MINUTES

Attendance: Grace Young, co-chair; Sarah Aneyci; Sarah Brown; Geeta Chougule; Dawn Cummings; Laura Dobler; Kristine Dodd; Daisy Ferreira; Tara Greenwood; Catherine Hanni; Annemarie Kennedy; Michael Leitao; Derek Lisi; Abigail Peterson; Laura Pleasants; Jessica Pontarelli; Jennifer Quiroz; Felicia Raton; Barbara Simoneau; Maria Sokolova; Beth Travers; Ray Windsor; Yi Vizard

Absent: Joel Hernandez (on leave); Marguerite Joutz; Liisa Laine

1. Acceptance of meeting minutes: September 10, 2019

There were no objections to the minutes and they were accepted by all present members.

2. Guest Speaker: Eric Estes, Vice President for Campus Life & Student Services

Vice President Estes oversees a division of 18 departments and centers that support all students (undergraduate, graduate and medical) as well as some faculty and staff, building communities and ensuring that students thrive at and beyond Brown. He came to Brown in 2016 after 12 years at Oberlin and is SAC member Ray Windsor’s staff mentor.

Eric noted foremost that his community cares very much about students. He presented on guiding values and commitments, the Division of Campus Life, foundation building (including reducing barriers to compositional diversity, restructuring staffing and retooling resources), and defining strategic priorities, with highlights of some recent priorities.

Some major, if seemingly simple, focuses on expanding diversity have included crafting job descriptions with diversity and inclusion in mind, networking of position descriptions, and engaging in a process of incentives/interventions as needed.
Strategic planning stages have included engaging in the NEASC accreditation process, strengthening culture of and process for department and program reviews, and defining division-level strategic priorities/areas of focus, outcomes, and indicators.

Campus Life and Student Services has four major areas of focus: health/wellness, building community, residential experience, and operational experience (includes resources broadly defined). Imbedded priorities include developmental mentoring and diversity and inclusion. From a new health center and wellness-themed residence hall to reduced Health Services and CAPS wait times for appointments, Brown is focusing every day on supporting students. Examples:

- A new Community Dialogue Project trains students in skills to hear, understand and value others equitably to bring to other organizations for facilitating conversations and reducing confrontations.
- Communities are being strengthened and built; Brown’s Center for Undocumented, First-Generation College and Low-Income Students (U-FLI Center), created for and by students in 2016, is one of the first in the country, while Brown has worked in the past few years to establish the Global Brown Center for International Students, to renovate the Muslim Student Center, and to create a program house for Native American students.
- Brown is focusing resources on residential halls and thinking about community spaces, including a new lounge in the Graduate Center and the new dedicated study space in the library.

Eric noted that operational excellence comes down to putting people in a position to be successful, even if that means doing things a different way, and professional development measures taken by Eric’s division reflect that. Brown shouldn’t see people moving on to other employers as a failure but as a celebration for having provided them with the opportunities to grow their skills and experience. A new FUN Committee will be launching to celebrate staff achievement and build community. Peers being able to share information without judgment is a helpful activity.

Eric noted that Brown’s Residential Staff are among the hardest-working people on the planet. They are a public face to dealing with parents about things that are often beyond their control.

Because Eric’s PowerPoint presentation had been so detailed, SAC members had only a couple of questions.
Question: What events is the FUN Committee planning?
SAC member Tara Greenwood is on that committee and reported that the committee is planning a trivia night and a tailgating party with Brown sports for staff members of the division.

Question: How do Brown employees get updates on all this great stuff going on?
Eric is relying on people in the division to help spread the word. They just redesigned the website which has the information and now have an Instagram page, posting at least once a day on division activities. Most departments in the division distribute newsletters as well, so please go to their web pages and sign up!

Question: (Referring back to a bullet point about building community)
Do you really host 50+ dinners and receptions for students and more than a dozen for staff and faculty in your home every year?
Yes! Eric does host dozens events at his home each year, mainly for students but some for staff. He’d be happy to have SAC over sometime.

3. SAC Recruitment Lunch Updates

Reminder: Please bring at least one colleague with you to the lunch.

Kristine Dodd updated the group and she and next year’s co-chair Barbara Simoneau met recently about involving all of SAC. They like the idea of a table talk session with 1-2 SAC members at each table, with their name on a tent card, and following brief remarks we would have a breakout session where SAC members talk WITH potential recruits rather than having someone talk AT them. Kristine will work with Grace Young on table numbers. Christina Bernier from UHR should be added to the list of speakers to discuss the United Way campaign.

SAC members will be assigned to tables to serve as advocates for the Council. Barbara Simoneau will send a form tomorrow to SAC members to gauge responses.

As a second-year person, SAC members can request to remain on SAC for a second term. Barbara will send a survey to second-year SAC members checking in on their SAC thoughts.
4. Holiday Party Updates

- The location is confirmed at South Street Landing, using the multipurpose rooms as well as hallways for silent auction items, to encourage main campus folks to visit that part of campus.
- Grace Young met with events managers and will have updates at the next SAC meeting on details.
- Someone will reach out to Mike Leitao’s office to coordinate transportation. An outside company runs the shuttles and will need to know details preferably sooner than later. The frequency is 10 minutes for shuttles now, but if there will be huge numbers they will add more shuttles for the event.
- A DJ will provide music. It was asked whether the noise would be an issue for others in the shared building (URI and RIC nursing students), but the fourth floor is far enough away from others that they won’t be affected.
- The party is open to staff (but not inviting their families as well), and people must have a Brown ID to use the shuttle.

5. Volunteer and Event Committee Updates

- The Veterans Networking event is tomorrow, 9/25, at noon. There are spaces left, so please encourage colleagues to attend.
- Staff Trivia will be held on Wednesday, 10/23 with two sessions - 12 p.m. and 1 p.m.
- Faculty in Focus is confirmed for 11/14, and people will need to register once the link is up.
- 10/3-11/3: Brown staff are invited to volunteer for Jack-o-Lantern Spectacular.
- 10/7-10/16 is the U-FLI drive for winter clothing. Daisy Ferreira will host a box at Health Services. Please talk to her if you’d like to host a coat drive box as well. 10/17 will be an event where the collected items will be given away.
- At the Staff Trivia event, the Volunteer Committee would like a box to collect pet items for the Providence Animal Rescue League (PARL). Requested items include food, pet beds without zippers, and pet toys and leashes. Collected food in particular will help stock a pantry exchange located at PARL in Providence for people who need supplies for their pets. Daisy will bring the supplies to PARL once collected. Daisy will share a flyer for cats and dogs to go into the newsletter.
- In January, SAC can do the kindness bags for the holiday season after asking area hotels for donations. SAC could meet to assemble them in a half-gallon bag with things like snacks, gloves, socks, underwear, pads, etc. It was noted that items shouldn’t be separated out by gender, as those in the community share
Catherine Hanni asked about the Bear Market status. Her office has committed to sponsoring in October, but she has not received an overwhelming response; people still seem to be confused as to the need for food on Brown’s campus. Daisy Ferreira offered to speak with the Chaplain’s Office after coordinating with Yi Vizard. Health Services will sponsor the market in November, and Laura Dobler’s department (CIT) will sponsor the market in December.

### 6. Staff Concerns & Updates

Derek Lisi reported that employees from Dining Services asked about the tuition benefit for Brown for their kids. Step children are covered under health insurance at Brown but not tuition. They’re in a bargaining unit that’s in negotiations, and university-wide benefits are usually left off the table because they apply to all staff. What’s the reason behind the discrepancy between healthcare and tuition?

Jessica Pontarelli said this topic came up in a Human Resources meeting this morning. As it stands, she doesn’t know if there is a difference between bargaining and non-union employee benefits. The Corporation made the decision not to cover stepchildren for any employees. If the employee concerns were sent to Derek via email, she requested that Derek forward the email(s) so she can share them with the Interim Director of Benefits. The Corporation has stood firm on the policy because of cost savings, and there is no indication that they plan to change the policy. Adopted children, it was noted, are covered under the tuition benefit.

### Upcoming Events and Reminders:

- Veteran’s Networking event w/OMAS | Sept. 25 | 12-1 p.m. | Watson Institute Room 353
- Parent Networking event | Oct. 11 | 12-1 p.m. | Petteruti Lounge
- SAC Recruitment Lunch | Oct. 15 | 12-1:30 p.m. | Chancellor’s Dining Room - bring 1 colleague with you
- Staff trivia w/ SAO | Oct. 23 | 12-2 p.m. | Kasper Multipurpose Room
- Faculty in Focus event | Nov. 14 | Faculty Club
- Cultural Potluck | Nov. 4 | 12:30-1:30 p.m. | South Street Landing 497 & 498
- Holiday party | December 5 | 4-6 p.m. | South Street Landing

*The next scheduled SAC meeting is on Tuesday, October 22nd at 12 p.m. at South Street*
Landing.