

Presidential Task Force for Opportunity and Equity Meet & Greet Minutes 11/10/2020

President Jay Gogue:

Called the meeting to order by thanking all members for attending the meet and greet. President Gogue expressed his gratitude to the group for all the hard work and efforts they have done so far. He emphasized the importance of the work that is being done.

General Ronald Burgess:

Thanked President Gogue for being in attendance. General Burgess continued by updating the group about the development of the subcommittee for the establishment of a Civil Rights Institute/Center - lead by Dr. Melody Russell. He thanked Dr. Russell for her continued work with this initiative. General Burgess also mentioned the re-establishment of the 'Retention and Placement of Black Students at Auburn' subcommittee; this will be led by Dr. Joffery Gaymon.

Ms. Mya Strickland

Commented on how she hopes to be part of the students who are impacted by Dr. Gaymon's subcommittee.

President Jay Gogue:

Assured Ms. Strickland that she would be and then proceeded to reflect on his time as a student at Auburn.

General Ronald Burgess:

Added how Ms. Strickland should look around the room to see how many of the individuals in the room were in current leadership positions but were also students at Auburn University, like herself. He encouraged her to finish the semester strong.

Coach Bruce Pearl:

Thanked everybody for attending the meeting and expressed how happy he was the group was finally meeting in person. Coach people went on to discuss how he just came from a successful practice with his team.

General Ronald Burgess:

Inquired about everybody's experience during the election and asked if there were any incidents to report?

Ms. Mya Strickland

Noted that she stayed indoors but did not hear of any incidents amongst her peers.

Mr. Seymour Irby:

Added that he was surprised at the lack of a reaction as a whole

Ms. Angela Cannon:

Noted how she received a text about some graffiti ('War Damn Democracy') that was spray-painted somewhere near campus.

Ms. Madison Birckhead:

Added that the only pushback she heard was about some professors who were not lenient about being flexible with their hours so their students could vote. She also noted how she heard about some professors who had been projecting their political views on their students.

General Ronald Burgess:

Thanked everybody for their feedback. He went on to add the conversation about on-campus voting polls is ongoing. He reminded the group that if the polls do come into fruition, these would only be for students who reside on campus. Added how Ms. Elizabeth Devore was responsible for the conversation being initiated and thanked her for the suggestion in getting this conversation started.

Coach Bruce Pearl:

Asked what way the members of the Presidential Task Force planned on taking care of students in need as the semester ends and extended holidays draw near. These include a student who is dealing with mental health, needing housing/food over the breaks, etc. Coach Pearl asked if anything could be done that would continue the promotion of student retention as well as keep these students motivated as the semester ends. He also inquired about ways to incentivize the students' sense of belonging/appreciation from the University.

General Ronald Burgess:

Noted that there are measures in place to take care of the student body but that Mr. Bobby Woodard would be able to better communicate what those means are. As for the incentives, General Burgess mentioned that the City of Auburn will still be abiding by the Covid-19 regulations and will apply the same procedures as football season. He went on to add this meant that during Basketball season, the arena can only reach 17% capacity which equates to about 1400 seats per game. General Burges went on to add that half of those seats will be dedicated to the student body and the remaining half will go towards faculty, staff, donors, etc.

Dr. Taffye Benson Clayton:

Informed the group that the faculty subcommittee recommendations have worked through the Dean's Council and have now been pared down where about eight strategies have been identified and the momentum is ongoing.

General Ronald Burgess:

Asked if anybody had anything else to discuss for the good of the order? He motioned that the meeting was adjourned and for the attendees to continue to mingle with one another. The next Presidential Task Force meeting will be via zoom, Thursday, November 12, 2020, at 3:30 pm.

Presidential Task Force for Opportunity & Equity Members:

Ada Ruth Huntley

Amy Weaver

Angela Cannon

Bill Hardgrave

Bruce Pearl

C. Kevin Coonrod

Donielle Fagan

Elizabeth Devore

Gretchen VanValkenburg

Ja'lia Taylor

Jaime Hammer

Joffery Gaymon

Katrina Akande

Kim Brown

Lastella Paradise

Madison Birkhead

Melody Russell

Mya Strickland

Oladiran Fasina

Ronald Burgess

Ronny Isaac

Royrickers Cook

Seymour Irby

Sylvia Masango

Taffye Clayton