This is my final report as President of Staff Council. By the time you read this, we will have elected a new President and Vice President who will be introduced at the Committee of the Whole meeting. The past two years have provided me with the opportunity to work with the other governance leaders, senior leadership, faculty, students, and most importantly, the UVM staff, and I look forward to supporting the Staff Council’s new leadership.

Since my last report, the Staff Council Executive Board has been busy preparing our annual update which we share with the Senior Leadership and the Board of Trustees Chair. This comprehensive document highlights significant accomplishments of the past academic year, speaks to a number of ongoing efforts, addresses areas of concern to staff, and allows us to reflect upon current challenges and opportunities facing the University.

A main area of concern has been the benefits cost share review process which I reported on at the February Board of Trustees meeting. The Staff Council collected 27 pages of comments, questions and concerns from UVM staff which we submitted to the University Benefits Advisory Council (UBAC) to include in their report to the President and Provost. A common theme throughout the comments was that while staff may understand that potential changes to the cost share of benefits will not impact the generous healthcare coverage we receive, they are especially concerned that an increase in the cost share will negatively impact them financially, even if salary increases are provided. After submitting the comments, Staff Council leadership was asked to meet with the President, the Provost, the Vice President for Finance, and the Vice President for Human Resources, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs. We appreciated the opportunity to clarify the feedback we received and to discuss the need for clear communication about any potential changes and look forward to future conversations so that all employees, especially staff, can remain informed and better educated on this matter.

On a positive note, as of the submission of this report, the review committee for the inaugural President’s Our Common Ground Staff Award has carefully and thoughtfully reviewed two dozen nominations. This has been a positive and rewarding task in determining who best exemplifies the qualities of the University of Vermont’s Our Common Ground. The challenge has been narrowing the list when there are so many deserving staff members. The six winning staff members will be celebrated at a special awards breakfast on May 5th where family, friends and colleagues will honor these staff members who have made extraordinary contributions and who have had a significant impact on our University.

And finally, my thanks to Board of Trustees Chair Deb McAneny for reaching out to the governance leaders to learn about issues which are important to us. No doubt my successor will experience the same sense of satisfaction that I have that the Trustees are genuinely interested in what concerns the staff at UVM and are looking out for the best interest of our entire University community. I look forward to serving as Past President and doing whatever I can to continue to good work of the Staff Council.
Good morning President Sullivan, Provost Rosowsky, Vice Chair Daigle, and Trustees. I am pleased to present my final report as President of the Staff Council.

Having just completed the fourth university-wide officer elections for Staff Council President and Vice President, I’d like to begin my report by announcing that the Council will be in capable hands for the next two years under the new leadership of President-elect Renee Berteau who has served as my Vice President for the past two years. Renee is the Business Office Financial Administrator in the College of Arts and Sciences. She will be joined by Vice President-elect Johanna Brabham, Residential Life & Davis Center Zone Manager for Custodial Services.

We also recently held elections for Staff Council Representative positions, and I am pleased to report that this year's election process resulted in 17 elected Representatives of which 16 are new to Staff Council. In FY2015, Staff Council will be the largest it has ever been in its 43-year history with a total of 38 members. These results speak volumes to us that the staff members at UVM are willing to dedicate time and energy beyond their job responsibilities to make this institution successful and ensure positive growth in the future.

We are pleased with all we have accomplished this year from addressing the needs of nursing mothers and those growing their families to building community through our various social events. We continue to advise the Administration by providing the staff perspective in order to meet the challenges and opportunities set before the University. By working along-side and collaborating with our institutional leaders, Staff Council continues to bring attention to longstanding concerns with University culture as well as issues that are important to staff at UVM.

We have outlined these areas of concern in our Annual Update that we recently sent to the senior administration and to Chair McAneny, which I understand she shared with Vice Chair Daigle. I encourage you to read a copy of this document as it provides an excellent summary of Staff Council’s contributions to UVM in the past year, what our organization sees as positive strides to address staff needs, and provides further context about where we believe future attention should be given.

Finally, I would like to close my report by thanking the senior leadership for encouraging and supporting the work of the Staff Council. As I stated in my previous report to you, having access to the administration is critical to the success of Staff Council and the confidence of staff. We have appreciated the increased opportunities for contact with the administration and expanded engagement with University initiatives and we look forward to continuing these conversations as we move forward under new Staff Council leadership.

Thank you.
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The approved consent agenda from the Board of Trustees Meeting can be found here.

Audit Committee

Anna Drummond informed us that the Violence Against Women act is being kicked off in May. The regulations guiding the University on what needs to be done will not be released until November 2014. In FY16, there will be a change in the Procurement and Competitive Bid process. More information will be forthcoming. The University’s new auditors, Grant Thornton, were introduced to the committee. They will begin in July on the FY14 audit. The transition from KPMG to Grant Thornton has been a smooth one.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Coy, Telecommunication and Network Services  
Staff Representative to the Audit Committee

Committee on Budget, Finance, and Investment (BFI)

The BFI committee met on May 16, 2014.

1. The Budget, Finance and Investment Committee (BFI) meeting began with approval of the April 14, 2014 meeting minutes.

2. The Investment subcommittee chair reported that the subcommittee made minor asset allocation changes. They also indicated that markets had been volatile and choppy during the first five months of the calendar year, however they anticipate that fiscal year 2014 will finish with greater than 10% returns. A Performance Update dated May 5, 2014, was provided by Cambridge Associates.

3. The Socially Responsible Investing Advisory Council (SRIAC) provided an update. The council met in October and February this past year. They heard from students who expressed concerns about GMOs and asked the council to monitor investments. The Council is preparing an annual report that will be presented in mid-June to VP Richard Cate and is planning a “town hall” to be held in October 2014. The council continues to monitor conditions in the SUDAN and asked BFI to reaffirm the existing Socially Responsible Investing Advisory Council resolution to the University of a “…policy of targeted divestment of companies doing work with or otherwise aiding the governing regime of Sudan…”.

The BFI committee affirmed the council’s resolution.

4. Vice President Richard Cate shared a resolution to authorize the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences to use an additional $1.2 million of the college’s one-time research endowment and gift funds for the Miller Research Complex $3 million project Phase I. This revitalization project proposes to replace old, worn out farm buildings with new state-of-the-art facilities.
The Committee approved the resolution.

5. Vice President Richard Cate shared a resolution requesting the creation of a Capital Project Prefunding Account. The proposal is to move $10 million from Treasury operations to a prefunding account to provide funding for pre-construction design and development costs. The first use would be the STEM project. The account would be managed with the following requirements:

a. The Account will be capped at $10 million.
b. Internal transfers for any specific capital project are subject to approval by the Board, and request must be accompanied by a plan for reimbursement.
c. Upon receipt of all project funding, the fund will be replenished.

The resolution was approved.

6. Richard Cate provided the Vice President’s third quarter budget report. He indicated that no unexpected changes in either revenue or expenses for the third quarter had occurred. The university will still have a $2.5 to $3 million fiscal year 2014 deficit, but that is less than initially expected at the beginning of the year.

7. The committee then reviewed a number of proposals for fiscal 2015, that taken together would be handled in a single consent agenda:

a. Undergraduate tuition – 3.4% both in-state and out-state
b. On-line tuition – set at a minimum rate of $591 and a maximum of $1,493 per credit hour for 2014-2015 academic year. The rate will be determined by the Provost.
c. Global Gateway International Student Tuition –
   - for students beginning the two-semester semester program in the fall of 2014, the rates are $26,888 and $26,388 for the spring semester
   - for students beginning the two-semester program in the spring $2015, the rate is $26,388 for the spring semester
   - for students beginning the three-semester program in the fall of 2014, the rates are $14,972 for the fall semester and $26,388 for the spring semester
   - for students entering the tree-semester program in the spring 2015, the rate is $14,472 for the spring
   - all entering students are assessed a $475 acceptance fee for their first semester
d. Room and Meal Plan rates for FY2015 were provided and are available on line at:
   - https://reslife.uvm.edu/content/paying_for_housing/room_rates
   - https://reslife.uvm.edu/content/paying_for_housing/meal_plan_rates
e. Student fee increase from $1,990 to $2,042
f. Graduate Student Senate fee to remain at $20
g. Graduate Continuous Registration Fee proposal
   - less than half-time $100 per semester
   - half to up-to-full-time $200 per semester
   - full-time $300 per semester
h. FY2015 General Fund operating expense budget of $309,152,000

Resolutions to approve items a. through h. were approved by the BFI committee for recommendation to the full Board.

8. The committee then reviewed a proposal, discussed at the April 14, 2014 meeting to create a Net Tuition Stabilization Fund. The proposal authorizes the administration to create a fund in the amount of $4.5 million subject to the following:

a. Used only to offset shortfalls in undergraduate net tuition revenue and capped at $4.5 million.
b. The president will authorize the use of funds after determining that other efforts have been made to off-set net tuition shortfalls by other available means.
c. Any withdrawals must be paid within two years.
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d. Any undergraduate net tuition in a particular year that exceeds the budgeted amount will be transferred into the fund until the assets of the fund equal $4.5 million.

e. The administration will report at the annual BFI budget planning meeting on any withdrawals from or deposits into the fund.

f. The resolution will be reviewed at the end of a five-year period after it has been implemented.

The resolution was approved for recommendation to the full Board.

9. A proposal was made to authorize the Vice President for Finance and Treasurer to make internal loans of up to $7 million (including $2 million of design costs previously authorized by the board) from the University’s Capital Project Prefunding Account for completing the design phases of the STEM Project.

The resolution was approved for recommendation to the full Board.

10. A proposal to fund the expansion of the university’s existing heat/chilling plant as a more economical and efficient manner to provide chilled water for air conditioning in anticipation of STEM and other projects was discussed. The estimated cost is $10 million covered through the reallocation of project funds, plant fund net assets and a loan from the Green Revolving loan.

The resolution was approved for recommendation to the full Board.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tobey Clark, Director IMF/TSP
Patty Eldred, Director AFS Auxiliary Services

Staff Representatives to the BFI Committee

Committee on Educational Policy and Institutional Resources (EPIR)

On May 16, 2014 the Educational Policy and Institutional Resources (EPIR) Committee met over two meeting sessions. Chair Botzow acknowledged new representatives who were attending and asked for and received approval of minutes from the February 7, 2014.

Provost David Rosowsky provided his verbal report which focused on: (1) Academic excellence, (2) Student success, (3) STEM initiatives and (4) the budget. The Provost stated his highest priority is his role as Chief Academic Officer for the institution and he therefore has created eight Academic Excellence Goals as an outcome of President Sullivan’s Strategic Action Plan. The Provost stated that he will present one goal at a time to the EPIR committee (from the eight Academic Excellence Goals, May 2014 EPIR.) The Provost stated that much has been accomplished since the February meeting (see Report B, May 16, 2014 EPIR.)

The Provost presented the three elements of the STEM Initiative: (1) growth in our STEM programs by increasing undergraduate enrollment in STEM disciplines by 50% and doubling graduate enrollments in STEM disciplines in the next 10 years. (2) Construction of the new STEM complex and (3) New and expanded K-12 programs. The Provost indicated that the growth in STEM enrollment does not mean a growth in student admission; there would be no net growth. Psychology programs are not in the scope of the STEM project however new space is being assessed for this discipline.

The Provost stated that, per goal #3 of the Academic Excellence plan, student advising shall be improved. UVM is currently at 66% approval ratings for academic advising and a goal to reach 75% has been set. Approval data for student advising around acquired job and work related knowledge is currently at 61% and the target is 70%. The Student Affairs
Committee of the Faculty Senate in collaboration with the Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning has developed a report with suggestions to strengthen academic advising. Colleges will be asked to have their own advising plans which could begin for students as early as orientation. Provost Rosowsky suggested the idea of “High Tech/High Touch” as a phone application which can quickly provide students answers to questions around academics.

Chair Botzow presented a resolution to approve STEM design completion and the EPIR committee approved. The resolution was referred for recommendation to BFI on route to the full Board.

Bob Vaughan, Director of Capital Planning and Management and Sal Chiarelli, Director of Physical Plant, provided updates on the Chiller Plant Expansion Project. There is an opportunity to expand the project due to STEM which would reduce operating costs and reduce electrical demands. Funds for this project will come from monies offset by STEM to include a revolving fund. Other chilling options were assessed however chiller expansion was critical for STEM and for institutional improvement.

Provost Rosowsky introduced the resolution to designate the Carse Land as a Natural Area. This is a 225 acre parcel, located in Hinesburg, donated by Henry Carse which is rich in wetlands, forests, uncommon plant species and suitable for research. John Erickson and Rick Paradis reported that start-up money would be needed for trail work and to increase the annual operating budget. The Carse land would be the 10th natural area in UVM’s portfolio.

Cathy Paris, Chair of the Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee, proposed approval of the creation of a new Minor in Music Technology and Business in the Department of Music and Dance, College of Arts and Sciences. Arts and Sciences, the Provost and the Technology Fund will provide the resources. Resolution for the new minor was approved.

Cathy Paris proposed approval for a new online Certificate of Graduate Study in Environmental Public Health. This certificate could be suitable for professionals such as: medical students, professional nursing students or employees from the Department of Health. EPIR approved the certificate.

Jennifer Prue, Chair of the Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee, reported on updates to improved academic advising plans. Deans may be charged to implement clear advising plans that span the developmental spectrum from first year students to graduate students. Currently academic advising is not consistent across the university. A centralized advising hub has been suggested that would be staffed by a mixed group of professional academic advisors from all colleges. Chair Botzow stated this issue will be revisited at the next EPIR meeting.

Annie Stevens, Vice Provost for Student Affairs, S. Abu Turab Rizvi, Dean of the Honors College and Pamela Gardner, Director Career Services, presented an update on the Career Success Action Plan. Colleges such as Rubenstein and Arts and Sciences are expanding their internship opportunities. UVM’s new Internship Coordinator provided over 600 advising sessions in her first 6 months. Local and national media have carried stories about UVM’s career initiative and Career + Experience Hub. Job Fair participation increased by 10% for students and alumni. A new Employment Counselor has been hired. A career/job satisfaction survey was sent to graduates 6 months after graduation however response rates were low; 12.2% of undergrads and 12.4% of graduates responded. A new strategy has evolved to move beyond surveys which will combine data from appropriate campus units and to strategize consolidating data across systems. Chair Botzow reported he is confident we have a great group leading this effort.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cathy Rahill, Athletics
Amanda McIntire, Human Resource Services

Staff Representatives to the EPIR Committee