

All SFA Faculty and Staff Retreat
Wednesday, August 25, 2021
Minutes

Dean Anne D'Alleva welcomed the group and thanked them for their flexibility for the current meeting format.

In Memoriam: Edvin Yegir – Mark Zurolo

Mark shared words, memories and a video with the group remembering Edvin Yegir. He shared what a brilliant designer and masterful typography gifted educator Edvin was, a compassionate activist and a true friend. To know him was to know his warmth, integrity, honesty, and intelligence. He believed in design as a tool for positive change and growth and will be missed by so many.

Mark spoke to Edvin's classrooms as collaborative communities in which students from across the ears have commented on how overwhelmingly positive the environment he created was and how he critiqued with the kindest grace.

Mark thanked all that sent well wishes and shared memories.

Anne called for a moment of silence to remember friend Edvin Yegir.

General Updates – Anne D'Alleva, Colleen Bridgeman, Elizabeth Foody

Dean D'Alleva's updates were shared with the group via email earlier in the week.

Anne shared her gratitude with the group. She noted that she feels as though the SFA staff and faculty has done extraordinary work over the past 18 months. In the context of the pandemic every single person in this school has innovated and has risen to challenges and has found new ways of moving forward.

Colleen Bridgeman shared a facilities update with the group.

Elizabeth Foody shared a thank you to faculty and staff for pivoting during this pandemic world. Our students and families have noticed and are very appreciative. Last year we were down 10 % enrollment. Many universities throughout the country have seen similar numbers. We are going to use what we have learned during the pandemic to correct that dip in numbers.

Elizabeth shared that she is currently tracking transfer students in and out. Paying close attention to that group as it may look different in the upcoming year compared to other years. We also expect an up tick due to our return to on campus/in person education.

Another admissions priority is engaging diverse populations. Two ways we will be engaging these populations: First Regional auditions in Stamford, to pull from more areas. Second is a continued focus on Magnet schools in CT, NY and NJ.

Elizabeth invited department heads and faculty to join her on the road, visiting schools.

Updates and Q&A with the Provost – Carl Lejuez

Provost Carl Lejuez shared with the group his passion for the arts and what we do in the SFA. He added how happy he is to be back and working through feeling of being back. He acknowledged the contributions and sacrifice and hard work of the staff and faculty.

Carl shared about himself, a first-generation college student. He shared some of his experiences in Kansas. He shared how he tries to understand what is different about the school of music and the uniqueness of our departments compared to others. Carl shared stories about his experience with the arts and the importance of the arts in his life.

He spoke about the priorities of the university, the university president, the board, and that Carl take seriously. He asked that as we proceed with strategic planning, that he hopes that we can think about what that means specifically for the SFA. That in the process you take ownership of the process.

He spoke to the unique collaborations that have come out of the school and that he has been really impressed by the school and how the school works well as a team. He spoke to the Krenicki Institute and arts and engineering.

Carl spoke about the great things that he sees happening in the school and touched on several project and initiatives that he has noticed.

He spoke to DEI and shared that hiring across the university for diverse groups is up 3 %.

Carl encouraged the group to continue to communicate with the provost's office.

A question from the group regarding maternity and paternity leave policies was addressed as Carl explained that he has been meeting with the Moms for Moms group on campus and that has helped him understand the gaps. He knows that there are aspects of change being addressed as part of the bargaining process through the union.

Strategic Planning Breakout Sessions:

Meeting attendees selected and participated in one of the following sessions:

Life Transformative Education (LTE) – Moderator: Arielle Hill-Moses

Doubling Research – Moderator: Alain Frogley

Economic Impact – Moderator: Colleen Bridgeman

Institutional Values: Anti-Racism, Human Rights, Environmentalism-Moderator: Anne D’Alleva

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training Session

Staff and faculty participated in DEI training lead by Jonelle Reynolds.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kate Pierro