



USM Student Council Report for the USM Board of Regents

February 19, 2021

With the advent of the new year, the USM Student Council has met twice and has shifted focus to primarily committee work and legislative advocacy efforts. Our group operates from a center of care for our student and university communities during the prolonged time of crisis and opportunity. We are continually awed by the dedication of the student leaders across the system and are excited by the progress developing in areas of mental health, affordability/access to higher ed, online academics, response to the pandemic, DEI and betterment of conditions for specific student populations (i.e. student athletes via support for the Jordan McNair bill.)

In this vein, we would like to report that the USMSC has a process to establish by majority institution vote the means to formalize and act upon USMSC stances. Since the last Board of Regents meeting, the USMSC has voted to officially support the following bills in the Maryland General Assembly. For each of the below, USMSC was able to provide written and/or oral testimony and to participate when applicable in press/press conferences to demonstrate support.

The Jordan McNair Safe and Fair Play Act

The Student and Military Voter Empowerment Act

The Textbook Tax Relief Act

The USMSC is in current voting process for an additional 5-6 bills which we will be able to provide more detail and updates on next month.

The focus of the USM Student Council since the last Board of Regents meeting has been to help our primary areas (government relations, mental health, student fees, DEI, student affairs) gain momentum through cross-institutional membership and plans of action. Members of the USMSC leadership team are present for the Chancellor and student meet ups which have become a cherished collaboration. Moreover, USMSC collaborative work with CUSF, CUSS and USM central persists as well with the joint work and promotion of USM Advocacy day earlier this week.

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



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the USMSC for inputs into the post-secondary plan process. In addition, the MHEC Student Advisory Chair and I plan to attend each group's open meeting to further bridge efforts and understanding.

Of note, the USMSC as a whole wishes to express appreciation for the tremendous work being done day in and day out by leaders at the institutional and system level as well as by faculty, staff and fellow students during this time. We wish to thank all of the representatives on the USM counseling center directors group for meeting with USMSC members on important issues related to mental health. Also, a large thank you to new UMGC President Greg Fowler for joining our February meeting for a robust conversation on online and hybrid learning during the pandemic and beyond.

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".

Annie Rappeport
2020-2021 USMSC President