
MONTGOMERY COLLEGE GOVERNANCE

Staff Council

April 2, 2020

CT S301

1:00pm-3:00pm

Attendees:

- Members Present: Shakenna Adams-Gormley (Chair), Brooke Crothers, Ramon De La Cruz (Vice Chair), Vickie Drake, Stacey Gustavson, Erin Hudgins (Secretary), Christine Hunt, Tilandra Rhyne, Carroll Rollman, Amanda Stroud, Jacquelyn Williams, Matt Wilson
- Invited Guests: Dr. DeRionne Pollard, Mr. David Sears

Call to Order

The regular meeting was called to order at 1:03pm by Chair Shakenna Adams-Gormley.

Constituent Concerns:

Shakenna Adams-Gormley shared a concern from staff wanting to know if the College would allow adjustments to health FSAs and dependent care FSAs based on the pandemic.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the March 5 meeting were not ready for approval.

Fourth Campus Project Exploration – David Sears

Senior Vice President Sears shared information about the exploration project regarding a potential fourth campus. The County Council had asked the College to consider opening a fourth campus on the east side of the county. This area is the most vulnerable in the county in terms of jobs and income, and a large proportion of elementary school students are on free or reduced lunch programs. The College asked the County Council for money to conduct a feasibility study to make sure that opening a fourth campus would meet the needs and mission of the College, as well as the needs of the community. Any facility that the College opened would need to be a fully functional campus, which could have some benefits for the College such as an additional technology hub to support expanded online course delivery options. Any location would need to be accessible to the Purple line and the local FLASH rapid transit, be able to support on-site parking, and be able to support athletics and lab (science and hospitality) facilities. Whether the College can proceed with the proposed feasibility study will depend on the impact of the current pandemic.

General Updates and Q&A – President DeRionne Pollard

Dr. Pollard shared her thanks to the staff for meeting the challenges imposed by the pandemic and remote working and learning, for everyone's patience, and for the kindnesses employees are sharing with each other and the students. Dr. Pollard then answered questions that the Council had prepared for her. The first question was regarding the procedures for assisting staff with technology issues. Dr. Pollard shared that plans that had already been in place were for short-term weather-related closures, not for an extended closure such as the current pandemic.

Supervisors were asked to provide a list of their employees who had technology needs in order to work remotely. Over 400 laptops have been distributed to those identified. If anyone still needs equipment, they should let their supervisor know. The College is looking into other resources and into solutions for connectivity problems. The second question was to determine if leave reporting would be suspended through the end of the semester. Dr. Pollard said that the suspension of leave reporting was temporary while the College got guidance from the Federal government regarding leave reporting, and that a memo about leave would be coming out soon from Human Resources. The third question asked if there would be furloughs later in the year because of the pandemic. Dr. Pollard stated that furloughs were not currently being discussed. The College is sticking to our existing budget as well as we can, and it is anticipated that we will receive same level funding for next fiscal year. The pandemic will cause several changes to working environments, and it is ironic that the College had just begun conversations about the future of work when this happened. The fourth question asked if there had been any consideration of flexibility for employees if the College returns to working on campus before public schools and/or childcare facilities open, so that minor children are still at home. Dr. Pollard said that this had not been discussed yet, and that returning to campus is hard to predict. The College and its employees will have to remain adaptable when we do return to campus. The fifth question for Dr. Pollard was to clarify if departments are allowed to set their own policies, or if they can only set guidelines, which seem to be less stringent. Dr. Pollard explained that policies are set by the Board of Trustees only, and that any plans developed by departments should not be referred to as policies. She also cautioned that departmental guidelines or regulations frequently have unintended impacts on other departments and can cause confusion for students.

Chair Report – Shakenna Adams-Gormley

There were no Policies & Procedures up for review. Ms. Adams-Gormley attended the most recent SVPAA meeting which mostly had updates related to Covid-19. The Coronavirus website is being updated regularly and frequently. Some students are driving to campus and sitting in their cars in the parking lot in order to access the WiFi because they don't have access at home. At this time the plan is for Summer I classes to be remote and for Summer II classes to be a blend of remote and in-person, but that will depend on the Governor's orders. A Withdrawal in Crisis (WC) and Incomplete in Crisis (IC) have been created for students with major challenges during the Spring semester. The College will NOT be going to a pass/fail grading system for the Spring semester. ATPA and Learning Centers doing online sessions. A plan is being developed for placement testing remotely.

Unfinished Business

- Equity & Inclusion Awards – Amir Khademi. The deadline for nominations has been moved to the end of April. Awards were going to be announced at the Equity Summit, but an alternate plan will be developed.
- Staff Awards – Amanda Stroud. The committee met, did their work, and relayed their selections to Dr. Pollard's office. Their meetings were conducted via Zoom.
- Professional Development Leave Committee – Tilandra Rhyne. The committee finally got access to documents and filled in the rest of the committee. Some applications are missing information and they are working to get the missing materials.

- Shuttle Concern – Amanda Stroud. This concern was passed to the Student Council and they assured us they would let us know if they need assistance from us.

New Business:

- There is no new business at this time.

Respectfully submitted by
Erin Hudgins, Staff Council Secretary