January 27, 2011

To: University of Vermont Board of Trustees

From: Jane Knodell, Provost and Senior Vice President

Subject: Internationalization Discussion at the Committee of the Whole

This memo supplements the information in my Provost’s Report in preparation for our Committee of the Whole discussion on internationalization next Friday. My goal for this discussion is to help the Board better understand what internationalization means, its relationship to our mission, the history of internationalization discussions and activities on campus, and to share some initial recommendations with you and seek your advice and comment about how we can further these efforts. Additionally, I hope that we can turn to EPIR for a more in-depth review of any issues or concerns that arise from the Committee of the Whole discussion.

What is internationalization? How does it relate to our mission?

The Association of International Educators defines internationalization as:

...the conscious effort to integrate and infuse international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the ethos and outcomes of post secondary education. To be fully successful, it must involve active and responsible engagement of the academic community in global networks and partnerships.1

In a 2008 report submitted to former Provost John Hughes, the UVM Committee to Review International Education defined internationalization as, “the integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the teaching, research, and service functions of the University.” Internationalization is a combination of many actions that help us create a vibrant and pertinent intellectual community and that support all of our strategic goals. It includes scholarly exchanges and partnerships; research partnerships; study-abroad and student exchanges; creation of a diverse community and promotion of multicultural understanding; curriculum integration as well as international student enrollment.

Internationalization is directly aligned with our mission statement, which calls on us to “create, evaluate, share, and apply knowledge and to prepare students to be accountable leaders who will bring to their work dedication to the global community, a grasp of complexity, effective problem-solving and communication skills, and an enduring commitment to learning and ethical

1 The Changing Landscape of Global Higher Education, NAFSA, Association of International Educators, 2010
conduct.” It is also a thread that runs through the goals in our strategic plan dealing with diversity, the student experience and scholarship.

The History of Internationalization Discussions and Efforts on Campus
Since 1976 there have been over 10 reports from various committees and leaders on campus addressing assorted aspects of internationalization, five of which included strategic recommendations to promote internationalization. In the past three years there have been a number of discussions and decisions about advancing internationalization, as well as initiatives to promote internationalization. In 2007, Provost John Hughes appointed the committee noted earlier in this memo to examine international education at UVM. In particular, he charged the committee to “consider what operations and functions we will need to support in order to promote the University’s stated intention to bolster international education to realize the vision of the University.” In 2008, Provost Hughes received the committee’s report, Internationalizing the University of Vermont: The Time is Now. In 2009, Provost Hughes implemented one of the recommendations of the report by establishing an International Advisory Council to:

- Assist in the development of a strategic plan for internationalization.
- Ensure that the international perspective is brought to the table at various meetings and in strategic discussions.
- Promote efforts to internationalize the campus through curriculum, student and faculty recruitment and inclusion.

Provost Hughes also established the International Student Success Task Force “to address pressing demands related to a program we are pursuing that will support the enrollment of approximately 80-100 Chinese undergraduate students per year beginning in the summer of 2010 (the US Sino Pathways Program), as well as the needs of our current international students.” Additionally, over the past three years, the President’s Commission on Diversity and Inclusion has submitted two reports with recommendations related to promoting internationalization, including increasing international student enrollment.

Initial Recommendations for Discussion
In keeping with internationalization’s alignment with our mission, its historical support on campus, and its ability to further the strategic objective of diversifying our sources of revenue, we have been exploring one aspect of internationalization in particular this year: increasing international student enrollment at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

There is consensus among the Deans, and growing consensus among other senior leaders, that an aggressive expansion of international enrollment at this time makes sense for a number of reasons. We have reached the undergraduate enrollment level upon which our growth model was predicated (10,150 students), thus our revenue base has reached a plateau that can only be altered by changes to either tuition levels or our financial aid model, both of which are extremely constrained. Additionally, we face declining demographics in Vermont and the Northeast — our critical admissions feeder markets. Another current challenge is the intense competition for

---

2 The best projection of high school graduates by state and race/ethnicity is the March 2008 version of Knocking at the College Door, produced by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. Per this report, Vermont high school graduates are projected to decline by 18.3% between 2009-2010 and 2019-2020. High school graduates in the Northeast are projected to decline 10.4% during the same period. Of particular concern is the projected decline in our top two feeder states: 8.6% in Massachusetts and 10% in Connecticut.
high-quality domestic first year students who can add to our campus’s diversity. Finally, recent developments in the international education marketplace suggest that the time may be particularly ripe for action: interest in study in the United States is high due to changes in Australian visa requirements and changes to the tuition model in the UK. A number of US universities have already aggressively pursued international enrollment, and more are planning to enter the marketplace.

Our current international student enrollment at 1% of undergraduate students and 9.2% of graduate students lags behind most public and private universities, and certainly our peer and aspirant universities. The Institute of International Education Open Doors 2010 Fast Facts (Appendix A) provides national trend information on international enrollment in the US. The following provides a quick sampling of undergraduate enrollment at several peer/aspirant institutions.

- Boston University – 2.8%
- Cornell – 8.5%
- Miami University – 2.8%
- Middlebury - 10.4%
- Northeastern University – 7.4%
- Skidmore – 3.3%
- SUNY Binghamton – 9.6%
- Syracuse – 5.3%
- William and Mary – 2.6%

There are a variety of ways in which an institution can increase its international student enrollment and we will be conducting an evaluation of them.

Should we decide to move ahead with an aggressive international enrollment initiative, we are committed to doing it right. We will ensure that our internationalization efforts will not negatively impact Vermont students or academic quality. Additionally, we will not divert resources supporting increased ALANA student enrollment to international enrollment. Any approach we take will require us to engage with key constituencies to discuss and resolve a variety of issues. Here are just a few examples:

- What services and programs will we need to create or enhance to accommodate the needs of more international students?
- Are there facilities needs we will have to consider?
- What is the relationship between internalization efforts and our programs and initiatives focused on domestic diversity?
- Where will increased numbers of international students come from, and what are the implications?
- What curricular adjustments might be necessary?

Clearly, we have much to explore and consider as we examine what I believe will be a very exciting opportunity for UVM. I look forward to our discussion next week to identify issues and concerns that you would like the administration to further explore in partnership with the EPIR Committee.