



# *The University of Vermont*

## *Staff Council*

*Serving as a voice and advocate for all staff at UVM, since 1971.*

February 7, 2012

To: Rodman Cory, Chair Ad Hoc Committee  
Members of the Ad Hoc Committee

From: Ida Russin, Staff Council President

Re: Creation of a Staff Memorandum of Understanding with University Leadership

Staff Council has focused on building strong working relationships with University leaders in order to better express the needs and concerns of staff members at UVM, with the hope of enacting change that benefits both staff and the entire University Community.

Institutions of higher education across the United States have been faced with many challenges over the past several years and while UVM has not been immune to these, it is clear that our university has fared significantly better than others. Still, the cultural climate at UVM has left staff feeling apprehensive about the decisions and actions of its leaders. This lack of confidence and/or mistrust may contribute to a general lack of confidence, weariness regarding change and initiatives, and the perpetuation of an adversarial “Us vs. Them” mentality.

As our mission statement indicates, “Staff Council serves as an advocate for staff by seeking out and responding to their ideas and concerns, representing them to the University administration, and keeping staff informed of University initiatives.” In order to realize this mission, Staff Council and staff must have a working relationship with the administration that continues to foster university wide engagement, open dialogue, and a well-defined working relationship.

Therefore in my capacity as Staff Council President, I am establishing an Ad Hoc Committee to develop a Staff Memorandum of Understanding. This committee will operate in accordance with Article IX. of our bylaws which is stated below.

### **Article IX. Ad Hoc Committees**

Ad Hoc Committees may be created at any time by action of either the Staff Council or the Staff Council President. They shall be created for a specific **purpose**, given a finite **period** of time in which to accomplish their mission, and have their **reporting structure** clearly articulated from the outset. The committee may be chaired by the President or Vice President, or by any Regular member of the Staff Council. If the President creates the committee, s/he shall appoint the chairperson of the Committee; if the Council creates the Committee, the Council shall appoint the chairperson.

### **President’s Charge to the Ad Hoc Committee on the creation of a Staff Memorandum of Understanding**

- Appointed Committee Chair and Staff Council Representatives volunteering for this task will review the charge. The committee will create a working name and will establish a schedule to meet at least monthly.

- Review and discuss current Staff Council methods for collecting non-represented staff concerns and ideas as well as measures to assess the organization's success in fulfilling its mission.
- Identify and examine other Memorandums of Understanding, both internal to UVM (e.g. Faculty Senate, GSS, SGA, Presidential Commissions, etc.) and external (e.g. other institutions of higher education) for direction.
- Review current Staff Council data (e.g. Staff Council Survey) and institutional information (e.g. Our Common Ground, Executive/Administrative Staffing Levels, Campus Climate Survey) to gain a better understanding of staff perceptions and feelings about UVM to focus the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Collaborate with University departments (i.e. Institutional Research, Legal Counsel, HRS, etc.), groups (Faculty Senate, GSS, SGA) and individuals for additional feedback and assistance.
- Report each month on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee at Staff Council Executive Board meetings and consult with the Staff Council President and Vice President.
- Provide opportunities for Staff Council and staff at large to provide feedback on the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Present a draft version of the Memorandum to university administration and meet with them to receive their insight and feedback.
- Distribute the Memorandum of Understanding in collaboration with the Staff Council Office.

## Timeline

- **February 7, 2012 – Charge Communicated**  
In the month of February the Chair establishes a meeting schedule with the Staff Council Office and begins to plan the process to complete the task outlined in this charge.
- **February 27, 2012 – Executive Board Meeting**  
Present a first draft of the MOU for feedback and report on the work of the committee at the Executive Board meeting.
- **March 6, 2012 – Staff Council Meeting**  
Present the first draft of the MOU with the Executive Board's feedback to the Staff Council and ask for feedback from the entire Staff Council by Monday, March 19, 2012.
- **March 19, 2012 – Conclusion of Staff Council Feedback on Draft Meeting**  
Conclude the gathering of feedback from Staff Council on the draft MOU. Update draft.
- **March 23, 2012 – Administration Feedback**  
Present a draft version of the Memorandum to university administration and meet with them to receive their insight and feedback.
- **March 26, 2012 – Executive Board Meeting**  
Present updated draft to the Executive Board for further feedback. Plan for gathering further feedback from the larger UVM staff community.
- **April 2, 2012 – Distribution of Staffline**

Distribute most updated draft of MOU through Staffline for feedback from the larger UVM staff to be collected by Monday, April 16, 2012.

- **April 16, 2012**  
Conclude the gathering of feedback from the larger UVM staff. Update draft.
- **April 23, 2012 – Executive Board Meeting**  
Present updated draft version of MOU to Executive Board for review and possible approval.
- **May 1, 2012 – Staff Council Meeting**  
Present updated draft version of MOU to Staff Council for review and possible approval.
- **May 21, 2012 – Executive Board Meeting**  
If draft is not approved at the May 1, 2012 meeting, review updated draft for approval
- **June 5, 2012 – Staff Council Meeting**  
If draft is not approved at the May 1, 2012 meeting, review updated draft for approval

### **Ad Hoc Committee Membership**

#### **Chair**

- Rodman Cory

#### **Committee Members**

- Renee Berteau

#### **Ex-Officio**

- Jeff Bukowski

Cc: Staff Council Representatives