

Communications Advisory Committee (CAC) Report

To: Joy Beatty, Chair, SACUA, 2019-2020

From: Dorene Markel, Chair, Communications Advisory Committee (CAC)

Subject: Report on Activities of Committee Name for 2019-2020

Members: Karl-Georg Federhofer, Amanda Halbert, Marieka Kaye, Chandan Kumar, Kayla Niemann, John Pasquale, Stephanie Preston, Afifa Shamim-Uzzaman, Amanda Thatcher

SACUA Liaison: Deirdre Spencer

Meeting Dates: Oct. 31, 2019, Dec. 18, 2019, Jan 28, 2020

Summary: The Communications and Advisory committee had 3 well-attended and informative meetings during the 2019-2020 academic year. We had a 4th meeting scheduled for April that had to be cancelled due to COVID and the unavailability of the VP for Communications and her staff that were immersed in the crisis.

The topics of focus for the year included:

Summary Topic 1: Address the topic of free speech on campus in light of the upcoming national election season. Discussion about safety and free speech issues related to the fall Presidential Debate were discussed and security questions answered.

Summary Topic 2: Address the ways faculty and staff can be better engaged with the surrounding community and the role communications can play. Staff members from the Office of Communications did an instructional session on how to interact with the media and also FOIA related issues about email and other documentation.

Summary Topic 3: Address the results of the AAU Climate on Sexual Misconduct Survey. This became a timely topic as the announcement of the removal of the Provost happened about the time of our committee meeting. There was much discussion about the timing of how the information was received by leadership and information shared with the greater community.

Topics to be continued or carried forward to next year are:

Topic 1: Since the Presidential Debate is still scheduled to be held at UM in Fall 2020, this will again be a topic of interest, regarding communications, freedom of speech and security.

Topic 2: The COVID Pandemic occurred before the committee could meet again, since our last meeting in April was cancelled. The pandemic will be a critical topic related to communications for the upcoming academic year.

Topic 3: The issue of Sexual Misconduct involving UM Faculty, Staff or students, continues to be an ongoing and important topic. The information about the team doctor who was accused of sexually assaulting students for many years had not surfaced before the last meeting of this committee and should be picked up for discussion in the new year.