Questions from CPAC

- Has UA discussed increasing evening and weekend college programs and classes?
 - President Miller stated that he doesn't understand why we aren't open all the time. He hopes in the future we are offering more evening classes. He hasn't seen as much traction on this topic but will continue to bring this up.
- Several academic programs have been eliminated over the past years. Are you currently revisiting bringing some, if any, of these programs back?

- Provost is actively evaluating these programs – at least 1 has been restored. Faculty Senate has a new committee to assist the Provost on where to need to invest. You will also probably see more conversation about where we need to hire more faculty.

Conclusion from President Miller

This is a critical and transitional time for UA. However, we are very optimistic. I appreciate you having me attend a CPAC meeting. Thank you for your continued great work. Let's schedule our meeting for the spring semester.