



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2009
SEVENTH MEETING OF 2009-2010 SENATE

CALL TO ORDER
START TIME: 7:06

ROLL CALL
FINANCE: all present
STUDENT ACTIVITIES: Jeff Fromuth (unexcused)
COLA: all present
CODEEE: all present
STUDENT ACTION: all present
PR: all present
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: all present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: approved

PUBLIC FORUM

Dan Fogel, President

We meet regularly with the officers of the senate and hope the dialogue will be constructive for all parties and that the dialogue will continue all through the meeting.

We still have some challenges ahead of us as UVM is addressing issues that we know of in the budget and that we don't know of for the next academic year. We continued to increase the budget for purchasing library materials, colleges, schools, and most importantly and of the greatest concern we increased undergraduate financial aid. The incoming class was the largest and most diverse class in our history. The faculty has been winning top recognition and awards and brought in record grants and we hope to continue and leverage the scientific power of the faculty. Generally we are very well positioned. We are doing well in a troubled landscape of higher education. We have reached the end of the enrollment growth. We are going to focus on improving the academic quality and quality of the academic program. Focus now will go to some academic initiatives.

Jane Knodell, Provost

In February we announced the need to find \$11 million in cost savings and we had a plan. The student to teacher ratio was going to be raised from 15.2 to 16.1. We created a group called the academic quality task force. Recommendations were made about the reinvestment of funds back into the colleges. Based on report recommendations more money was reinvested in colleges and schools for lectures, undergraduate and graduate teaching positions, and faculty. There were 9 people whose positions were eliminated but they were all rehired under different jobs. Instead of 22 positions going away only 12 positions went away but that did not result in any layoffs since there were no people in the positions that we got rid of. The impact on education is that more of the courses being taught will be taught by full time faculty and full time lecturers, and I think that is a plus. There is a change in class sizes but it is not dramatic. 4.6% of all sections are larger than 100 and a year ago it was 4%. So the changes are not dramatic. What the Deans did was try to preserve smaller classes at the intermediate and advanced level and just enlarge courses in the introduction class. The class size in your major shouldn't have gotten bigger.

Gary Derr, Vice President for Executive Operations

Chair Glynne: How do you view SGA's role in the governmental structure of UVM? Is it a government body or is it just an advisory board?

President Fogal: You are an important part of shared government but you have a different status from the faculty which has formally delegated authority over the programs and education. The SGA is a shared government recognized by the board.

Chair Glynne: Did UVM misrepresent itself in the claim we are an official government body and not an advisory board?

President Fogal: The accreditation report has a great deal of integrity and shows our respect for the students and we have a great interest in seeing shared government institutions strengthened.

Chair Wilkinson-Ray: If students are unhappy with the direction of the University what signals would you look for as red flags?

President Fogal: I would look for expressions of student views through the SGA, as well as some advocacy groups. I think we have been responsive to advocacy groups around issues like moving to recycled paper. We have a record of listening. We also look at things like the national survey of student engagement.

Provost Knodell: If I were a student I would be concerned if I didn't see the University investing in good faculty and better classrooms and dormitories.

Chair Wilkinson-Ray: If you still feel like you are not being heard what would you do?

Provost Knodell: I would make sure I used good evidence and construct good arguments and continue to articulate my position. It is based on a democratic process and you have to continue to work within that system.

Chair Cafarelli: With the University disregarding pleas to upgrade the baseball field, what do you say to the locals? Considering a local offered to pay for half of the cost.

President Fogal: I have not been aware of the offer. I think costs have been dramatically underestimated. I believe an offer of funds was made up to \$9.5 million and it didn't even come close to what would be needed. Most of UVM's resources come from you the students and we need to invest those funds in the academic interests of the University.

Chair Cafarelli: What are the current plans for centennial field?

President Fogal: We will try to maintain it as a safe place. It is and continues to be a priority to invest the money to make it adequate and safe.

Senator Hannaford: Could you talk about class sizes?

Provost Knodell: Class sections over 200 were .6% a year ago and now they are .7% so as you can see there has not been a big change

Senator Whitmore: Could you elaborate on the incentives you were talking about for this year?

Provost Knodell: One is the development of setting general education requirements. Since every college has its own requirements it makes it hard to switch colleges or to have 2 majors or 3 majors in more than one college. So a general education requirement would provide more uniformity across the colleges and give a clear idea of what we are providing our students in a bachelor's degree. Also another initiative has to do with research. We want to identify transdisciplinary areas, about 5-7 of them. We want to be internationally the best place to study these issues.

President Fogal: We see these initiatives as closely related in terms of building the scholarly distinction of the University. We want much richer fabric of undergraduate research experience.

Chair Glynne: Why doesn't UVM celebrate Veterans Day?

Fogal: I didn't know we don't celebrate it.

Chair Glynne: As far as I know it's a federal holiday so most public institutions have the day off but I am not asking or that I am asking for some celebration. I know the University supports veterans but on Veterans Day I think the University should do something.

President Fogal: I think we will need to look into that. I think the University has a very good record of supporting veterans.

Senator Church: You said that none of the upper level senior classes would be affected by the budget cuts. Your document says that sections of 19 students to be switched to 35 students. Do you not consider that a change?

Provost Knodell: I saw all classes under 40 as a class that allowed a lot of interaction between students and teachers. I don't think there is a dramatic adverse effect. In fact I think it's better to have 15 versus 5 students in the room. I didn't see anything in the data that caused me to be concerned with what's going on in intermediate and upper level classes.

President Fogal: I don't think the norm is going from 11 to 30. Looking at the spreadsheet Provost Knodell brought with her there are 477 classes with 11 or less students, 492 classes with 12 and under and a lot with 29 or fewer. What you are seeing is a very high quality learning environment in a vast majority of the sections. We should count ourselves as lucky to have so many small sections.

Senator Church: Did you ask students rather than Deans about how they feel about class size?

Provost Knodell: Students were not on the task force but faculty were and I think the faculty represent the interests of what's going on in the classroom.

President Fogal: Not every section can achieve every aim of the program of each field of study. There are many exciting awarding courses that are taught that are larger than 50. We take great pride that out of the couple thousand sections there are many smaller classes.

Senator Doran: What about the departments that are made up of mostly part time faculty?

Provost Knodell: In departments that lost part time faculty course were picked up by other faculty and lecturers.

Senator Doran: I herd that the English department had large numbers of part time faculty as well as Anthropology.

Provost Knodell: In both departments their curriculum is fully covered. I am not aware of any problems in those departments.

President Fogal: Some people who had part time jobs in English have come out of this last year as full time employees.

Senator Waldvogel: What do all of you think about the students that were arrested last year and why we arresting them necessary?

President Fogal: We honor the tradition of student advocacy and of students speaking out. We think that ideas have to be expressed. But they should never be expressed in a way that is disruptive so when people are trespassing and staff has to be sent home and the University can't continue its operations then you say there are other ways to express those ideas and then you need to uphold the rule of law.

Provost Knodell: In the presidents wing there were many people working there including staff. When those actions took place and students forced themselves into the wing it was very frightening for the people who were working there and it doesn't feel like a safe place to be. You have to understand it from all points of view.

Senator Baron: Can you provide some examples of how we can see the posing of an environmental advocate and taking action for the next few years?

President Fogal: Provost Knodell is working on building the power of our transdisciplinary programs which will have focal points focusing on environment and apply research to improve society. We aim at creating an environment that is supportive of the values the students want to up hold.

Provost Knodell: We are finalizing our climate action plan. President Fogal committed the University towards a reduction of our carbon emissions to a goal of zero. It will be a costly goal and the goal is to have a feasible road map to reach carbon neutrality. The date is not yet set. We don't want to do it just by buying carbon credits. By January we want to have the plan in place.

Senator Frye: How will the plan play a part in the structure and investments of the University fund?

President Fogal: As we look at ecological economics and design we look for a niche area where we can be among the best. Ecological art has been mentioned as an idea for a niche.

Senator Buswell: Could you comment on the contract with Coca-Cola and how it benefits student ad initiative to support local food and carbon neutrality.

Provost Knodell: It's hard to see how it does. Does the senate have a proposal?

Senator Buswell: Termination of the contract or review of the contract.

President Fogal: There will be a review and the contract is something we inherited when we arrived here. The discussion I have had with students has been very constructive.

Chair Wilkinson-Ray: The need for an end to growth and to encouraged development not growth, how would you plan to bring that to the University?

Chair Chevrier: Do you have suggestions of how to talk to the faculty senate because they don't have a public forum like we do?

Provost Knodell: I thought they represented your position well because I was at the meetings they were raising the issues about the quality of educational experience. We have a very responsive faculty. My recommendation is trying to go to the committees of the faculty senate and they would be open to hearing you issues and working on issues of mutual concern.

Senator Just: Last year there were a lot of student protests on campus and led to some arrest. And there was a lot of anger towards administration, faculty and staff. Looking back what would you have done differently and what tangible advice would you give to the students that feel silenced based on last years actions.

President Fogal: Looking back there were things I wish we did differently but we tried very hard to communicate fully and constantly. We have always tried hard to make sure are always safe. When we had the hunger strike we made sure there was medical counseling. Our first concern is the safety of students and then the openness of ideas. It is in the interests of hearing all the voices but we cannot be put in the position of negotiating with any group that occupies a space. There are rules that have to govern civil disorder.

Senator Hannaford: What is the administrations stand on the unionization of staff?

President Fogal: Workers have the right to work and we support that. We do have unions that represent staff. We have never been found to have committed an unfair labor practice. We are not perfect but I would uphold the right of workers to organize.

Senator Greenwald: Considering the extra classes picked up by fulltime faculty are there any measures being taken to make sure they are not being too stressed?

Provost Knodell: For Faculty that take on large classes we have a program of undergraduate teaching assistance and that's a big help to faculty and students. We also have additional graduate teaching assistance. There have also been a lot of workshops run to help faculty and staff. We are doing everything we can think of. We are doing everything we can to make sure faculty is successful.

Senator MacDonald: A majority of people on the senate and a large number of students would support some sustainability requirement. What exist as part of the general education requirement or separate requirement about satiability and how can students and SGA brake down those barriers?

Provost Knodell: Discussion of general education requirements is just starting so now is the time to insert your views about that.

Senator Church: Are there other targets being set such as buying local food and for waste flows on campus?

President Fogal: We are very supportive of local food and we are among the first Universitys to work with our dining partner Sodexo to keep a local food movement. And we will be offer through Sodexo a local milk option. I don't think we have a target but we want to feel our way but it will cost more. We may be able to set one as we move along. The same thing goes with waste, we have a commitment to recycling and sustainability.

Senator Brown: Using the Rubinstein School as an example it has national recognition. Will there be some if any of the same programs?

Provost Knodell: Each college would still have its own distinctive curriculum. I would not expect any reduction in any of the colleges.

President Fogal: We will be taking to the board of trustees about a proposal to accelerate the renovation and expansion of the Akin building. We are about the only University in the country that does not have a general education requirement. It is to make it more student friendly.

EMERGENCY BUSINESS

Speaker Ellis: Will Vivas and Tran please stand.

They take the oath of office.

NEW BUSINESS

Senator Buswell: Bill recognizing the sailing club for club of the fort night

Senator MacDonald: resolution for creating a sustainability requirement

Senator Machel: the sunshine act

OLD BUSINESS

Financial Policies

Treasurer LeMieux: Financial policies manual has been going around. Does anyone have any questions?

Senator Wilkinson-Ray: Is anything different?

Treasurer LeMieux: No.

Amendments for financial policy called to question VOTE passed

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

Treasurer LeMieux: I went to the audit committee meeting this week. The chief internal auditor of UVM has been with her counter parts and has been auditing areas of UVM and we got a lot of the results. Read results. Up until Monday this school had no internal control model for how we control our finances. Monday we adopted one.

SPEAKER ELLIS:

Next week I am going to ask that everyone who is bring up legislation for 2 weeks that legislation be to me within 24 hours of our meeting next week.

PRESIDENT JONES:

Sodexo, some administrators, and some of us are going to talk about what it would look like for pricings for more local food. It will not occur if students don't want it. The General Education requirement. The first meeting was on Friday but the change is unknown because the deans respond to how we are going to go about implanting this by December if we don't know what a general education would address. I will keep you informed about that. I would like to know where Senator Glynne is getting his information about centennial field. We were told we are not a governing body we are an advisory to the president. I understand that faculty senate has ownership over curriculum but the academic calendar affects everybody.

VICE-PRESIDENT ASH:

In the meeting we had with the three guests we briefed them on the topics that were going to come up tonight and I asked them not to list off a ton of statistics. I was impressed with their higher effort than in previous years. I want feedback on if this is the format we want for public forum when we have special guests come. I want your opinion on what should be in the galaxy space. We will be meeting about it Thursday at 7. We will appoint senator Buswell as new chair of elections committee for the rest of the year and there are 4 more senators on the committee. Me and President Jones open ourselves up as a resource. The clean energy fund is still looking for three student senators to act as representatives

Chair Maciewicz: The clean energy fund is an offset of the office of sustainability. It's mostly students and needs 3 SGA representatives. We were under forum so we can't meet right now. It only meets about 4 times a semester but it's a full year commitment. Contact me if interested.

Chair Wilkinson-Ray: I think you should allow everyone to do a follow-up question on public forum.

Senator Altendorfer: What's going on with the academic calendar, are there any updates?

Vice President Ash: The faculty will not be meeting to vote on a calendar again till October but I have been working with the public relations committee to talk about what students need to know about what's going to be changing for this year.

Senator Whitmore: I think a max of an hour for public forum would be appropriate.

Vice President Ash: We appoint Burns as the new chair of academic affairs

Senator Church: Can we have them come back again?

Vice President Ash: This might happen 2 or 3 times a semester.

Senator Buswell: I thought the time limit set was good.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE- SEN. CAFARELLI:

The shirts will not cost more just because there is more stuff on them. They cost about \$3.50 per shirt.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES- SEN. CHEVRIER:

This weekend are policy workshops. 11-1 Sunday.

COLA- SEN. GLYNNE:

We have a meeting with the Mayor on October 7th from 10-11. We are going to talk about affordable housing and veterans initiative and try to improve our relationship with the community. The H1N1 vaccine is being moved to mid October.

Senator Vivas: Can we celebrate veterans day on our own?

That's the plan but the students shouldn't have to get together to do that.

CODEEE- SEN. MACIEWICZ:

I will email out my report

STUDENT ACTION- SEN. WILKINSON-RAY:

We will be working on the naked bike ride, milk tasks force and local foods

PR- SEN. RIFKEN:

We are talking to student life about homecoming. In the past we have had a floats and this year its like a harvest testable.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS- SEN. BURNS:

Academic integrity counsel training is this Thursday. There were a lot of questions about class sizes and Vice President Durr will email the spread sheet they referenced a couple times so I will email it to everyone.

SENATORIAL FORUM

Senator Whitmore: I think its a good idea for more local food but we need to understand the economic alternative for that. Its import to not make judgments on peoples personal finical situation and you need to realize it dose cost more and not all students can afford this.

Senator Glynne: President Fogal stated we don't want to mismanage UVM funds to support a business. But he said we are a business. Then he said a safe place for centennial field. There are three plans to make it in to a parking lot, faculty and staff housing, or a varsity fields.

Chair Chevrier: He asked my opinion for who for club of the fort night and I suggested sailing club because they did great things with there sanctions and will be holding policy workshops that will be going on this weekend. They are the epitome of what we want to come out of sanctions

Senator Machel: If follow-ups will not be granted due to time restraint that you make sure the questions are being answered.

Senator Henley: You shouldn't make statements that you have not done the research for. Because organic and local are not the sme thing and often local food is just as reasonably priced as regular food.

Chair Cafarelli: The idea behind the new t-shirt is sportsmanship because October is sportsmanship month. The motto is play to win cheer with pride. I think it's a much better t-shirt than cheer positive.

Senator Henley: The Provost pushed it aside between a 19 and 40 person class. Last semester I took a class that should have been 19 and under and it was 40 and some people were sitting on the floor. We should remember that is a big difference between 19 and 40.

Senator Baron: I am well aware of the other companies that Coca-Cola manages. Rather than increasing our choices it has limited them and ending the contract will actulay alow more choces for those people morally opposed to Coca-Cola.

Senator Vivas: They are not just giving us products, the school is getting some advantage from it. What sort of company can give you money or provide economic support if you just use regular water. Its not something you can make a profit out of and the school needs money to run

Senator John-Freso: If we do cut that contract and perhaps go for more expensive operations what on the priority list?

President Jones: point of information you are correct and my efforts and what I think we should do is create an group that would work to develop a proposal that I think would be successful. If we had worked with community members or local venders and came up with a coalition of people who want to come to an agreement to create enough revenue to compete with Coca-Cola there would be no reason to not accept that proposal. If there isn't an alternative the University won't actively seek one

Chair Cafarelli: I sent out an email last week in regards to the idling issue we have on campus. They have a sticker that says they are a non idling car and they were idling and that was weird.

Senator Vivas: When you are talking about more local products are you talking about more satiable products? I am not sure what you mean?

Senator Henley: My reason for speaking out against Coca-Cola is they have a really bad labor record. It wasn't so much about local alternative although that would be much more appetizing then going to Pepsi but I think its an ideological ethical issue.

SENATORIAL COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

President Jones: I thought the questions asked of the guests were very respectful but next time you can be a little bit more direct and aggressive. This Sunday is the first time UVM TV is going live and they invited me and Vice President Ash and Chair Rifkin to come on board and if you have suggestion about what you want us to say let us know.

Chair Glynne: The debate team opens there terminal play for regional on Saturday 8am till Sunday

Senator Baron: I would like to extend the invitation to anyone on SGA to attend a conference. Senator Buswell and I are going the weekend of October 2-4. it will deal with issue of university dominance and there investment sand contracts. Conference is in Philadelphia.

Chair Wilkinson-Ray: A group of students are putting on a documentary series called reclaiming our education Tuesday at 8 marsh 235.

Senator Just: gave a resigning speech

Senator Henley: open invitation to come to the farm I work on and help out.

ROLL CALL:

FINANCE: all present

STUDENT ACTIVITIES: Senator Fromuth (excused)

COLA: all present

CODEEE: all present

STUDENT ACTION: all present

PR: all present

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: all present

ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ENDS: 10:13