

Presiding: Lewandowski

Attending: Alumni Board: Buss, Carlson (Alumni Trustee), Cisar, Ferris, Goyert, Hands, Justic, Kay (student), Keller (student), Kern, Key, Kitslaar, Larson, Lewandowski, McNaughton, Petersen, Prodoehl, Russo, Sanon (student), Soich (student), Spaeth, Tolan, Waldvogel-Leitner.

Absent: Fancher, Konopacki, Phillips, Timm, Wade, Woods

**College Administration/Staff:** Gerretsen, Hanson, Liethen, Scanlon, Schroeder, Webster (Advancement); Messitte (President); Mlodzik, Stephenson (Admission); Roy (Interim Dean of Faculty).

### **A. Proceedings (Friday, 3/27/15)**

Lewandowski welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with the singing of the Alma Mater at 8:12 a.m. Announcements followed.

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved the minutes from the Fall 2014 meeting.

Standing Committee meetings met in the Main Dining Room until 9:30 a.m.

### **State of the College (Messitte)**

President Messitte addressed the Board by going over the following items:

- Career Discovery Tour in Washington D.C. trip was successful. There were 12 students that attended.
- Admission: They are breaking records on incoming applications, but students are not depositing. Messitte highlighted that this phenomenon is not because of the marketing or admission efforts- we are getting beaten by other schools/competitors. It's very important that we update our facilities.
- Advancement- Fundraising is going well. We are pushing to \$67 million and may hit \$70 million by June 30 when the Imagine Tomorrow campaign closes. The current campaign is currently focused on growing the endowment and scholarships.
- Commencement- The 2015 Commencement theme is "The Liberal Arts and Military Leadership" and they have announced the Commencement speaker- Dr. Christopher B. Howard. He is currently the 24<sup>th</sup> president of Hampden-Sydney College and was a distinguished graduate of the US Air Force Academy. He is also a Rhodes Scholar, and earned his doctorate in politics at Oxford University and an MBA with distinction from the Harvard Business School.
- Dean of Faculty- They had 57 applicants for the dean of faculty position- the search was top-notch. He is in the final stages of getting an accepted offer with a candidate.
- Storzer Campaign- We have raised \$4 million so far and trying to raise up to \$10 million (this will be a \$20 million project). The Administration is currently talking to banks for financing (Ripon is not in a good position to receive loans). They are currently in the process of applying for and

hopefully receiving a USDA rural development loan with 40 year fixed interest.

### **Strategic Planning Update (Messitte)**

President Messitte gave the Strategic Planning Update for Meg Carne, Special Assistant to the President and Liaison to the Board of Trustees (who was unable to attend the meeting).

- "The Place"- one aspect that makes Ripon distinctive. There are three areas that we need to work on.
  - The Prairie- We currently have funds available to construct an observatory and a field classroom on the prairie.
  - College Buildings- There are lots of items that are dated and not fixed around campus. We spend about \$200,000 per year on deferred maintenance (including boilers that need to be replaced and the roof being repaired).
  - Town of Ripon- The town is not vibrant enough. A mural was created by art professor Rafael Salas last summer. There is interest in putting a bookstore or an art store in the downtown to further develop a lively downtown for students and their families.
- "The Academic Experience"
  - Faculty- The college needs to keep hiring tenure faculty. We need to keep the best faculty in the classroom and also need to pay for the best. We are currently hiring adjunct faculty who don't have terminal degrees or on tenure track. We also do not match with competitors on resources that are available to faculty. We are also pressuring faculty for more publications (especially with junior faculty).
- "The Ripon Student"
  - Wellness
  - Civic Engagement
  - Sustainability

Other Notes: Our current faculty ratio is 10:1. That is the best ratio in the ACM schools but not for a good reason, instead it's because we need more students to enroll. The ratio is currently not compelling enough for incoming students.

### **Advancement & Imagine Tomorrow Campaign Report (Webster):**

Webster summarized the campaign's progress- \$67 million has been raised so far and hoping to reach \$70 million by June 30 when the campaign closes. There will be a celebration during Family Weekend & Homecoming (October 2-3) to celebrate the success of the campaign. Staff is currently focused on Storzer fundraising, but they are still working on reaching the Annual Fund goal. A soft launch occurred about a month and a half ago, as the process of financing and design continues. Ideally, having \$7-\$10 million raised before the project starts, as well as long-term and short-term financing finalized. There are concerns about the operating costs of Storzer

which will require more heating, cooling and staffing which could add up to half a million dollars annually. Currently talking with new Ripon Medical Center to work together on expanding collaborative opportunities between the hospital and college.

**Constituent Engagement & Career Services Report (Gerretsen, Hanson, Ucen):** Gerretsen went over all of the services, including engaging alumni and expanding opportunities for students.

**Alumni Relations-** 44 events have been held year-to-date with 1300 attendees and seven events were held on campus. There are thirteen more events on the schedule before June 30<sup>th</sup>. 21 events have had hosts and there are also 10-12 alumni that are participating in the upcoming Rome IN Focus trip.

**Career Services-** 24 events year-to-date, including two career discovery tours, four workshops and two alumni career days. In addition, eleven recruiters have come to campus. For one-on-one appointments, 44 student visited in the fall and 33 visits so far this spring.

**Challenges:** Main challenge is reimagining the Constituent Engagement and Career Services Office. We have had to start from scratch with no history or data. Ucen reviewed the strategic planning process and newly imagined goals/objectives of the Constituent Engagement & Career Services Office. He went over the key objectives that the program needs:

- 1) "Currency", engagement- need to promote and increase engagement with the college across all constituencies.
- 2) "Customer"- building brand awareness and enhancing relationships with key constituents.
- 3) Programming and creating better cross-campus collaborations.
- 4) Maintaining and enhancing constituent data sources in order to promote effective and efficient connectivity to the college.

The Board adjourned at 11:45 a.m. to lunch.

### **Report of Admissions (Mlodzik, Stephenson)**

Eliza Stephenson '09 gave an update on behalf of Admissions. Eliza is in charge of the admission volunteer team. Their goal is to have faculty, current students, parents and alumni volunteering for admission. Currently, they have 80 volunteers and have attended 108 college fairs as an office. Eliza works with alumni volunteers and she is working to spread volunteers over a large geographic area. She is always looking for new alumni to send letters to the prospective students. She requested that any suggestions or alumni suggestions to please be sent her way.

Leigh Mlodzik '02, the Dean of Admission, also gave an update. They have had 1817 applications (higher than the last three years), and currently have received 79 deposits (in-line with last year) with a May 1st deadline. There are 938 students (200 greater than last year) that are in the active pool that have not yet accepted. Last month, they held the Celebration of Excellence events,

which has a high yield, and had a higher attendance rate this year. Accepted Student's Days, also high yield events, are coming up where students will be traveling in from nationwide. The increase in applications they have had is contributed to the vendor they are currently using, Royal. A counselor left the office in February, and they have hired two admission professionals to temporarily consult with the office. Over 80 responses have been received so far to the Implemented Deposit IQ survey to see where students are in the process. Leigh passed around different outcome pieces which are designed to highlight different areas of interest. They have met with a lot of counselors at different high schools and the majority of the prospective students just need to make up their mind. The majority of large schools are on a wait list, so they are putting that in consideration. The Admission Office has also been involved in two new national college fairs this year, in Austin, Texas and Atlanta, Georgia.

### **Report of Academics (Roy)**

Dean Roy stated that this is one of the busiest years within Academic Affairs, currently preparing for the Higher Learning Commission visit and going through a faculty-led curriculum review process.

1. **Higher Learning Commission-** There are 27 members (includes students, parents, alumni, trustees and faculty/staff) involved in this very time consuming process, but it is coming along as well as expected. They are at the stage of drafting the reports for the commission, and the on campus review visit will take place in December.
2. **Curriculum Review-** Trying to regularize this process. There are two faculty members (Paul Schoofs, Mark Kainz) heading this process. The review is currently being discussed with faculty and is in the process of being amended. The faculty are excited as this may allow them to work across departments (pre-professional and interdisciplinary programs). Some may even start as soon in the fall. This new proposal deepens the education in liberal arts and improves education for students. Roy is excited and confident about this review.
3. Three new faculty appointments have been finalized in Biology, Psychology, and Business/Economics.
4. Wireless access has been improved in all faculty buildings. There have also been faculty development courses on technology that were highly attended by faculty. The College has recently received funding from ACM on how teachers can use technology to assist with higher learning.
5. The College is currently exploring a possibility to build an observatory on the prairie, which will provide opportunities for students, high school students and the community. There would be no budgeted funding for this project because it would be support by several endowed physics funds.
6. **Points of Pride-** Roy reviewed recent successes and achievements of our faculty and students on campus.

Andrew Kitslaar '06 introduced the spring nominations memo on behalf of the Governance Committee.

**\*\* NOTE: Confidential \*\***

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved two Alumni Association Senior Award recipients to be honored at the Awards Convocation on April 22nd.

**Taihua Li  
Kaitlyn Welzen**

**BOARD ACTION:** The Board approved the nominee list for Alumni Trustee and Alumni Board members.

The Alumni Trustee nominee is: **Perry Robinson '79** and the first alternate is **Laura Kreofsky '91**.

Alumni Board (listed in order of preference):

**Samuel G. Mutschelknaus '12  
Leila C. Keita '08  
James J. Mendyke, Jr. '83  
Ramzi Bashir Baydoun '86  
Oussama El-Hilali '89  
Michael J. Milburn '97  
Eugene A. Schneider, Jr. '90  
Daniel F. Yost '95  
Alexandra Shepard Kermani '83  
Helen K. Holter '78  
Masoud F. Kermani '83  
William T. Baker '92  
Christopher Reed-Waddell '07  
Sara B. VanSteenbergen '12  
Daniel J. Curran '98  
Leeanna M. Shultz '10  
Elizabeth Pecha-Poelker '78  
Susan Rigler Palmer '79**

Kitslaar introduced Board officer elections, beginning with the presidential nominees. Dan McNaughton '86, and Joe Tolan '81 both spoke from the floor concerning their interest. Discussion was called for, in which, McNaughton and Tolan left the room during discussion, voting followed.

**BOARD ACTION:** McNaughton was elected the new Alumni Board President.

Kitslaar next introduced the elections for Vice President. Nicole Klaas Hands '06 asked to be removed from the slate. Dave Cisar '77 and Joe

Tolan '81 both spoke concerning their interest. Cisar and Tolan left the room during discussion, voting followed.

**BOARD ACTION:** Tolan was elected the new Alumni Board Vice-President.

**Alumni Trustee Report (Carlson)**

Julie Carlson gave a brief Trustee report. John Ryberg has resigned from the group and Kent Timm could not make it to this meeting. She did have a recommendation that she would like the group to define what an alumni trustee's role includes and also suggested that we try to connect more with the Trustees this fall. She didn't really feel ownership in either group. The Trustees are focused on the Storzer project right now and to feel free to contact Julie if anyone has questions or comments for the trustees.

Gregg Petersen handed out a meeting survey for the members to fill out.

The Board adjourned at 2:53 p.m. for committee meetings in the Main Dining Room of Pickard Commons.

A faculty & staff career networking event with the Alumni Board was held at 4:30 p.m. in West Hall, followed by the 2015 Cap & Gown Party in Great Hall.

**B. Proceedings (Saturday, 3/28/15)**

Standing Committee meetings continued over breakfast in the Main Dining Room.

Gregg Petersen reviewed the meeting survey results:

- 20-3 vote- Provisions passed for recommended change to the Alumni Trustee constitution language.
- Congratulated Ted Uzen on all his work with the Constituent Engagement & Career Services staff regarding the strategic planning process.
- Suggested to send out the reports the weekend before the meeting to give everyone time to look them over.
- There was a comment about how we do not hear from everyone in the meeting.
- There was a request to meet with Tom Ponto, the Vice President of Finance, during the next fall '15 meeting.
- Request to come up with top three items for the next committee time. The executive committee can decide when they meet beforehand. Committee chairs can list the top three items in their minutes.

**C. Standing Committee Reports**

**(NOTE:** Full minutes/meeting notes from all committees are attached.)

**Gregg Petersen '78 (Governance Committee)**

- Made minor proposed changes to the Board constitution. Will post the operating procedures on the website.
- All members should make it their personal goal to nominate alumni for an award and for the Alumni Board by this fall.

**Sue Mijanovich Key '72 (Advancement Committee)**

- Career Discovery Tour funds are close to endowment level (\$50,000) with the hope to reach that goal by next fall. Will need to reach \$450,000 to be comfortable in fund two annual trips from the endowment's interest.
- The Senior Class Gift reached 56% at the Cap & Gown Party last night. They will need 24 donors more to reach 70%. Motion was approved that the board will pay \$20.15 at 70%, \$25.00 at 80%, \$40.00 at 90% and \$75.00 at 100%.
- An ask letter will be going out to past AB members in April. Sue passed around a list of past members for current members to call. They would like to call or send letter to past students that have been on a past Career Discovery Tour.
- It was nice talking to the students during the networking event and hearing about their experience with the Career Discovery Tour, however, the student's felt inadequate with their networking skills. An idea was suggested that we should bring in an alumnus employed in the HR department that could work with students before they go on their tour.

**Kimberly Larson '08 (Ripon Person Committee)**

- ROI panel theme- next theme will be "Innovation" where alumni have a different career than what they studied for at Ripon. Should pick alumni that have been out of college for 40, 30, 20 and 10 years.
- Alumni engagement is a two way street. Suggested quarterly skype calls.
- Career Discovery Tour Spring '15- went over student comments and will send out a survey to this year's hosts for feedback.

**Dan McNaughton '86 (Ad Hoc Career Services Committee)**

- Goal is to start engaging with first years. The committee brainstormed many different ways to engage students early and often.
- Faculty needs to be more communicative with the Constituent Engagement & Career Services Office. They need to understand exactly what the office does and the majority of faculty do not share information about opportunities to collaborate with the office.

**D. General Discussion/New Business/Old Business**

No further new business was discussed.

Old Business-

- Webster has been meeting with Follett in regards to spirit wear. The current bookstore manager does not have control over the website and they are working on a way to have easier access to the website. They are also working on "made for you" wear but Follett seems more focused on the larger institutions and Ripon is usually towards the end of the list. They are also currently looking at other options.

**E. Recognition of Retiring Board Members**

The following retiring members were recognized: Michelle L. Buss '95, Andrew P. Kitslaar '06, Nicholas A. Spaeth '04, Julie A. Waldvogel-Leitner '02

Those not in attendance were also recognized: Samantha E. Kay '15, Jennifer L. Keller '16, Clarence Sanon '15, and Logan T. Soich '15

The following members are resigning or not returning for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term: Brooke Tireman Konopacki '94, Gregg R. Petersen '78, and Nicole J. Prodoehl '97

**BOARD ACTION:** Adjournment was made at 9:55 a.m. after singing the Alma Mater.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Gerretsen '04  
Alumni Board of Directors Executive Secretary  
Director of Constituent Engagement & Career Services