Provost’s Report
May 15, 2015

Board of Trustees
Educational Policy and Institutional Resources Committee

Prepared By
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At the time of your May meeting, I will be nearing the end of my second year at the University of Vermont. In preparing this report, I reviewed my very first address to the Educational Policy and Institutional Resources Committee in fall 2013. I’d like to take this opportunity to highlight some of our most significant accomplishments in the last two years and offer some thoughts about the next two years.

Early on, it became apparent to me that the breadth and complexity of my responsibilities demanded a disciplined focus in the areas in which I could have the most immediate and significant impact in support of the goals identified in President Sullivan’s Strategic Action Plan. I organized my thinking by creating a “quad chart” that included four major Initiative Sets. The Budget Initiative Set includes activities ranging from achieving balanced annual budgets to leading the campus-wide conversation and subsequent transition to an incentive-based budget (IBB) model in support of the University’s long-term financial sustainability. The Academic Excellence Initiative Set includes many of the traditional activities of a university’s Chief Academic Officer such as evaluating, demonstrating, and ensuring the quality, impact and rigor of our academic programs. The Student Experience Initiative Set recognizes the opportunities and realities of increased inter-mingling of curricular and co-curricular activities, with a focus on capturing and maximizing the utility of our students’ time and efforts outside of the classroom. The STEM Initiative Set includes leading the planning and orchestration of the new STEM facility as well as a parallel effort in K-12 STEM education and pipeline development.

Specific accomplishments, all in partnership with other campus leaders and members of our academic community, include:

**Budget Initiative Set:** Working closely with the Vice President of Finance and our Budget Team, we –
- Achieved balanced FY15 and FY16 annual budgets.
- Completed a two-year campus-wide process around the development and implementation of an incentive-based budget model 1.0 for the University, leading to a July 1, 2015 launch.
**Academic Initiative Set:** Working closely with the academic leadership and the faculty, we —

- Developed a concise set of Academic Excellence Goals to guide decision-making, resource allocation, strategy, and forward planning at all levels of the University.
- Developed Academic Advising Plans, Scholarly Productivity and Impact Metrics, and methods for Evaluating Teaching Performance for each College and School.
- Implemented the University’s first General Education learning outcome in writing and information literacy (launched fall 2014). A second General Education learning outcome in Sustainability has been approved and will launch in fall 2015.
- Welcomed the first cohort of international students into the UVM Global Gateway Program in January 2014.

**Student Experience Initiative Set:** Working closely with the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and her leadership team, we —

- Developed and implemented strategies to increase student success, retention and wellness.
- Opened the Career+Experience Hub at the Davis Center.
- Developed and implemented the Four-Year Career Success Plan.
- Updated the Housing Master Plan and implemented plans for enhanced student housing.

**STEM Initiative Set:** Working closely with campus leadership, and leadership and faculty in CEMS, CAS, and CESS, we —

- Completed the space planning and design for the new STEM Complex.
- Assembled and led the STEM Leadership Council to engage senior leaders from industry to help us vision and plan for expanded STEM programs.
- Created, with leadership in CESS and CEMS, a seed grant program to develop new programs aimed at K-12 STEM education, outreach and teacher preparation.

While not allocated its own “box” in the quad chart, fundamental to all of these activities was my desire to deepen our campus culture of open and authentic communication, as well as to find ways to tell the UVM story to our many constituencies beyond the campus. Actions undertaken in support of this goal have included:

- Creating Across the Green, a series of periodic updates on current initiatives and information on topics of interest to the broader academic community.
- Meeting regularly with undergraduate and graduate student leaders, campus and local media, admitted students and families, and young alumni.
- Hosting a series of meetings with the Department Chairs; attended College/School faculty meetings and Board of Advisors meetings at least once (typically twice) a year.
- Supporting the development of the University’s first Research Report, the Humanities Report and a redesign of the University’s website.

In retrospect, this is a remarkable list of accomplishments achieved in a relatively short period of time. And, to be sure, these are not my accomplishments, they are our accomplishments. Countless members of our academic community – faculty, staff, and students – have participated in these activities that have advanced our institution. Together, we have strengthened our foundation and our infrastructure – we have righted the house in many ways – and are now better positioned to innovate, to compete, to transform, and to evolve as a great university.
Indeed, the next several years will be a period of remarkable transformation at the University of Vermont. I am eager to facilitate and witness the culture change ushered in by IBB. The new budget model is a strategic management tool that empowers our academic leaders to forward-plan and to achieve their highest priorities and goals. IBB has the potential to harness the power of the entire campus in support of our core academic mission. Our campus will also undergo a significant physical transformation in the next several years. The STEM facility will serve as a literal and figurative spine for central campus and will allow the University of Vermont to retain its place among the most relevant and effective comprehensive teaching and research universities in the nation.

It continues to be my honor and privilege to serve the University of Vermont as Provost. We have accomplished much and have many more opportunities ahead of us. Working together, we will continue to realize progress toward our shared goals, position UVM for even greater success, and achieve as a distinguished and distinctive university.