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FACULTY SENATE

Student Affairs Committee
Minutes
April 6, 2023
8:30-10:00 a.m.
Microsoft Teams

Present: Thomas Borchert (Faculty Senate President), Matthew Carlson (CAS), Terry Delaney (CALS), Krisan Geary (CEMS), Steve Gove (GSB), Denise Hersey (LIB), Jennifer Prue (CESS), Sarah Twitchell (LCOM), Scott Van Keuren (CAS)

Absent: Nathan Kokinda (CNHS), Devika Singh (LCOM), Pending (GSS), Trish O'Kane (RSENR), Eva Stanford (SGA)

Guests: Jennifer Dickinson, Erica Caloiero, Jay Jacobs

Co-Chair Jennifer Prue called the meeting to order at 8:36 am via Microsoft Teams.

1. **Minutes.** The minutes of the March SAC meeting are approved as written.

2. **Chair Update –** Jenny Prue stated that student demand and need for support services has increased and Sharon Mone, Program Director of Student Accessibility Services (SAS) will be invited to provide an update on resources provided by SAS.

3. **Religious Holiday Policy** – Thomas Borchert presented suggested revisions to the Religious Holidays Policy. Discussion included reasonable accommodations and the need to calibrate accommodations with the expectations and requirements of a course; desire for equity of accommodations made for religious observance, athletes, students with disabilities, and students with medical needs; the need for a clear process for appeals and the desire for a systemic approach for handling all student appeals; the use of the term holiday v. observation, and the distinction between religious holiday versus ongoing religious practice such as daily prayer; and the desire for faculty to have a level of religious literacy. Thomas Borchert will explore the use of the term holiday v. observance in federal policy and will look at the appeal process outlined in other UVM policies. An updated version of the suggested revision to the Religious Holiday Policy will be presented at the May meeting of the SAC and if approved the policy revision will be reported to the Faculty Senate in May and take effect in Fall 2023. Jenny Prue stated that future SAC agendas should focus energy on student's rights and an academic appeals policy that is practiced consistently.

4. **Office of Enrollment Update** - Jay Jacobs, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management provided an update on enrollment. Enrollment goal for the first-time, first-year class is 2950, and all indicators look outstanding. There is a significant increase in the number of students from Vermont, the number of

students of color (35-40 more), the number of international students looks good, and student quality is level with last year. The admission rate is currently just under 59%. The Early Decision admission program implemented this year has resulted in higher yield rates from last year. Transfer student applications are up slightly from last year, and because degree audits are now being given to admitted transfer students, the yield rate is also increasing. VP Jacobs highlighted the UVM Go program, a pre-orientation program for incoming first-year students which focuses on themes of global engagement. The programs are let by UVM faculty. UVM Go will serve a small representation of the first-year students this year and scale up to participation by about half of the new first-time first-year classes. The floor was opened for questions and discussion topics included services offered for first-generation students; reasons admitted students choose not to attend UVM; and of the 64-66 Vermont students nominated for Green and Gold Scholarships – 100% are admitted with a 50% yield. Jay Jacobs has provided coupons for ice-cream and coffee for students to use to invite a faculty member for an informal conversation. Jay invited faculty to ask a student who might not have the cultural capital to ask a faculty member for a coffee or ice cream to engage in a less formal setting. VP Jacobs reported that the Navigate contract ends in summer of 2024. An RFP committee will be formed and there will be faculty representation on the committee.

5. **Old / New Business.** – none at this time.

The SAC was adjourned at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting of the SAC will be on April 6, 2023, at 8:30am on Microsoft Teams.