

Gordon Ford College of Business
Leadership Team Meeting
Via Zoom
Thursday, January 21, 2021
9:00 am

Members present: Drs. Ray Blankenship, Indu Chhachhi, Lukas Forbes, Alex Lebedinsky, Whitney Peake, Mark Ross, Evelyn Thrasher, and Chris Shook, presiding.

Dr. Shook asked for approval of the minutes from the January 7, 2021 meeting. Dr. Whitney Peake made a motion to approve the minutes, and Dr. Ray Blankenship seconded. The minutes were approved with no change.

Dr. Ross shared the Beta Alpha Psi awards that were recently given during the regional competition. They won first place Regionals Best Practices, the Gold Challenge (top 10 chapters in the world), Information Systems Professional of the Year (Ms. Ann Puckett), and third place Inclusion & Diversity. Ms. Alea Luckett is the current president and Ms. Kristine Barron is the faculty advisor.

Dr. Chhachhi explained that Finance students again participated in the TVA competition. For the second year in a row, WKU students beat their benchmark (S&P 500). We have been participating in the TVA Investment Challenge Program for 22 years and our students have historically outperformed the professionals and S&P 500.

Dr. Shook recently sent out an update to our college's Business Advisory Council and asked for their participation on a couple of recruiting tasks. Dr. Shook shared with BAC, as well as the leadership team, current enrollment stats for both the college and the university.

The Council of Academic Deans met recently, and Dr. Shook provided a brief update on those conversations.

- A SACS/SOC update was presented to the deans.
- The Colonnade Program will be looking for a new director.
- Academic Program Review was going to initiate a new process, but that has been on hold for the time being.
- Ms. Jennifer Hammonds, in the Registrar's Office, is asking that the PDF forms request be sent to her as quickly as possible and not be held at the department level.
- They are looking for guidance in combining classes on blackboard. There is concern that information listed on Blackboard could be a FERPA violation.
- Dr. Ranjit Koodali explained that Graduate Admissions is looking into issuing credits for prior learning experiences. They will also be looking at their admissions policy and procedures.
- Mr. John Sunnygard, of International Enrollment Management, provided an overview of WKU's travel policy. He will be reaching out to departments for their input as he updates the current policy.

Dr. Shook led the Leadership Team in a discussion about the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program and how it will impact the college overall, its impact of faculty and staff positions, and our college's accreditation review. President Caboni's thoughts, that this is not about cutting costs but rather about flexibility, were reiterated. March 15 is when faculty/staff can begin applying for VSIP, which will take effect on July 1. The understanding is if a department has someone to take advantage of the program, the department will lose that budget line. The department and colleges will have to request the lines to be put back in the budget, for both faculty and staff positions. Dr. Shook thanked the leadership team, in advance, for their work and asked for their patience and we work through this process. This could be an opportunity for our college to rethink how we do things. Dr. Shook encourages faculty and staff to do what is best for them and their families.

A brief update on the Provost Search was provided by Dr. Shook. He thanked Dr. Whitney Peake for continuing to serve on the committee. There will be four candidates coming to campus within the next couple of weeks. Dr. Peake encouraged the Department Chairs to attend the public forums and provide feedback.

Dr. Thrasher gave a brief review of the senior exit surveys. She explained that, given the circumstances of courses being moved on-line, the responses to the survey have been poor. In the past, Ms. Browning and Ms. Duvall were able to meet with classes to encourage participation and answer questions. Due to COVID restrictions last semester, they were unable to meet face to face with classes. The department chairs were asked to speak to the faculty and ask them to encourage student survey feedback. Dr. Thrasher described some of the data retrieved from these important surveys and how that data is used. The chairs were asked to send ideas of promoting survey engagement to Dr. Thrasher. She will forward to Ms. Browning and Ms. Duvall.

A couple of new junior faculty award proposals was presented by Dr. Whitney Peake. Discussion will continue at the next Leadership Team meeting.

Ms. Jenna Aikins will be moving temporarily to Dr. Pat Jordan's office, GH 449.

The Leadership Team was asked to remind their faculty that they must wear a mask. It is to be worn properly, at all times and over the nose and mouth. The only exception is if the faculty member is alone in their office.

There is some discussion of restructuring Student Services. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

Dean Shook was asked if there was plan for second floor, that was previously a computer lab. At one time it was hoped to have a Student Success Center, but those plans have been put on hold. So, for the foreseeable future, it will remain a study area.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 am. The next Leadership Team meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2021 at 9:00 am via Zoom.