Summary of the April 2, 2013 Staff Council Meeting

The meeting included guest, Richard Cate, VP for Finance and Administration to discuss UVM’s budget, approval of draft minutes from the March 5th meeting, an update from Staff Council President Catherine Symans, announcements from Staff Council Administrator Jeff Bukowski, a vote to amend the Staff Council by-laws to include gender neutral language, and a brief update from the Compensation, Benefits and Budget committee about the communication piece that may go out after the Board of Trustees - Budget, Finance and Investment committee meeting next week. At the May 7th meeting Francis Churchill is scheduled to attend to update the group from UVM’s Socially Responsible Investing Advisory Council on the issue of fossil fuels divestiture and a student group Student Climate Culture will also present information on their efforts to encourage this divestment.

Staff Council President’s Update – Catherine Symans

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 [here](#).

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 the 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 Assistant 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 also April 8th, 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 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 which 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
Jeff reminded the group about elections and highlighted those groups that need representation this next term and mentioned that the deadline for applications is April 17th.

Units/Divisions with Staff Council Representative Open Seats:

- 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

Detailed information about elections can be found on the Staff Council website [here](#).

Jeff also reminded the group about the UVM Staff Art Exhibit, Sept 11-30. Handouts were shared at this meeting and all of the information is on the handouts or on the website. Deadline to submit is June 14th.

**Public Comment Period**

Michelle Smith, former Staff Council Vice President, inquired about meetings with Barbara Johnson. Michelle asked if there had 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 in to a mentoring program but nothing has come to fruition. As for Mediation training, we currently have what are called Peer advisors that have been trained; they assist Grievants 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.

The Staff Council Video Project will get back on track in April. Look for communications if you volunteered to be in the video.

No public comments were offered.

**Bylaw Updates**
Amendments to the by-laws were voted and approved to included gender neutral language.

**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.

**Other Business**

The next Staff Council meeting will be held in Livak Ballroom, Davis Center on Tuesday, May 7th, from 12:05 to 1:30 p.m. At the next meeting we will have Francis Churchill from UVM’s Socially Responsible Investing Advisory Council to discuss fossil fuel divestiture and a student group Student Climate Culture will also present information on their efforts to encourage this divestment.