UVM Staff Council
October 7, 2014
12:05-1:30 p.m.
Livak Ballroom, Davis Center
Draft Minutes

Members Present: President Renee Berteau, Vice President Johanna Brabham, Immediate Past President Catherine Symans, Brendan Andrews, Jeremy Arenos, Sarah Childs, JoAnne Dearborn, Jean Evans, Christine Farnham, Nick Gingrow, Wendy Koenig, Troy Krahl, Gwen Landis, Ania Lavoie, Lyndelle LeBruin, Robin Lockerby, Steve Lunna, Noël McCann, Gabriela Mora-Klepeis, Jeanna Page, Holly Pedrini, Shirley Pine, Judy Riani, Susan Skalka, Karmen Swim, Marie Tiemann, William Valliere, Amy Vile, Bethany Wolfe

Ex-officio: Jeff Bukowski, Staff Council Administrator

Members Absent: Dziyana Aydin, Valerie Carzello, Naima Dennis, Doug Dickey, Kate Ford, Nick Hall, Carrie Pratt, Dave Rogers

Also Participating: David Rosowsky, Senior VP and Provost, Richard Cate, VP for Finance and Treasurer, Amy Gilman, Staff Council Assistant

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:07 p.m.

President Rosowsky Address and Q&A with Staff Council

The Provost began by reiterating his current top priorities in his role as Provost and Senior Vice President. His top priorities are Academic Excellence, Student Success, Budget/Incentive-based Budgeting (IBB), and STEM. When he began at UVM he laid out his 8 Goals of Excellence. These goals all support the President’s Strategic Plan and help operationalize the strategic plan. “If we meet these goals we will make huge strides and gains at UVM” said Rosowsky. Additional detail is in the Provost’s narrative in Across the Green that he shared in September 2014 and invites all to read it.

The Provost said he is encouraged that the Staff Council is examining the role staff play in supporting student success in addition to their regular advocacy work on salary, benefits, and host of other issues. IBB is in the parallel flow phase, tweaking as it is monitored. Capital projects on campus included finishing up Billings Library, the STEM facility, Alumni House opening in Oct. 2015, the Taft School and Bell Towers at the Medical Center.

The questions asked of the Provost touched on the following topics: equity issues around how medical leave for staff and faculty is determined, and how that relates to parental leave or long-term illness. How will IBB affect the hiring of faculty, faculty pay and the tenure-track system. What is and where is the strategic plan for investment and sustainability for UVM staff salaries. How can university-wide communications from Administration become more consistent, timely and effective.
Question and Answer Period/Public Comment Period for Provost Rosowsky

How would you address the equity issue around how medical leave between staff and faculty is determined, particularly as it relates to parental leave and long term illness?

Provost Rosowsky acknowledged the question and concern behind it and indicated that while he is the Chief Budget Officer, this issue falls outside of his direct purview and that he would pass it on to Wanda Heading-Grant, Vice President for Human Resources, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs.

How is medical leave for staff and faculty determined?

The Provost said there is a delicate balance between staying competitive with salaries and benefits and staying within the industry norms. The directive given by the Board of Trustees, is that salaries be at market medians.

How is the IBB Implementation process going?

The Provost indicated that since there is no new software involved with the implementation, it is more about learning how to use information in a different way. Richard Cate, Vice President for Finance indicated that the biggest need is being able to track and pull down information so as to generate helpful reports.

How will IBB affect the hiring of faculty, faculty pay and tenure-track system?

Provost Rosowsky indicated that each college will weigh and measure their teaching workload and budget. He urged folks to remember IBB is a budget model not a substitute for leadership or strategy or good decisions. Overall, UVM is in a balanced place when looking at the number of tenured positions versus the number of instructors.

As chief budget officer of the University, what is your long term plan to address the challenges of increasing health care costs while providing staff employees with meaningful salary increases that go beyond meeting the cost of living in Vermont and recognizing the efforts of staff who go above and beyond, face challenges, and attain positive outcomes? How will you engage staff and the rest of the University on this issue (e.g., create town halls, form a task force, etc.) and align salaries with the other strategic investments for UVM?

Provost Rosowsky said some expenses we know will always continue to increase, and we can plan for that but the IBB budget model should allow departments and colleges to plan for those and still have a say on how to address those important compensation issues. He wanted to remind people that UVM is one of the few schools that weathered the financial crisis well without major faculty/staff position eliminations or the elimination of benefits as most other schools have had to do. Rosowsky said it was too early since UVM is still in contract negotiations to begin a discussion. When the time comes he said
UVM is great at engaging everyone around the table and getting input to make an informed decision. A Representative responded to this statement by indicating that when you say that UVM is giving 2% raises and the cost of living is higher than ultimately that is a loss for every employee.

We have come to appreciate the regular communications from you and other leaders on issues or initiatives that impact all of UVM, this is especially true with the change to the Incentive-based Budget model, but the kind of communication and organizational change management used for IBB does not seem to be consistent with other initiatives like Tobacco Free UVM and Changes to Cost Share of Benefits for example. As we continue to move forward as an institution, how will you address the need to communicate effectively and better manage change at UVM so that all members of the UVM community are engaged and show that ideas and concerns have been heard, but more importantly responded to accordingly?

Provost Rosowsky said he is responsible for communicating on IBB but can relay the feedback regarding those two specific initiatives to the proper VP.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the September 2, 2014 Council minutes. With no further discussion, the minutes were adopted.

**Debrief/Discussion of Provost Rosowsky’s Address**

Renee Berteau reminded the group that at many schools the Provost rarely has the level of interaction with the Staff as our current Provost does. One representative voiced frustration about how employees continue to bash Peoplesoft when the new system allowed us to gain better access to information and reports. Renee added that one of the lessons learned from Peoplesoft that is being applied during this IBB process is the need for a Transition Team. There is a formal team organized to ensure communication and training needs are met for those affected by the changes with IBB. There was a similar effort during PeopleSoft, and is needed during any change initiative at UVM.

A question that was not asked of Provost Rosowsky dealt with concerns around equitable professional development opportunities for staff regardless of how much revenue your department, college, or unit produces under the IBB model. Will professional development come from just the department/college funds or HRS or both? Will that be a line item that will be vulnerable due to internal department/college priorities?

Additional thoughts were shared about the need to continue to communicate the concerns of staff to the President and Provost to influence the work of VP’s and Deans at UVM to address these issues and also partner with other leaders so that our message is consistently heard by campus leaders.

A representative wondered “If UVM is all about excellence in so many areas, why are we looking to simply ‘meet the median’ for employee salaries and benefits as the Provost mentioned?” We don’t believe that the President and Provost aspire to aim for the median or to be average. Why would we?
**Standing Committee Reports**

Bethany Wolfe, co-chair of Outreach Committee, mentioned that one of the goals of the committee this year is continued work on improved UVM internal communications. If anyone wants to suggest other methods or tools, rather than email, please let her know. Some people do not read their emails due to overload and sheer volume. What other ways may be effective? One remark was that in general, emails at UVM are too long and too dense. Renee suggested that the Outreach Committee get a few minutes at the next meeting for exploring staff desires about communication.

**Statement of Collaboration for HRDMA**

A draft of the Statement of Collaboration between Staff Council and Human Resources, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs (HRDMA) was discussed to gain feedback from Representatives. This document, suggested by Wanda Heading-Grant, Vice President for HRDMA, is an effort to highlight the kind of relationship Staff Council and HRDMA wish to have as partners moving forward in light of the many retirements, reorganization of the unit, and changes in personnel. Work will continue on the document as it will now be sent to Wanda for additional feedback and input.

**Officer’s Update**

The full Officer’s update is posted online on the President of Staff Council’s webpage.

Renee thanked the Staff Appreciation Planning Committee and the Staff Council Office again for the dedicated work during Staff Appreciation Week/ I ♥ UVM Staff campaign (#iheartuvmstaff). Renee also talked about the September meeting of the President’s Advisory Council. This month’s discussion was around Title IX and what it covers and who must report. Focus was given to compliance and reporting.

**Brainstorm for the Undergraduate Student Panel - Nov. 4, 2014 Staff Council Meeting**

Ideas will be solicited by email prior to the November Staff Council Meeting.

**Other Business**

Holly Pedrini from the Social Committee reminded the group that they will soon begin to see information about the annual Holiday Bazaar & Food Drive that will take place December 3, 2014. This is the major fundraiser for the social committee each year to raise funds to help offset costs and discounts for events, and provide funds to the Community Service Awards and Staff Emergency Loan Fund. She asked that reps consider signing up when the volunteer sign-ups go out soon.

**Adjournment**

Renee made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and adopted. The meeting adjourned at 1:23pm.