

**Academic Committee Meeting**  
**July 27, 2021**  
**11:00am-12:30pm**  
**IN-PERSON/ZOOM**

**Attendees:**

Bagchi, Rajesh  
Boyle, Kevin  
Carlson, Kevin  
Ghandforoush, Parviz  
Gnyawali, Devi  
Hall, Janice Branch  
Hunnings, Kay  
Khansa, Lara  
Maher, Jack  
Mitchell, Elizabeth  
Russell, Robin  
Singal, Vijay  
Sumichrast, Robert  
Xiang, Phil

**Absent:**

**Recording Secretary**

Ridpath, Kimberly

**Minutes/Action Items/Announcements**

Dean Sumichrast welcomed the committee for an exciting first in-person meeting since the pandemic. Sumichrast reported that Pamplin's online MBA program that was launched in early July. Parviz Ghandforoush shared 35 students were selected for the first cohort. The new class is quite diverse.

Robin Russell announced the panel discussion, "Leading Conversation on AI," a partnership with Deloitte. Panelists featured are Janine Hiller from Pamplin and a representative from Hume Center.

August 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to register your vaccine status; Sumichrast has encouraged the committee to share this deadline with their faculty and staff. The committee briefly discussed various issues that could arise for vaccinated and non-vaccinated faculty, staff, and student interaction.

Sumichrast announced Jack Maher will finish up five years as department head and will go back to faculty after the fall semester. The committee congratulated Jack on his success as head of ACIS.

## **Planning for Returning to In-Person Work for Fall**

Kay Hunnings has compiled and shared the plans for each department. Each plan begins with a set of guiding principles. Sumichrast discussed these plans with the committee. Offices must be open within working hours and the plans will be updated appropriately as conditions change. Hunnings reported on the pilot program for the university's "Future of Work" project. Sumichrast discussed class expectations for the fall semester. Rooms can be used to 100% capacity and there is no provision for social distancing. All students and the instructor must wear masks. All university employees who have not demonstrated that they are vaccinated will be required to be tested for Covid on frequent basis—initially weekly. There was an open discussion on potential situations that could arise and actions the college or university will take to resolve. Some questions remain unanswered so the college will invite leaders to meet with the Academic Committee before classes begin.

New faculty and staff reception will take place on August 26<sup>th</sup> from 3:30-5:00 p.m., in the Holtzman Alumni Center. The event is planned to be outside under a tent. Sumichrast encourages everyone to attend.

There will not be a welcome back picnic this coming fall, but we do plan to pick up with in person events, later in the fall semester. August 20<sup>th</sup>, in lieu of the picnic, Lara Khansa announced an event the undergraduate office will hold for incoming freshman. She will share the details with the committee following the meeting.

## **Fall undergraduate class**

Lara Khansa shared the fall undergraduate freshman class statistics, comparing 2020 to 2021. Pamplin continues to be very popular with undergraduates. The incoming class is more diverse on many dimensions.

## **Reorganization (UG and DEIB)**

Janice Branch Hall, Pamplin's Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) described the mission for her role and office. She reported on the reorganization that will centralize functions related to students/alumni, faculty/staff. In particular, some of the services for recruiting undergraduates and providing resources for retention/success that were previously part of UG programs will now also be part of DEIB. Hall and Khansa are working very closely together to make sure we continue to provide the needed services. The changes and future goals are fully aligned with Pamplin Strategic Plan and section 5.6 of Pamplin's Implementation Plan.

Hall's position will continue to include support for departments in identifying and recruiting underrepresented minority and women faculty. She will continue to be a resource to the Pamplin Community Committee, business center, departments, and advisory boards. Khansa shared the Embedded Counselor will start August 10<sup>th</sup>.

Hall shared details on the Graduate Ethics and Inclusivity Training. The university requires two trainings for in-coming graduates—one that is developed by the university with an online learning module and second training is developed by each college.

### **Administrative Assessment**

Kevin Carlson shared that the associate deans have been working on the required administrative assessment. This assessment aligns with the Implementation Plan and goals set in the PIBB model. Carlson said one goal was to use existing assessment processes rather than requiring additional work. Part of this requirement feeds into SACS accreditation.

### **BIT Cyber**

Sumichrast shared that BIT Cyber is one of the specialized programs that align with other programs, to help the college. They are not designed to be owned by the departments regarding funding/resources. Robin Russell discussed this new BIT Cyber that is taking place in Northern Virginia. She shared they are off to a slow start but moving in the right direction. They are aligning our curriculum to the Northern Virginia Community College's curriculum. They just signed an articulation agreement that will say exactly what the students' need to take at the community college, to get the maximum benefit as they are moving into BIT Cyber. This way those students will know in the beginning if they are transferring into Virginia Tech and will take the right classes they need. Russell continues to encourage the committee to provide any help or suggestions to improve this program and gain some flexibility. Sumichrast shared that this pilot is the only Virginia Tech undergraduate degree offered in Northern Virginia.

### **Action Items:**

1. Kim will schedule an additional academic committee, inviting an HR representative, to specifically discuss "returning to fall" and the issues that may arise for vaccinated and non-vaccinated faculty or staff.
2. Kim will also schedule a meeting explained above, for the entire faculty and staff, with this same HR representative, etc.
3. The committee will develop a list of questions related to returning to the classrooms this fall.