UVM Staff Council  
April 2, 2013  
12:05-1:30 p.m.  
Davis Center – Livak  
Draft Minutes

**Members Present:** Brendan Andrews, Renee Berteau (Vice President), Michelle Chapman, Rodman Cory, Naima Dennis, Jacqueline Drouin, Isis Erb, Mark Hall, Laurie Juskiewicz, Troy Krahl, Gwen Landis, Karen Lemire, Robin Lockerby, Noel McCann, Sharon Mone, Joanne Montanye, Mary Parent, Holly Pedrini, Parvin Pothiawala, Judy Riani, Karmen Swim, Catherine Symans (President), Wayne Tetrick, Marie Tiemann, Susan Williford, Bethany Wolfe

**Members Absent:** Ann Barlow, Scott Hipko, Nicole Todd, Lynn Tracy, Floyd Vincent

**Also Participating:** Jeff Bukowski (Administrator/Ex Officio), Amy Gilman, Staff Council Office Assistant, Samantha Stocksdale, HESA graduate program, Kaitlin Russell, Nursing, Barbara Drapelick, Microbiology & Molecular Genetics, Paul Chapman, Libraries

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m.

**Discussion on UVM Budget with Richard Cate**

With respect for the window of time for our guest, Richard Cate (RC), the group jumped right into questions that were earlier vetted through the council but posed by Rodman Cory. Below are questions asked and summarized responses from Richard.

**Q1:** We’ve heard you talk of moving to a five-year budgeting model. How far along is that project? How different will it be from what we are doing now?

**RC:** Business managers are currently working on the FY14 budget that goes before the UVM BFI committee next week. The plan at this point is that 2015 will be the 1st year of the 5-yr plan. The goal is to incorporate ongoing needs, as well as address two items that have been missing in the budget. The two items are: academic initiatives and maintenance of facilities. The recommendation by outside consulting firms is that currently UVM should be spending 18-20 million for ongoing maintenance. Just doing what we do now, and staying the course, our overall budget need will increase 8 million each year. That is one of the many reasons why this university is working hard and looking at alternative income streams (e.g., distance education, research going out, etc.)

**Q2:** You have said that there are plans to move forward with a study of the way that we budget. What will that look like and when will it occur?
RC: There was a self-study here at UVM to try to ask the question, what is the current state of the budget process? President Sullivan sent that information to the faculty senate’s budgeting group and student groups and asked for comments back. After that phase there will be a communication back out to campus. It will talk about responsibility and an approach to business management that looks much like a private sector plan where units generate income and cover expenses (e.g., pay salaries, pay the light bill, lab expenses, overhead rates for admin, etc…) and there would be incentives for growth and efficiencies. The structure for this work will be done in committees or conversations. Richard also added there must be protections in place for the smaller units and that this shift is not so much about centralizing but finding efficiencies and coordinated approach to services.

Follow-up question from Renee Berteau: UNH has regional business centers. Is that concept what this group is looking at?

RC: This budget group is familiar with the model at UNH and this administration wants to choose whatever style, model that will work best for us, our school and our situation.

Follow-up question from Robin Lockerby: Would that not create competition among departments here? Have other schools experienced that?

RC: There are definitely examples of overlapping and duplication here at UVM, some necessary and some maybe not. No matter how it works out, we do not want to compromise or lessen the academic experience.

Q3: The nature of your office seems to place it at the intersection of so many of the conversations around unionization (salary, benefits, employee engagement, etc.) We recognize that when people talk about job satisfaction, there are many elements involved and salary is only one of them—in fact, many studies indicate that for many people it is not even the most important element. In light of that, what is your sense of the things that staff at UVM want, that they feel they are not getting? What is the administration doing to address those needs?

RC: Richard stated that these views were his own personal thoughts and feelings about that question not necessarily those of the university. What staff and faculty want varies greatly. While there could be some crossover among all 3700 employees at UVM, we all want something a little bit different from the next employee, but we’re probably not that different from the rest of the US. Cate stated, “I think people want certainty, fair treatment, compensation, good benefits, ability to support their families, opportunities to move up, adequate work environment and to have the tools to get the job done well.” Richard mentioned that he is neither for nor against unions. He has worked with unions successfully over the last 30 years and can work equally with represented or unrepresented groups. He does feels that the perception is greater in regard to the actual opportunities gained by unions at times. “If you think about it, we’re using the same
pay scales and offering the same benefits package we’ve been using for represented workers as for unrepresented workers.” He used the faculty group as an example. Then UVM President Dan Fogel felt pretty strongly about getting faculty salaries up to the median for a school of our size, student body and type of school. The union kept the salary increases about the same from the start point until faculty got to the median. Then they couldn’t keep those increases moving along because they were right where the target was--the faculty had hit the median mark. The other piece of the employee experience is that in small pockets around the institution there may be groups or areas that are not treated as well as they could be. Those folks might believe they would be treated better with a union, but its management’s job to correct that on their own with or without union representation. The responsibility is on us to address the working conditions and workplace settings so that UVM is a good place to work. Academics teaches the faculty to be experts in their own narrow focus of study but that doesn’t always mean a good faculty member makes for a good manager. Often times faculty have staff members direct report to them and they may not be equipped to manage that side of the job. There may be flare ups with lack of faculty managerial skills, it’s doesn’t appear to be widespread but there are instances.

Follow-up question from Rodman Cory: So has faculty had conversations about more training or better training for those supervisors? And how can Staff Council help you?

RC: Staff Council can continue to be an information channel of what staff are feeling or experiencing in the institution. With all of these representatives in their various departments, listening and keeping an open ear helps the information flow back. Anything that helps with the flow of information is great. Also remember to act as a filter – ask yourself, is this an individual that might be making a lot of noise about their particular issue or is this a more widespread issue?

Follow-up question from Judy Riani: Would the Staff Council survey help assist with this information flow? It seemed like issues came up out of the last survey that was done.

Response from Jeff Bukowski: The Outreach, Assessment and University Engagement committee is sending out a staff survey again this spring. It’s been not quite two years since the last one. Look for it soon.

Question from Renee Berteau: In other organizations, there is an individual ultimately responsible for the employee experience. Who is that here?

RC: Well, several folks, but ultimately myself or President Sullivan but he can’t individually manage all of that, so it’s me. The hope or the process is that the supervisors under me are doing all of their work to handle the employee experience at their level.
Richard concluded by adding that next week the BFI committee meets and the conversation is about how we are making the budget balance for FY’14. He mentioned that one way without more cuts or raising tuition is checking the debt capacity of the institution. What is our rating? What is the capacity? Currently it should not exceed 6%. So in lay terms, how much of your income should be going toward the “mortgage.” Can we leave it at 6%? How do you handle the money upfront? Those are some of the discussions that will take place next week at that committee meeting.

**Approve Draft Minutes**

There was a motion to approve the March meeting minutes, it was seconded. The March 5, 2013 minutes were approved.

**President’s Update**

April is the month that the Staff Council holds elections for Representatives. There are openings in nine Units/Divisions or Schools/Colleges. These are as follows:

- College of Nursing and Health Sciences – (1) three-year term
- College of Medicine
  - Administrative – (1) two-year term
  - Basic Sciences – (1) two-year term
  - Clinical Sciences – (2) one-year terms
- Continuing Education – (1) three-year term
- DFES/AFS – (1) three-year term
- DFES/ETS – (1) three-year term
- President’s and Provost’s Office - (1) one-year term
- Research and Graduate Studies – (1) two-year term
- Rubenstein School – (1) three-year term
- School of Business Administration – (1) three-year term
- University Relations and Campus Life – (2) three-year terms, (1) two-year term, (1) one-year term

It is essential that there is proportional representation as determined by an annual census and we encourage all staff to consider this opportunity to participate in Staff Council. We ask current Representatives to encourage staff to consider running for elected Representative positions. Detailed information can be found on the Staff Council website.

**STAFF COUNCIL LEADERSHIP MEETING WITH UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT**

President Catherine Symans, Vice President Renee Berteau, and Staff Council Administrator Jeff Bukowski met with Gary Derr on March 13th. They discussed the Provost Search and then discussed internal communications surrounding the current budget concerns in an attempt to clarify who is
responsible for communications out to staff. With no immediate answer, Vice President Derr suggested engaging in further discussion about internal communications with staff sometime during this summer.

The second quarterly meeting with President Sullivan is scheduled for May 2nd.

**HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES QUARTERLY MEETING WITH STAFF COUNCIL LEadersHIP**

Staff Council leadership is scheduled to meet with Associate Vice President Barbara Johnson on Thursday, April 4th at which time they will discuss the topics of tuition remission, nursing mothers stations, the tobacco free initiative and the Staff Council survey.

**PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The March meeting was canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for May 1st.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The next meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Monday, April 8th. The next meeting for the Budget, Finance and Investment Committee of the Board of Trustees is April 8, 2013.

**OTHER**

In October 2012, the Chairs of the Presidential Commissions sent a letter to President Sullivan requesting a reexamination of the effectiveness of the Commission structure “to determine how best to address and remain focused on issues of diversity within the University Community.” Wanda Heading-Grant, Chief Diversity Officer and Special Assistant to the President for Multicultural Initiatives, has been charged by President Sullivan to assist with the process of a formal assessment of the Presidential Commissions. A team of three external reviewers has been identified to conduct an assessment and will be on campus this Wednesday and Thursday meeting with various constituent groups. Catherine and Renee have been invited along with the other governance leaders to participate in a working lunch with one of the reviewers on Wednesday, April 3.

President Sullivan appointed an Honorary Degree Advisory Committee (HDAC) comprised of the governance leaders, faculty, a representative of the UVM Foundation, and Alumni Association President. The HDAC met on March 27th to review the nominations for Commencement 2014. At the next meeting, scheduled in April, the Committee will recommend three to five Honorary Degree candidates who will be submitted to the President for his final decision.

March was a busy month of attending workshops and conferences. Catherine participated in two workshops at uvm@edu: Sowing Seeds of Engagement & Staff Recognition: Best Practices; attended the Vermont Women in Higher Education (VWHE) Annual Conference on March 21 and 22nd; and participated in this year’s Blackboard Jungle last Friday. All events were beneficial in the educational aspects as well as connecting with other staff. Catherine encouraged Staff Council Representatives to take advantage of these and other opportunities whenever possible.
Catherine concluded her report with heartfelt congratulations to Staff Council Administrator Jeff Bukowski on successfully completing his dissertation defense and extended a warm welcome to Amy Gilman who joined the Staff Council Office just two weeks ago.

Announcements and Correspondences:

Jeff reminded the group about the upcoming elections and ran down the list of openings that are currently vacant or will have a vacancy.

- College of Nursing and Health Sciences – (1) three-year term
- College of Medicine
  - Administrative – (1) two-year term
  - Basic Sciences – (1) two-year term
  - Clinical Sciences – (2) one-year terms
- Continuing Education – (1) three-year term
- DFES/AFS – (1) three-year term
- DFES/ETS – (1) three-year term
- President's and Provost's Office - (1) one-year term
- Research and Graduate Studies – (1) two-year term
- Rubenstein School – (1) three-year term
- School of Business Administration – (1) three-year term
- University Relations and Campus Life – (2) three-year terms, (1) two-year term, (1) one-year term

Staff Art Exhibit information and handouts were shared with the group. The exhibit will run Sept 11-30 in the Davis Center, Fireplace Lounge. Deadline to submit is June 14th.

Public Comment Period

Michelle Smith, former Staff Council Vice President, inquired about meetings with Barbara Johnson. Has there been progress with the staff mentoring program and the same with the mediation process as part of the Grievance and Mediation Policy – Staff (Non-Represented)? Jeff Bukowski gave some history on this topic regarding Staff Council’s previous efforts a few years ago. There had been talk that DFES was looking into a mentoring program but nothing has come to fruition, and no one department could manage the program. As for Mediation training, we currently have what are called Peer advisors that have been trained; they assist Grieavants as outlined in the Grievance and Mediation Policy – Staff (Non-Represented) but are not trained mediators. Currently, HRS still sources out any mediation needs with Champlain College.
Staff Council Bylaws Updates

There was a motion to approve the gender neutral language to the bylaws; it was seconded. The bylaws amendment was approved.

Standing Committee Reports

Compensation, Benefits & Budget – sub-committee communication piece may go out after the BFI committee meets but before the May Board of Trustee Meeting. The timing of that would be to be able to get feedback before the Board meets in May. This communication will be a printed postcard.

Marie Tiemann: There has been talk about premiums, rate changes --what is the response or what do we know?

Rodman: There will be communication and it may be rolled out in time for the April 25th Benefits Expo or directly from Richard at some point.

Other Business:

Jeff mentioned the next meeting Francis Churchill from UVM’s Socially Responsible Investing Advisory Council will be attending. We will still be moving ahead with the video project so stay tuned. If you signed up we’ll be in contact soon to follow-up with more detail.

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting, it was seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:05pm.