



USM Student Council Report for the USM Board of Regents

December 11, 2020

The USM Student Council has continued to have impressive levels of engagement and growth. Our primary focus areas remain government relations; diversity, equity and inclusion; mental health; student affairs; student fees; and communications. Our government relations efforts have included researching relevant bill proposals that are in the works to be presented during the 2021 Maryland Legislative Session.

The focus of the USM Student Council since the last Board of Regents meeting has been to help our primary areas gain momentum through cross-institutional membership and plans of action. In addition, much of the last month has been our busiest time of the year because of another core responsibility of the USM Student Council—our role in the student regent selection process.

The student regent application process yielded nine very strong candidates from across the USM. The entirety of our official December meeting was allocated to getting to better know the candidates through interviews followed by time for thoughtful deliberation, caucusing and voting. We are pleased to share that we are sending four finalists for consideration to the Chancellor. Alongside our report this month, we are sharing the collaboratively designed questions that each candidate was asked during the meeting. Due to interest and need, we will have a supplementary special meeting on Sunday, December 13, 2020 to discuss topics important to our members and their constituents that they wish to address prior to the start of 2021.

Our USMSC leadership team continues to be present for the Chancellor and student meet ups. This past month the focus was on understanding towards better supporting and celebrating our international student community members across the system.

USMSC collaborative work with CUSF and CUSS continues and is reaping many positive benefits. The joint councils meeting went very well and plans for joint advocacy endeavors for the Maryland General Assembly in the Winter are underway. In our meetings we have noticed overlapping themes across students, faculty and staff as related to COVID-19 adaptations, flexibility and “silver linings”. As a result, we have a COVID-19 group in the works that will have representation across constituencies to develop holistic, solution-oriented recommendations for consideration across councils, institutions and the USM.

USMSC and the MHEC Student Advisory Council are in continued conversation during this key planning term for higher education in the state of Maryland. We are in



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process of setting up a special meeting similar to the format we had for the USM Naming Policy feedback session that will allow the MHEC Student Advisory Council to have an in-depth conversation with the USMSC to gain our input into MHEC's development of the forthcoming Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary education. In addition, the MHEC Student Advisory Chair and I plan to attend each group's open meetings to further bridge efforts and understanding.

Of note, the USMSC as a whole continues to express appreciation for the tremendous work being done day in and day out by leaders at the institutional and system levels as well as by faculty, staff and fellow students during this time. Students look forward to continued conversations and collaborations as related to academic flexibility and compassion during COVID-19, affordability, mental health resources and environmental sustainability work across the system.

With Respect and Appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Annie Rappeport". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and "R".

Annie Rappeport
2020-2021 USMSC President