In March, Staff Council Vice President Michelle Smith and I drafted a memo to President Fogel and Provost Knodell listing the concerns communicated to Staff Council by staff. These included:

- The poor timing of community-wide communications from the senior administration, including the initial Post-Retirement Medical Benefit announcements that affected only those staff retiring at age 65 or greater;
- Some disappointment and dissatisfaction with a budget proposal including a 0% increase for non-represented staff;
- Shared concerns with the faculty over the hiring of the School of Business Administration Dean;
- The late snowstorm closing announcement for the region’s unexpected March 7th storm;
- The lack of inclusion of staff in the retention studies, thereby discounting how staff impact “Student Success and Satisfaction”;
- Concerns that the opening of the Administrative Business Service Center might have more of an impact on the budget and positions at UVM than were originally expressed.

We were very pleased that President Fogel and Provost Knodell promptly responded to this memo, and many of us believe that the Administration’s response accepted responsibility for less than ideal communication and timing, as well as a willingness to have these honest conversations. The memo addressed many of the concerns so the staff at UVM know they were heard, they matter, and that the Administration wants to continue to include staff in decisions about the University’s future. We heard reiterated from the President and Provost that staff are valued, and I feel that those messages need to continue to be sent frequently and in earnest from our leaders.

We appreciate that the Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of the staff perspective and have chosen to include a staff member on the Presidential Search Committee. Staff care about the university and especially the students whose lives we impact on a daily basis. We support them in their residence halls. We audit their transcripts. We advise them in their non-academic issues. We help them to develop their learning skills. We organize events that celebrate their diversity. There are great changes underway, and we are pleased to be a partner in these processes.

On another note, Staff Council recently completed its first electronic survey, sent to nearly 2000 non-represented staff. Last fall I formed an Ad Hoc committee who prepared a thoughtful, well rounded survey that would help identify the key concerns of staff while gauging how well Staff Council represents these views and voices those concerns. The Ad Hoc committee worked collaboratively with Institutional Research and Human Resource Services and I am happy to report that we had over a 40% response rate. Analyzing the data thoroughly and compiling a report will take time, and we will report out more detailed information in the coming months.

At the May 20th Board of Trustees meeting, I will address budget concerns and their impact on staff.
Staff Council President Ida Russin

Comments to the Board of Trustees, Committee of the Whole, Friday, May 20, 2011

Staff Council completed its annual elections for new representatives in April and I am happy to report that we will have representation in all units and divisions for the new academic year. This will ensure that our organization will include multiple views from staff across the entire university. Now I’d like to address the budget and salary subject.

My family has always been dedicated to helping and giving to others, and we routinely have extra young adults at our dinner table. It’s wonderful to share a meal and share their lives. But it is increasingly more difficult to be a giving family. We’re asked to give to our communities, our places of worship, our local food banks, our alumni associations, and our favorite charities. Some of us even feel that we should “buy local” whenever possible. We feel it’s all that giving that makes us better citizens who embody Vermont values.

Those of you who are not the ones who might regularly purchase groceries in these area stores might find it hard to believe that:

- A pound of Cabot butter can cost up to $4.99
- A loaf of decent bread averages about $4.00
- A pound of cold meat ranges from $5.00 to $9.00 per pound

Trying to maintain our lifestyles while salaries remain level is getting particularly difficult. You certainly all know that gas in our area is closing in on $4.00 per gallon, and fuel oil reached highs that are making many of us play catch-up all spring, to get those fuel balances paid.

I ask the Board of Trustees to consider staff salary increases as necessary, to keep pace with inflation. We understand that negotiations for collective bargaining units are on-going, but non-represented staff fear that the outcome of these negotiations will result in salary increases for represented staff and faculty, and still no increase for us. If it turns out that both represented and non-represented staff and faculty move forward with a 0% increase, then we will have to accept that this year. However, any other scenario will leave non-represented staff feeling undervalued. Staff earning a salary greater than $75,000 will have gone three years without a pay increase. And staff are increasingly voicing concern about the further rollback of employee benefits. Please know that the budget issues facing UVM do put pressure on those employees who are trying to live their lives as good citizens of Vermont. We want to continue to give, we want to continue to support local businesses, we want to remain dedicated to UVM, but it is difficult to remain positive during these continuing budget challenges. Thank you for your continued support to the staff at UVM. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.
Staff Council Reports
Board of Trustees May 20, 2011
Staff Representative Comments and Committee Summaries

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee met on Monday April 25, 2011

Chief Compliance And Privacy Officer Update

Chief Compliance and Privacy Officer Anna Drummond provided an update on Compliance activities and gave an overview of the Office of Compliance and Privacy Services work over the past year. In the area of research compliance, she reported the Office has continued its work with the Effort Management and Reporting Subcommittee and with the Implementation Team for the new software associated with effort management and reporting. Ms. Drummond reached out to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to form a Work Group to address the area of privacy, information security and data retention. The Work Group has held workshops on campus to develop the best practices and legal requirements in order to provide the campus community with guidance about how data ought to be collected, retained, shared and destroyed. Ms. Drummond reported that she developed and has implemented a Data Security Breach Notification Policy and Procedure which provides for a timely and coordinated University response to adverse privacy incidents. Ms. Drummond has worked with Enterprise Technology Services (ETS) on this effort. Laboratory safety is another area being addressed by the Office of Compliance. A Work Group is currently working to develop the institutional laboratory safety policy. The FY 2012 work plan will include an in-depth compliance risk assessment to identify the areas of highest compliance risk and have those risks addressed. The Office continues to conduct extensive outreach with the University community in order to discuss compliance issues and further create a culture of compliance. The Compliance Office is responsible for maintaining the University policy website. The site has been reorganized and enhanced for better functionalities. An Ethics and Compliance Reporting Help Line has been implemented. The Compliance Office works with Enterprise Technology Services, the Chief Information Officer and other University departments to evaluate and reported incidents and take appropriate action if needed.

Ms. Drummond reported on the activity of the Ethics and Compliance Help Line and noted that the amount of activity is a gauge on the awareness of the tool and that it is a place for people to seek information.

Chief Internal Auditor Update

Chief Internal Auditor, William Harrison provided a summary of the audits performed this past fiscal year and presented a brief on the Internal Audit plan for FY 2012. Mr. Harrison explained that he has classified risk into eight categories across campus. (e.g., financial management, sponsored research, information technology, etc.). Mr. Harrison also noted that the Office of Audit Services does not employ an Information Technology auditor, but they will continue to utilize co-sourced auditors to perform this work.

Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Update

Senior Strategist, Al Turgeon and Risk Management Director, Mary Dewey presented an overview of the draft ERM program design. The purpose of the ERM program is to create an institution-wide culture of risk and opportunity awareness by providing a structured, consistent, and continuous process for early and proactive identification and reporting of material risks to senior management and trustees. The program is designed to create a culture of prudent risk assessment. Guiding principles have been drafted and a risk tolerance statement is under development. The presentation also outlined a drafted annual workflow, summary of roles and responsibilities and a communication plan.

Information Security Officer Update

Vice President Cate announced the selection of Dean Williams as the new Information Security Officer. Mr. Williams is currently the Director of Client Services at the University and will begin his new position June 1, 2011.
Respectfully Submitted,
Marie Tiemann, University Financial Services
Staff Representative on the Audit Committee

Committee on Budget, Finance, and Investment (BFI)

The BFI committee met on Friday, May 20th.

The primary agenda item for the BFI Committee was to approve the resolutions regarding the FY 2012 budget. In addition, the Committee also reviewed budget-to-actuals for FY 2011.

FY 2012 Budget

It was reiterated during the budget discussion that any salary increases in FY 2012 will need to be offset by additional budget cuts and that a 1% salary increase across the board equates to $1.7 million in cuts needed elsewhere. Trustee Sam Bain noted that Staff Council President Ida Russin’s report to the Committee of the Whole regarding the effect that a 0% pay raise will have on non-represented staff (and her recognition that this is the third year in a row with no raises for those making more than $75,000) resonated with him and that he is very concerned with this. In response to a request made at the Committee’s April 11th meeting, the administration provided more detail on the University’s income and expense units.

The resolutions for a 5.8% tuition increase, a 3.7% increase in room rates and a 4% increase in meal plans, along with a slight increase in student fees all passed unanimously. There was much discussion about the need to reign in the increases in tuition and an amendment was added to the tuition increase resolution that administration will present an initial draft plan to slow the growth of tuition at the BFI’s October, 2011 meeting.

FY 2011 Budget-to-Actuals

As of March 31st, the FY 2011 budget-to-actuals report shows that the University is on track to finish the fiscal year slightly under budget.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jesse L. Bridges, Athletics
Eric J. Hoefel, Business Process Reengineering Team
Staff representatives to the BFI Committee

Committee on Educational Policy and Institutional Resources (EPIR)

On May 20, 2011 the Educational Policies and Institutional Resources (EPIR) Committee was called to order by the new Chair Donna Sweaney with a hefty and exciting agenda before us. Provost Jane Koedell presented her report, highlighting many of the topics that this committee was asked to approve. Of note was the Academic Program review, outcomes from the General Education Committee, revisions to the College of Medicine Handbook, the Internationalization campaign and the progress of the Student Success and Satisfaction plan.

The committee heard reports and recommendations from Cathy Paris, the Faculty Senate representative, to approve the creation of a Ph. D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, a Ph.D. and Masters of Science Degrees in Bioengineering and to merge the Departments of Anatomy & Neurobiology and Neurology in to the Department of
Neurological Sciences. The committee was assured that these changes would have no additional cost impact on the University and are aligned with the Spires.

Brian Reed, Associate Provost for Curricular Affairs presented to the committee a resolution to approve revisions to the Academic Program Review Process. The committee was particularly pleased with the addition of the plan for a Viability Review Process. This process will review academic programs considered at risk (based on graduation rates from the program) on a yearly basis. This will identify at-risk programs more quickly than is possible through the 8-year cycle of the Academic Program Review. This review will begin with the 2011-2012 academic year.

Cathy and Brian reviewed the first phase of the General Education Program. Brian stated “This is an exciting march in to the future”. While encouraging the process to continue the board was concerned with how long it takes to implement.

Dean Rick Morin from the College of Medicine reported on the revisions to the College of Medicine Faculty Handbook. This discussion has been going on for nearly 10 years. Dean noted the unanimous approval by the College of Medicine faculty and the Faculty Senate.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lesley Boucher, Dana Medical Library
Amanda McIntire, Human Resource Services

Staff Representatives to the EPIR Committee