College Senate Meeting
October 15th 2015

Members Present:

Alexandria: Margaret Emblom-Callahan, Alka Gandhi, Kirsten Riddick, Ruth Takushi, Matt Todd
Annandale: Vicki Budd, Laura McCullough, DeQuan Smith, Jo Ann Short
Loudoun: Michael Polcen, William Straight
Manassas: Corey Esparza, Susan Givens, Barbara Lash, Marcie Schreibman
MEC: Andy Cornell, Patty Ottavio
Woodbridge: Cynthia Alvarado, Megan Davies, Alison Thimblin, Sue Thompson
College Staff: Shannon Ingram
ELI: Kristin Shriver Hagan, Christy Jensen
Pres App: Charlotte Calobrisi, Kerin Hilker, Chad Knights, Beatrice Veney
Students: John Bownik (AN), Vincent Cordrey (AL), Joye Thomas (MA)

Alternates: Jill MacDiarmid for Heidi Adamson, Walter Pehrsson for Frank Ferrara, William Jacoby for Maria Liappis


Guests: Ms. Sarah Bogdewiecz, Vice Chair, Personnel Services Committee, Dr. Preston Davis, Chair, Instructional and Student Services Committee, Ms. Stephanie Sareeram, Chair, Personnel Services Committee and President Ralls.

College Recorder: Norie Flowers

Call to Order

Chair Matt Todd called the meeting to order and welcomed Senators and students Mr. John Bownik (AN), Mr. Vincent Cordrey (AL) and Ms. Joye Thomas (MA) and asked the new student Senators to introduce themselves.
Report from Personnel Services Committee

PSC Chair Stephanie Sareeram, gave a brief overview of the mandate of the committee charged with taking on personnel-related issues for faculty and staff to ensure they are all represented with fairness and equity.

Ms. Sareeram presented adjusted language to the original request to propose official language for instruction at NOVA approved sites. The new language approved by the PSC states:

Instruction, other than that delivered through distance learning (which includes the virtual portion of hybrid classes), is to be conducted on campus unless otherwise approved by the academic dean and provost. Under no circumstances may faculty and students meet in a private home for instruction as either all or part of a course offered by the College.

As a result of the recent change to the proposed language above, Mr. Todd moved the request for approval of this policy to the November meeting in order to give Senators time to review and discuss the changes.

Other PSC issues that will be coming forward to the Senate include: proposed language concerning summer faculty stipends; the question of position equity across the college; and, a proposal for a reasonable contract and budget process for Assistant Dean summer work and pay.

Personnel Services Committee Classified Professional Development

PSC Vice Chair Sarah Bogdewiecz presented the Classified Staff Professional Development/Cross Campus Day Proposal for the reinstatement of a permanent classified staff development day similar to Convocation and Power Up Your Pedagogy Conference for faculty. The following recommendations incorporate feedback from a survey done among classified staff and include:

- An outside keynote speaker and in-house breakout sessions
- A proposed budget of $16,000 (the budgeted amount for previous Cross-Campus Days and approved this year by Finance)
- Timeline of late May or early June, with 6 months minimum planning timeline
- The venue to be the Annandale Campus
- The formation of a Committee comprised of mostly of a broad representation of classified staff and also including representatives from HR, the Professional Development Committee and the Personnel Services Committee.
Ms. Bogdewiecz underscored the importance of Cross Campus Day for classified staff and the desire to see the program continued. Changing the timing of the event to an early summer date would allow for proper planning and increased attendance and closing offices for a day would maximize the number of classified staff who could participate. There should also be a continuous effort to make the event better year-over-year, and doing so would positively affect the reputation of Cross Campus Day as a meaningful event that seeks to provide staff with a day of learning and networking.

Senators questioned the unrestricted expense budget line item of $3,191.00 and Ms. Bogdewiecz responded that this was essentially for any unanticipated expenses. Senators also questioned how the determination would be made for the type of programming chosen. Ms. Bogdewiecz responded that this was the reason representatives of the Professional Development Committee were included in the planning.

Mr. Todd reiterated that one of the responsibilities of the Professional Development Committee is to look at whether we are meeting the needs of the faculty and staff.

A motion was made, seconded without objection, and carried to endorse the Classified Staff Professional Development/Cross Campus Day proposal.

A second motion was made, seconded without objection, and carried to refer the Classified Staff Professional Development/Cross Campus Day proposal to the Administrative Council.

Report from Instructional and Student Services Committee

Dr. Preston Davis, Chair of the Instructional and Student Services Committee introduced the mandate of the Committee to receive proposals from the College Senate, Campus Councils, Working Groups, and College community and make recommendations pertaining to the quality of education in the College, student life and the welfare of the student body of the College. The committee studies, gathers information, conducts discussions and surveys the intellectual and/or student environment, academic standards and teaching-learning conditions in the College.

Dr. Davis presented the 2014-15 Year in Review, highlights of which were: recommended the creation of a Veteran's Task Force; provided input on student e-forms; began discussions on consolidation of college calendars; approved changes to the International Travel policies; supported college-wide adjunct orientation; supported literacy rubric designed by college librarians; supported the ENF faculty’s recommendations that students be allowed to move from ENF 1 to ENF 2 and that there be continued and additional tutoring support; proposed revision to the Faculty Handbook regarding final exam policies; and, drafted a syllabus prototype. Additional information on the last two issues may be found in the April 17, 2015, ISSC minutes on the college website at the following link:

http://www.nvcc.edu/about/leadership/collegeforum/committees/issc.html
Dr. Davis reported that a proposal was forwarded to the Senate last year for the creation of an ELI subcommittee made up of 3 members of the ISSC, 3 from the PSC and 3 Senators. The first meeting of this group was cancelled with a new date planned. Members are:

- PSC: Nancy Severe-Barnett, Jimmie McClellan, Joan Osborne
- ISSC: Anne Loochtan, Charles Kellermann, Preston Davis
- Senate: Chad Knights, Frank Ferrara, Christy Jensen

This year initial ISSC committee meetings will focus on student success and the effectiveness of the GPS initiatives, paying particular attention to student orientation.

Dr. Davis reported that the ISSC rejected the motion on class attendance sent to them by the Senate last month. Given the lack of mandate or specific language in the faculty handbook, ISSC members were hesitant to recommend a broad college-wide attendance policy for faculty and further asked that the input from the other groups asked to comment on the motion be forwarded to the ISSC for possible further discussion. On the issue of locking doors, committee members recommended that this issue be referred to the Chief of Police.

Senators were not in universal agreement on whether there should be a college-wide attendance policy. Some felt it important to have a baseline and guidelines but with instructor discretion. Others believed there were sufficient guidelines in place to deal with students who repeatedly arrive late to class. Student Senators voiced their opinion that part of coming to NOVA is to prepare for a career and attending class on time was part of the preparation. They also indicated that student conduct and the process for violations of that conduct are addressed in the Student Handbook and that another policy wasn’t needed.

**Faculty Handbook Revision: LTRDC**

Mr. Todd presented the LTR membership revisions to Senators for approval, to include clarification on the ELI Director position to ensure that the right person was included and the addition of an Ex Officio Provost, a common addition to many of the college committees.

A motion was made, seconded without objection, and carried to approve the amended LTRDC membership.

**Campus Council Updates:**

Annandale: Student success issues, attendance policy, scheduling and enrollment were all agenda items. The Council is drafting an amendment to the current VA Senate Bill on mental health to include community colleges for a full-time mental health counselor on campus. The Council is also drafting a letter to NOVA’s President to request clarification on why the Segal study was not followed during the recent salary increases.
President of the College

Dr. Ralls began his conversation by saying he was most recently president of a 58 community college system in which the goals for transparency were important, and in that position, he appreciated the feedback and opportunity to pass around ideas and to dispel rumors. The strength of the college is the strength of the faculty and staff.

When asked about vision, he lay emphasis on the fact that you don’t want a president to show up with a new vision. Vision is something already here, and the goal at NOVA is to move forward and to build on what we have and be better. In 2010 the college made a commitment to student success. These words captured our role as a community college and gateway to the American dream.

Dr. Ralls stressed three things special about community colleges and important to him:

- **A Workforce Engine for the Region** - helping people reach opportunities and helping the community by creating jobs. Our constituents expect this from us. We are a technology hub and are one of the leading cyber and medical colleges. It is important for faculty to collectively move forward in achieving these goals. In North Carolina over 1,000 faculty members across the state redesigned technical education, particularly with green jobs, providing industry certification and stackable credentials.

- **The Seam in Seamless Education** - reaching out to the other sectors – public schools, Pathway programs, systemic solutions, and connecting to universities. Most of our students go to a handful of colleges, 58% to Mason and Mason has more transfers than new students and most of these transfers come from NOVA.

- **Pathway to the American Dream** – and being more than a gateway as many students revolve out. We need to keep our tuition low because it isn’t helping low income students if we have high tuition. Curriculum with guided pathways is important. We are a pathway college, not a destination college. People go to NOVA to get a better job or a university degree. The more we can clear that structured pathway for them, the better we are doing our job.

Dr. Ralls presented an overview of the recently launched national Pathways Project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and in which NOVA has applied to be one of 30 colleges to be selected to participate. The initiative focuses on building capacity for community colleges to design and implement structured academic and career pathways at scale. The project will engage five-person teams of varying composition from a selected group of 30 colleges. All will support committed community colleges in work to design and implement clear, structured student pathways to high quality credentials that are aligned both to university transfer and to jobs with value in the labor market.

Dr. Ralls also highlighted the challenges every colleges faces particularly in connection with budget. The good news is that we are not nearly as bad as other colleges, but the bad news is that enrollment is still down. We need to work on strategic budgeting issues with transparency, and, while not everyone will agree with the decisions, he will always be transparent about them. We are .9 percent down in enrollment which is better now but the challenge is that we had a 6 percent drop in summer enrollment and one percent drop in fall. By the end of October, we will have a better sense about spring and whether projections tie into the budget estimations. We
also decided to allow dual enrollment to be free, the revenue of which is about a half million dollars.

Cost drivers for this year's budget included raises. While the state pays part, enrollment pays most of it. New facilities are another driver. We do not have any more reserves left. We've had reserves in the past to float the budget if needed and this year we used the remainder. Going forward, there is no more cushion.

The HR system is also broken. VCCS did an audit and, as a result, we have no more delegation authority. We need to know that every position and stipend is factored into the budget.

If we have a flat spring and enrollment doesn't go up – there will be budget challenges.

Comments from Senators included the question of the possibility of zero based budgeting and the philosophy of “one college.” Dr. Ralls responded that zero based is tough to do because you have to “fly the airplane while you are redesigning it” and you can’t shut everything down.

While great value in “one college,” there is also value in differentiation. We need to figure out the areas where “one college” works well and it will be primarily in the systems, the functions like payroll. Our purpose is instruction and opportunities and we need to focus on these core goals. We don’t want “NOVA franchises” but we want to do what works with some distinction. Full-time faculty drive programs. We need to look at campuses that are growing and campuses that are declining in enrollment.

Senators questioned whether we will be forced to make decisions that will affect students and asked for guidance. Dr. Ralls responded that we need to try not to impact instruction. Provosts have been given budget targets: 30 percent are taken at the campus and 70 percent at the administration level. We need to look at some specific areas, fall, spring and summer semesters and certain courses that we need to be strategic around as 50 percent of our students are enrolled in 25 percent of the 900 courses offered at NOVA.

Student Senators articulated that it was hard to meet with a professor for their office hours if they are traveling to several campuses and that the college offers so many classes and which students are not aware. Dr. Ralls emphasized the need to use technology to reach students, that it is may not be necessary to meet face to face every time. On the issue of not being aware of NOVA’s programs, Dr. Ralls again emphasized the need for a structured pathway, articulate and coherent, to prevent dead ends.

The issue of transfer credit was raised and Dr. Ralls stated the fact that Virginia does not have a system with the four-year colleges and the importance of this, as a result, to bring college leaders together. The good news is that 75% of our students come here to transfer and 79% of our students transfer to 5 institutions, most to Mason. We need to have a couple of expectations from four-year institutions: the need to know what courses are going to transfer and then give us a year if they change the programs. On flip side, we at NOVA need to offer the right courses.

Senators raised the issue that we tend to be reactionary since we don’t get information and they questioned how academic units could help. Dr. Ralls responded that, as a pathway college, we need to have strong engagement and we need the right conversations with universities. We need active and engaged advisory committees and we need to go out aggressively into our communities. Being inclusive in higher education is more important than being exclusive.
Dr. Ralls summed up his conversation by asking Senate members if they were in agreement with a structured pathway for NOVA’s students. All agreed to this viewpoint.