President’s Advisory Council  
February 21, 2019  
1PM in Friends’ Hall  
www.ramapo.edu/president/pac  
DRAFT MINUTES

In attendance:  

I. Approval of December 2018 Minutes

President Mercer introduced the minutes. A. Casilli moved and E. Saiff seconded approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved.

II. President’s Report

President Mercer expressed his appreciation to the grounds and public safety crews for their work in preparing the campus during recent snow and ice conditions and power outages caused by an off campus vehicular accident. He reinforced the importance of individuals judging for themselves, based on their locations, what necessary precautions to take.

President Mercer reported that he, along with members of the Cabinet and the Board, have been engaging the Treasury Department, Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, and our legislative representatives on the College’s state appropriation and matters of funding parity. He added that an unveiling of the State Plan for Higher Education was delayed. It will likely be unveiled after the budget has been passed. While the College has spent several months providing input to the Secretary of Higher Education on the emergent Plan, there remains little to report out on its draft contents.

President Mercer also encouraged PAC members to familiarize themselves with the College’s Strategic Plan: Fulfilling Our Promise and the 63 indicators that accompany it in Dashboard 2021. He noted that the work of PAC to advance shared governance at Ramapo will be instrumental to the College’s ability to achieve many of its planned outcomes.

III. Revising the PAC Purpose Statement

President Mercer reported briefly on PAC’s last meeting in which the group moved to revise its purpose statement to include responsibility for the advancement of shared governance.

Revisions to the purpose statement were proposed which focused on PACs role in advancing the structure through which shared decision making will occur. After some
wordsmithing, President Mercer advised that he would return to the group with a revised statement along the lines of:

The President’s Advisory Council (PAC) is a forum for perspectives to be shared on issues of common interest, a sounding board on matters in development, and a vehicle to provide recommendations and advice to the College President. Further, PAC is responsible for the sustainability of institutional structures that facilitate shared governance.

IV. Shared Governance Subcommittees: Membership and Next Steps
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Continuous Learning

Goldstein provided the group with an overview of the three proposed subcommittees and their respective responsibilities in stewarding shared governance as follows:

COLLABORATION
- Recommendation 4: Mentorship for new members of representative bodies, with emphasis placed on effective representation within the context of that group.
- Recommendation 6: All Stakeholder groups should be encouraged to designate a liaison to advise/report on matters pertaining to College-wide accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.
- Recommendation 7: Conduct regular joint meetings between Stakeholder leadership.
- Recommendation 9: The College-at-large should actively support any effort by the Staff to establish a mechanism for representation in College governance.
- Recommendation 10: Annual meeting of Stakeholder group leadership to engage candidly on shared governance events/issues from the preceding year and suggest changes that may improve shared governance moving forward.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING
- Recommendation 5: All Stakeholder groups should recognize Institutional Research as the College’s official resource for publicly available data and should be encouraged to make use of its data.
- Recommendation 8: Establish an Annual Shared Governance Retreat
- Recommendation 11: Biennial survey of the entire College on the state of Shared Governance at the College, soliciting suggestions for improvement; this will be followed by an open forum of the College.
- Recommendation 12: Shared Governance decisions will be memorialized through documentation that includes the Decision-Making Plan that was devised between the representative groups (as outlined in the protocol section of the report), the decision that was made, and a rationale for that decision.

COMMUNICATION
- Recommendation 1: Make meetings more open and transparent.
  - Provide consistent advance notice of meeting agendas.
At the close of each meeting, explicitly set a list of takeaways so that liaisons/representatives report out consistent information to their respective constituent groups.

Review and/or adjust meeting management to ensure that the reporting out by liaisons or representatives is inclusive and adequate.

- Recommendation 2: Maintain a centralized website with current information on all standing College committees and governance groups to include committee charges, membership, and in what capacity members serve.
- Recommendation 3: Multi-channel dissemination of information about items currently under review.

PAC members then aligned themselves with the subcommittee of interest to them and were encouraged to discuss with their fellow subcommittee members the following organizing questions:

1. Is our membership sufficient?
2. Should we designate a convener/subcommittee chair?
3. How will we work with one another, as needed, between PAC meetings?
4. Do we need clarification or additional context on the recommendations assigned to our subcommittee?
5. Should we prioritize the recommendations our subcommittee is responsible for stewarding?
6. What non-PAC entities or resources might be essential to our success?
7. What evidence and/or measures will we use to demonstrate progress on our recommendations?
8. What are reasonable timelines for our work?
9. How will we build awareness around our efforts and potentially demystify Shared Governance for other stakeholders?
10. How will we sustain our efforts?

Discussion ensued among each subcommittee, however, time ran out and there was no opportunity to meaningfully report out.

V. PAC ‘18-19 Meeting Calendar

Goldstein advised that the next PAC Meeting was tentatively scheduled for Wed. April 10 from 12:30-2:00PM, however, several members expressed schedule conflicts with the date and time. It was suggested, in light of the time limitations on today’s discussion, that the April 10 meeting be used by subcommittees to meet pursuant to availability rather than convene the entire PAC.

VI. New Business

There was no new business.