



FACULTY SENATE

Executive Council
November 13, 2023, 4:00 – 5:30 PM
Minutes

Present: Professors Borchert (President), Eyer (VP), Allen (at large), Bonifield (PSC), deRosset (at large), Everse (CAC), Gove (SAC), Julianelle (at large), Kervick (CAC), Pope (at large), Read (ERTC), Rodriguez (FPPC)

Absent: Prue (SAC), Vacant (RSCA)

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM on Microsoft Teams

1. **Minutes** – The minutes of the October 2023 meeting were approved as written.
2. **Chair's Remarks** – Thomas Borchert will be meeting with Ron Lumbrá, Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Tom will be communicating his concern about the use of executive session when deliberating decisions such as raising tuition.
3. **Degree Corrections** – Degree correction requests were received from the College of Arts and Sciences for the September 2023 list of graduates.
Motion: Guillermo Rodriguez moved to approve the degree corrections as requested. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.
4. **Report from the October Board of Trustees meeting** – Guillermo Rodriguez reported that the Board approved a 3.5 percent increase in tuition for out-of-state students, and an increase in meal rates of 3.5 percent. Tuition will remain flat for Vermont students. The UVM Promise household income threshold will increase from \$60,000 to \$75,000, making more Vermonters eligible for free tuition. There will be a 3 percent increase in the comprehensive fee for undergraduate students. There will also be a \$1,000 additional fee per student enrolled in three of the colleges – Engineering and Mathematical Sciences, Nursing and Health Sciences, and the Grossman School of Business. This fee will go directly to the units to offset more costly teaching and laboratory resources. The 40 percent increase in healthcare costs for the university was stated as a factor in the decision to increase tuition. Guillermo also reported that the university is facing a \$20 million difference in the budget and the administration is asking the units to use their reserve funds to cover the gap. Discussion included concerns about the use of executive session, the desire for a faculty member on the Board of Trustees, the lack of modeling for financial &

enrollment impact of these decisions, and questions about how the three colleges were chosen for the additional fee and how the \$1,000 amount was determined. Concerns were also expressed about the use of reserve funds without a long-term plan. Guillermo reported that the reserve draw would be done in two phases, first draw of \$8 million, and then \$12 million.

Colby Kervick attended the Educational Policy & Institutional Resources (EPIR) committee meeting and reported strong support and approval of the co-major credential. President Garimella attended the EPIR meeting and used the development of the co-major as a good illustration of cross-unit collaboration and faculty governance. The Curricular Affairs Committee anticipates receiving proposals for co-majors this winter and is in the process of developing detailed institutional guidance to address advising, and student financial aid implications.

Thomas Borchert reported that the resolutions approved by the Board of Trustees included the appointment of members of the BOT to the five-year comprehensive review of President Garimella. Tom will ask Chair Lumbra to clarify how the campus community and Faculty Senate will be involved in the review.

5. **Water Resources Institute Report** – Thomas Borchert reported that the RSCA completed the review of the proposal to establish a Water Resources Institute at UVM and voted to approve the proposal at their November 9th meeting. Public comments received with all positive. Tom will write the memo to the Faculty Senate recommending approval. The November 27th Faculty Senate meeting will include a presentation by Beverly Wemple. The proposed institute will be voted by the Faculty Senate at the December 18th meeting.
6. **Catamount Core Curriculum Committee (CCCC)** — Thomas Borchert opened discussion regarding the next steps for the CCCC, which is currently a joint ad hoc committee between the Provost's Office and the Faculty Senate. The General Education Framework was approved by the Faculty Senate in 2020, and the plan included the appointment of the ad hoc joint committee to develop the processes necessary to implement and sustain the General Education program prior to the CCCC becoming a standing committee of the Faculty Senate. The chair of the CCCC is Pablo Bose, the Provost's Faculty Fellow for the Catamount Core Curriculum. Pablo is stepping down and an announcement seeking applicants for the Faculty Fellow for the CCC was recently distributed. Discussion included concerns about the process for appointing the chair of the CCCC – specifically the Provost controlling the appointment of the Faculty Fellow, the authority of the Faculty Senate over curriculum, and the suggestion that the CCCC become a subcommittee of the Curricular Affairs Committee. Points of clarification included the Senate approved the Catamount Core framework and delegated authority to the CCCC whose membership includes elected faculty members from the units; the content of the Catamount Core curriculum is being put forward by faculty and approved by faculty; the Faculty Fellow is a faculty member; and the process of syllabus review outside of the CCC sits within unit curriculum committees (not the Senate Curricular Affairs Committee). Thomas Borchert stated that the Provost's office is currently providing support for the process of standing up the Catamount Core, the Curricular Affairs Committee cannot take on this work in the current form, and that the

Faculty Senate bylaws will need to be changed to create the Catamount Core Committee as either a standing committee or subcommittee.

7. **Academic Freedom and Outside Speakers** - In October, UVM cited safety concerns and withdrew space originally scheduled to host a lecture by the Will Miller Social Justice Lecture Series. Thomas Borchert reported that he has invited UVM Vice President and General Counsel, Trent Klingerman, to attend the November Faculty Senate meeting to share information and take questions regarding that decision. In addition, Tom reported that he received a few comments on the recent review of the University Policy on Free Expression; Campus Speakers; Response to Disruption Policy and has forwarded the comments to Michael Schirling and the Policy Revisions team.
8. **Library Reorganization** – Stephen Everse, chair of the ad hoc committee reviewing the proposal to reorganize the Libraries, reported that in response to the feedback received by the committee, the review process has been paused. Dean Geffert is currently on a “speaking tour” to the units and will consider the information gathered for potential revisions to the proposal. Discussion included continued concerns about the process, the importance of anonymous commentary from Libraries faculty, the desire for the process to include a vote of the Libraries faculty, and concerns about reports of inaccurate information presented in the proposal.

Motion: Evan Eycler moved that the following resolution be communicated to the Dean of the Libraries and to the President and Provost:

Whereas the method of gathering input on the Libraries reorganization is not anonymous; and

Whereas no Libraries faculty are tenured; and

Whereas anonymous commentary is necessary to preserve the spirit of cooperation and collegiality of faculty and administration;

Therefore, be it hereby resolved that the Faculty Senate Executive Council requests that information gathering on the Libraries reorganization proposal be suspended until some means of gathering anonymous input from Libraries faculty is devised and implemented, and that assurance be given that feedback already submitted will remain anonymous.

The motion was seconded and carried.

Vote: 8 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain

Thomas Borchert will deliver this resolution to the Dean of the Libraries, and to the President, and Provost.

9. **Agenda for P & P meeting with Executive Council – (Mon. Nov 20, 2:00 – 2:45)** – With no objections, Thomas Borchert moved to cancel the November meeting.
10. **Draft Agenda for Faculty Senate Meeting (Monday, November 27, 4:00-5:30 PM, on Teams** - Thomas Borchert will distribute a draft agenda via email for electronic vote later this week.

The meeting adjourned at 5:48 PM