

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

March 18, 2026

Video Conference on Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Present: Takamura Ashikaga, Jay Ashman, Ralph Budd, Gary Derr, Alan Gotlieb, Rachel Johnson, Dwight Matthews, Mara Saule, Judith Van Houten

Absent: Michael Gurdon, Beth Mintz, Clare Burlingham, Alison Pechenick, Ruth Farrell

Call to Order: Chair Ralph Budd called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM

Approval of the Minutes of February 11, 2026

Minutes were approved.

Meeting scheduled: There will be an in-person meeting of the RFAO Board in the Senate Conference Room at 2 pm on Wednesday April 15. President Tromp will join us at 3:00 PM for 45 minutes.

June 5 Luncheon:

Wolfgang Mieder will be our luncheon speaker for the June 5 luncheon, at the Grand Maple Ballroom in the Davis Center. The Assoc. Provost's staff are helping us with this event. The luncheon will be from 11am-2pm. Lunch will be an assortment of sandwiches, salad, cookies, soft drinks and coffee. The cost exclusive of coffee is \$20.99 per person. It is difficult to predict how many retirees will attend and pay for their meal. We have until two weeks before the event to finalize our order with Sodexo. We have some resources in the Provost's budget to cover expenses from a short fall of retiree payments.

Update on communication resources (Judy Van Houten and Rachel Johnson):

We have organized the links to various programs that might be of interest to our retirees into a page for the RFAO web site. A copy of the page with its links was provided to the board members and approved for posting on the web site. As more organizations, programs, and series become known to you, please forward their links to us.

Communications from UVM to Retirees (Gary Derr and Dwight Matthews):

We still seek to have retirees receive important notifications from the University that automatically go to active faculty. Gary is making inquiries about this issue.

Faculty Senate Report (submitted by Mara Saule):

The Faculty Senate met on February 23, 2026 online via Teams, with approximately 95 attendees.

1. President Abby McGowan announced that the University's Strategic Plan had been approved by the Board of Trustees and is moving forward with identification of next steps for implementation. She also announced that the Provost's Search Committee is in the process of being constituted, with Pres. McGowan and VP Alicia Estey as co-chairs. Finally, elections for

Senate President-Elect and 2 Members at Large of the Executive Committee are soon to be launched.

2. Resolutions in Memoriam were read for both Profs. Jack McCormack and Sid Poger. Jack's work in the Faculty Senate and then later in RFAO was particularly highlighted and its transformative impact recognized.
3. The bulk of the meeting was devoted to a presentation by Alicia Estey, Vice President for Finance, Administration, and Human Resources regarding the University's financial status. The following are highlights of her presentation, the entirety of which is available through the Senate website.

In FY25, revenues, excluding use of over \$11M in reserves, exceeded budget. Even without reserves, the University would have ended the fiscal year with a positive balance.

For FY26, General Fund revenue and expenses are projected to meet budget.

FY26 Support Center budget allocations reflected reductions ranging from 0% to 3% with the highest cuts leveled on administrative units. For FY27, Support Centers submitted potential budget reduction scenarios of 1%, 1.25%, and 1.5%.

FY27 budget planning parameters include an in-state tuition increase of 2% and an out-of-state increase of 4.5%; operating budget expenses increase by 7%; and a requested 3% increase in state appropriation. The FY27 budget is projected to be structurally balanced without reserves.

Other updates included plans for an IBB "health check," an update to the administrative Enterprise Resource Planning platform (a.k.a., "PeopleSoft), addressing deferred maintenance with a six-year capital plan, and completing the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) search process.

4. The Student Affairs Committee presented for vote the resolution to revise the "Attendance Policy" as it applies to intercollegiate and academic competitions. It was voted on and passed.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be held on Monday, March 23, in person in Memorial Lounge

Update on United Academics (Alison Pechenick)

United Academics continues its robust work on behalf of UVM faculty, with plenty to do. With respect to the health insurance grievance filed recently by our two retiree colleagues, UA's grievance officer reports that UVM is responding to VLRB request to draft a side letter for retiree healthcare. The letter will address procedure only, not plan offerings.

UBAC update (Ruth Farrell)

UBAC met once since the last RFAO exec board meeting. The UBAC meeting focused on questions regarding possible changes to the PPO1 health insurance plan for active employees. No items directly relevant to retirees were discussed.

Assessment of the current status of the Medicare insurance transition

The FAQs that the RFAO created should be updated especially for new retirees. The issues in this newer set of FAQs presumably will be different now that Via has been implemented. Caitlyn will have her own version. We will need a copy of that set of FAQs. We presume that Michael will request this.

Comments from a board member: The only VIA “issue” mentioned recently to RFAO members were by two people asking how we can predict when VIA will reimburse us each month (the March payment seemed to lag UVM’s contribution date by more days than expected). With only three data points thus far, it’s early days to draw any conclusions, if there’s even any cause for concern in the first place.

Comments from a board member: I heard from Caitlyn that HR has a process and materials in place for current retirees as they become Medicare-eligible, and those 65 and older retiring now. It might be good to review these items and find out more about how things are going for retirees signing up now that the tsunami has passed. Questions and answers about wait times, guaranteed issue, and others will be different.

Other business

There have been messages about Provost and HR Director searches and other issues that have not reached retirees. These other issues include auto-forwarding of email will not be allowed in many instances in the future, and a module for training to avoid scams has been developed. The former does not appear to apply to retirees, but the latter would be of interest. Dwight and Gary are exploring these issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:44 pm

Respectfully submitted, Judith Van Houten