Parents Advisory Council Meeting
March 22, 2015
12:00 noon – 2:40 p.m.

Members Present: Benny Joseph, Karyn Campbell, Kathleen Small, Linda Sutherland, Lionel Goulet, Mary Chernak, Michael Burk, Neena Verma, Ninette Marzouki, Pam Meoli, Sawsan Berjawi, Seena Franklin, Tina Barsby

Members Absent: Kevin Crimi, Kathleen Breck, Tina VanDerwerker, Cathy Harder-Bernier.
Note: A conference call is scheduled for April 2 at 5:30 for absent members.

Staff Present: Jeanne Horrigan, Elizabeth Cleary, Rose Boulay, Kelly Gray, Adrienne Cremins.

Group and Individual Pictures
Adrienne Cremins took group and individual pictures of Council members before the meeting started.

Polo Shirt Sizes
The Office of Parent Services collected Council members’ shirt sizes to order Polo shirts. Members will receive their shirt in the fall during Family Weekend. Members are expected to wear Council shirts at sponsored events.

Call to Order & Business Items
The meeting started at 12:05 p.m. with Jeanne presiding.

- Introductions of University Staff
- Introduction of Council members
- Council members expressed their desire to stay involved in their students’ education and give back to UMass Amherst in a meaningful way.

After introductions, the group took a short break to pick out their meals and returned to the meeting room.

Advisory Council’s Mission and Goals
Rose reviewed the Council’s Mission and Goals. There was no objection.

Mission:
UMAPA Advisory Council seeks to support the University of Massachusetts Amherst by involving parents in the college experience for the purpose of improving, promoting and advancing UMass Amherst and its mission. The Council specifically focuses on parent/student issues in order to enhance the undergraduate experience.
Goals

- Provide avenues for parents to connect with and support each other;
- Act as liaisons between all parents, students, UMass staff and administration;
- Provide feedback on ways the University can better serve students and families;
- Assist with program development, other services provided by the Office of Parent Services, and Student Affairs initiatives;
- Serve as ambassadors on behalf of the university through volunteerism and other means.

Review and Approval of Council’s Bylaws and Guidelines

Rose reviewed the Council’s bylaws and guidelines. Items covered include: Term, expectations, meetings, voting process, quorum, and minutes. Bylaws will be effective within 10 days. There were some questions related to term limit of general council members, when bylaws can be amended, and quorum. The clarifications are below:

Clarifications:

- Term limits for general membership are renewable beyond the two years. Two years is a minimum commitment.
- Officers have a one-year term limit to give others a chance to serve in that capacity, but they can be re-elected.
- By-laws can be reviewed and changed annually in the fall at Family Weekend. Suggested changes/additions must be submitted 30 days in advance so answers from Parent Services can be given ahead of time.
- There is no voting by proxy for members who are not present at the required meetings (Spring Break/Family Weekend).

Signing of Non-Disclosure/Confidentiality Statement

All members read confidentiality, photo release, and limited license statements and signed.

Election of Officers

Members present elected to name co-officer status for the following positions:

- Co-Chairpersons: Kathleen Small and Ninette Marzouki
- Co-Vice Chairpersons: Neena Verma and Pam Meoli
- Co-Secretaries: Karyn Campbell and Mary Chernak

Note: Linda Sutherland also volunteered to serve as the behind the scene person doing whatever needs to be done.

Guest Speaker

Kelly Gray, Ed.D., Associate Dean for Student Life from the Dean of Students Office served as guest speaker for the meeting. She updated the group on the Deans of Students Office strategic plan and the current areas of focus which include:

- UMatter @ UMass and creating a culture of caring.
- Helping students get involved in campus activities.
- Getting students to list an emergency contact in SPIRE.

Then Kelly opened the floor for questions and concerns.
Communication throughout the year
To effectively carry out the work of the Council, members decided on the following:

- **E-mail** -- as primary mode of communication
- **Facebook** -- members would like to have a Facebook presence as well to promote the Council and encourage greater parent/family participation in sponsored activities.
- **UDrive** -- secure “cloud-based” storage issued through UMass where documents of a sensitive nature can be shared.
- **Conference Call** -- Members will communicate via conference call, if necessary.
- **Google Docs**

Advisory Council Initiatives for 2015-16
Council members will work on creating the following committees:

- Wellness
- Volunteer
- Special events

Possible Initiatives
- Parent reception during family weekend
- More parent involvement during move-in day
- Parent/faculty mixer at family weekend

Members agreed to have the following biographical information shared with other members in an effort to stay connected and work on ideas before the fall meeting: Picture, name, e-mail address, town and state.

Campus Updates
Elizabeth and Jeanne shared some University updates with Council members including,

- **Old Chapel** - Chancellor’s initiative as part of UMass Rising Campaign.
- **Student Experience Master Plan** - creating a vision plan to improve the quality of life for all students including learning, living, and recreational spaces.
- **Provost New Initiatives** - Jeanne mentioned the new UMass Amherst Provost—Katherine Newman, Ph.D. and her plans for Undergraduate Education. She then discussed the Exploratory Track the Provost has put in place to better direct the career path of undeclared students and the 1.0 credit hour freshman seminars new students will be enrolled in this fall semester.

Fall Meeting Date and Time
The next UMAPA Advisory Council meeting will be Sunday, October 4, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. on campus.

**Meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.**

Minutes prepared by Rose Boulay