

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF VISITORS RETREAT**

*August 24-25, 2023*

**MINUTES**

The Rector highlighted two quotes from the book sent by President Hemphill for later discussion. The first, from Chapter One is, “What are the foundational traits of a successful institution? First and foremost, the right leadership is an absolutely essential piece of moving an institution from survive to thrive.” Another quote says, “The most important function of the board is to find the best possible and most experienced and visionary president and let the president manage and advance the college.” This is where we are today. It is a good reminder, though, that our role as a board is not to run the institution, but to support President Hemphill.

The Rector commented that change in higher education is coming at a much faster pace these days. Three related topics on the agenda for deeper discussion include Name, Image, and Likeness in Athletics, Artificial Intelligence, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. He noted that ODU students come from 90 different countries and are comprised of 45% Caucasian, 29% African American,

## **A YEAR IN REVIEW – PRESIDENT BRIAN O. HEMPHILL, PH.D.**

President Hemphill shared the major milestones of this past year, including:

- Creation of stand-alone divisions in Digital Learning and University Communications
- Membership in the Sun Belt Conference
- Kick-off of Capital Campaign
- Approval of the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan
- Reaffirmation of Accreditation
- Continued progress on Integration with EVMS

Areas of significant success include:

- Federal presence with an office in Washington, DC
- VMASC 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Football home opening win against Virginia Tech
- Monarchs Give Back
- School of Data Science
- Research Institute for Digital Innovation in Learning (RIDIL) launch
- Hampton Roads Biomedical Research Consortium headquarters grand opening
- Inaugural Maritime Symposium
- First-ever Budget Summit
- Spring Commencement
- Maglev demolition
- Health Sciences Building construction
- Championship effort in Intercollegiate Athletics

President Hemphill presented an overview of the national landscape of higher education. First, the value proposition, which is the concern that students, parents, legislators and others are having with the value of a college degree with increased student loan debt and skyrocketing tuition as well as declining state support. The enrollment cliff has also impacted higher education. A recent article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* discusses how flagship institutions are growing while enrollment in regional institutions is declining, and there are also flagship institutions that are also facing enrollment declines and deficits such as West Virginia University, Rutgers, and Penn State.

The enrollment cliff has already hit the midwest and northeast significantly, with institutions almost identical to Old Dominion (The University of Akron, Wright State, Eastern Michigan, Central Michigan, and Northern Illinois) experiencing significant enrollment declines. At each of these institutions, a decision was made to reduce the admission standards in an effort to increase enrollment and fill the budget gap. At Old Dominion University, however, a strategic decision was made last year to increase admissions standards and lower admit rates from a high of 96% in 2021, , demTJ0 Tc 0 Tnd Noreot7o



The President and Dr. Selig introduced Kevin Lennon, NCAA Vice President for Division I Athletics, who provided an overview of the current state of college athletics and how the issue of Name, Image, and Likeness has emerged in the last several years and is being used in ways that were not initially anticipated. College athletics has become a big business with many complexities, and more is being asked of institutions in order to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (2013-10-4n66b;TJ18Tnd int

Initial thoughts regarding where we are in terms of building a roadway for success are that the process resulted in more questions than answers; retention is “everybody’s job” and nobody’s job; systematically focus on data to prioritize efforts; outcomes determine future investments; and this is a road trip, not an errand. The Roadmap includes ODU’s Strategic Plan; the Student Success innovation team; the National Institute of Student Success; and Data, System, & Innovations. The Drivers include Student Engagement & Enrollment Management; Academic Affairs; Digital Learning; Administration & Finance; Development; and students and parents.

For the drive ahead, Vice President LaBanc cited the following strategies for completion of the first year: admissions practices and financial aid strategies, including assessment and outcomes of initial changes and in the area of affordability, continue commitment to access and become competitive in the high ability (merit) space; student communication journey; and comprehensive & coordinated first year experience, including lead vs. lag measures (eventually allow for robust predictive models), onboarding changes (from confirmation through semester one), and fuller engagement of parents.

Efforts to improvement engagement and belonging include the “One Stop Shop” model with use of CRM and AI and master planning possibilities; identify seminal engagement and enact early alerts with class attendance alerts, mid-term grades and creation of a “bucket list” for students to pursue; and student at-risk communities and assess current efforts for first-gen, Pell, male and other students and high DFWI courses.

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY DISCUSSION**

The Rector called to attention the letter from Secretary of Education Aimee Rogstad Guidera to University Presidents, Chancellors, Superintendents and Rector regarding the recent Supreme Court decision regarding the use of race in college admissions. She reminded Boards of “the indispensable role” they play in setting admissions policies for their respective institutions. She also instructed Boards to meet to finalize admissions policies and confirm that the policies are consistent with the Supreme Court rulings. Chief of Staff Ashley Schumaker said that she and Al Wilson are drafting a response. President Hemphill noted that maybe only three schools (UVA, Virginia Tech, and William and Mary) may be impacted by this ruling, while the others, including ODU, will not.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI): THE NEW NORMAL**

Nina Rodriguez Gonser, Vice President for Digital Learning discussed the impact of Artificial Intelligence on higher education. Also presenting with her was Kate Ledger, Associate Vice President for Marketing and Outreach, and Dr. Chrysoula Malogianni, Associate Vice President for Digital Innovation. They discussed the vast possibilities and inherent challenges AI brings to higher education. She noted that questions have arisen about the balance between man and machine and emphasized that automation is not about replacing but enhancing and making processes more efficient. In integrating AI into higher education, there is a need to discern which tasks can be automated and which ones require the human touch and human interaction. As educators, we must ensure that the tools deployed serve every student fairly.

Ms. Ledger discussed AI's impact on the administrative aspects of higher education, and how it is being used in marketing; admissions; advising and retention; financial aid and budgeting; and student affairs at other institutions. She also noted the danger of deepfakes with AI, as well as legal implications with data security, privacy and bias. But when used thoughtfully, it will elevate roles by freeing staff members from perfunctory, time-consuming, and low-return work, allowing them to focus instead on higher level, mission-aligned effort.

At the request of President Hemphill, Ms. Ledger explained the University's implementation of Salesforce and Marketing Cloud GPT, which is anticipated to go live in February for ODU Global and other areas of the campus. President Hemphill noted that the University currently has several systems that do not communicate with each other, but the implementation of Salesforce will solve many of these issues, will communicate with Banner (the University's ERP), and result in cost savings.

Dr. Malogianni discussed AI as the next leap in educational evolution. She shared AI principles and forms of AI, and how it can be used to enhance the educational process with personalized

### **RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION AND FOIA CERTIFICATION**

At the conclusion of Closed Session, the Rector reconvened the meeting and the following Freedom of Information Act Certification was read: “Any person who believes that the Board discussed items, which were not specifically exempted by law or not included in the motion, must now state where they believe there was a departure from the law or a departure in the discussion of matters other than that stated in the motion convening the closed session. I shall now take a roll call vote of the Board. All those who agree that only lawfully exempted matters and specifically only the business matters stated in the motion convening the closed session were discussed in closed session say “aye.” All those who disagree say “nay.” The certification was approved by roll-call vote (*Allen, Bradley, Corn, Dickeski, Ellmer, Hill, Hodge, Holland, Kemper, Middleton, Mitchum, Montero, Mugler, Pitts, Slaughter, Wyatt*).

### **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI): THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE**

September Sanderlin, Vice President for Human Resources, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and Dr. Veleka Gatling, Assistant Vice President for Diversity and Inclusive Excellence, reported on the University’s efforts in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Vice President Sanderlin emphasized that DEI is every Monarch’s responsibility and is founded in the University’s Strategic Plan and the Monarch Plan for Inclusive Excellence. She shared the various offices on campus that aid and support for students as well as for faculty and staff.

The Office of Academic Affairs is dedicated to systematically building and maintaining a culture of inclusive excellence that values and embraces diverse faculty with several programs and initiatives



Human Resource Management (DHRM) plays in tracking employees and veterans with disabilities, noting that ODU met its goal for FY 2023. She also reported on expected new regulations to Title IX as they relate to due process and athletics and said that the results of the elections may impact the new regulations.

### **SPRING 2023 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRESS UPDATE**

Ashley Schumaker, Chief of Staff and Vice President for Strategic Operations, provided a Spring 2023 Strategic Planning Progress Update. She said that the President Henthorn was very consistent in his messaging to everyone that was involved that we have a plan, that it is measurable, and it is actionable. Equally important is that it be a transparent process. Her report today is an overview of what the Board will receive on a regular basis every fall and spring in addition to special reports at the mid-point in Summer 2025 and the final report in Summer 2028.

Spring updates will focus on activities, initiatives, programs and fundraising totals. Fall updates will focus on projected vs. actual student enrollment (including online), projected vs. actual student outcomes (retention and graduation rates), and research funding.

She shared the focal areas of the plan, including academic excellence; branding, marketing, and communication; corporate/community partnerships and economic development, philanthropic giving and alumni engagement; research growth

second is a desire to better understand the concerns and needs of the student body. He suggested that one way to increase interaction with the faculty, alumni and students is to include them on the agenda for each of the standing committee meetings, as appropriate. Ms. Dickeski agreed as long as it is clear that it is an informational opportunity as opposed to anticipating action by the Board. President Hemphill said that the Educational Moment at each of the Board meetings is a good avenue for this intera

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

The Rector thanked Ashley and Donna for coordinating the retreat. President Hemphill expressed his appreciation to the Board for their support and the work that has been accomplished together this year, and thanked Donna and Ashley.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:22 PM.