



FACULTY SENATE

Minutes
November 12, 2012

Senators in Attendance: 56

Absent: Anesthesiology (Shapiro), Chemistry (Liptek), Family Medicine (Nicholas), FPPC (Ross), Medicine (Weiss), Nutrition & Food Science (Pritchard), Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Zweber), Pathology (Wicox), Pathology (Ambaye), Pediatrics (D'Amico), Pediatrics (Wittpenn), Psychiatry (Naylor), Psychiatry (Heil), Radiology (Green), RSGE (Galbraith), SAC (Prue), Socialwork (Witkin), Surgery (Adams), Surgery (Trotter), VP (Kaza)

- 1. Approval of the Minutes.** The minutes of October 8, 2012 were approved with corrections.
- 2. Senate President's Remarks.** President Roberts began her remarks by announcing the winner of the Member At Large election. Professor Douglas Fletcher will serve in this capacity until June 30, 2014. She also took time to update the Senate on the two new General Education outcomes that are developing. The next two outcomes that will be developed are diversity, and sustainability. If there is interest in joining either working group, please contact Julie Roberts (julie.roberts@uvm.edu). Both committees will be bringing updates and proposals to the Faculty Senate and the greater campus community to gather feedback and approval for certain aspects of their work.

President Roberts spoke to the issue of extended discussion of agenda items. When this occurs, operating procedure dictates that there are three possible ways to proceed. The Senate can choose one of the following:

- Motion to extend discussion time, consequently removing time from another agenda item.
- Motion to table the agenda item to allow for greater discussion. The tabled agenda item will be placed on the next Faculty Senate meeting agenda.
- Motion to vote.

A Senator can propose any of these actions; however, the Senate may vote it down in favor of another.

- 3. UVM President's Remarks.** President Tom Sullivan addressed the Faculty Senate. He began by thanking veterans for their service to our country. He also wanted to wish the faculty an early happy Thanksgiving. Before the meeting began, the President had circulated a document outlining his observations and goals for the University of Vermont following his 100 days of listening. One of his top priorities is to make UVM more

accessible and affordable for all Vermonters. This will mean looking at the relationships between tuition, scholarships, and financial aid packages. He noted that although there is a proposed tuition increase of 3%, this is the lowest increase in the last 36 years. Sullivan aspires to advancing the academic culture of UVM. He plans to do this by making improvements to the student experience, providing a more welcoming and accommodating atmosphere for transfer students, and increasing four year graduation rates. Other aspects of enriching the academic culture will include reexamining the student-faculty ratio, increasing funding opportunities for faculty scholarship, investing in more tenure track faculty positions, and upgrading spaces on campus (ex. laboratories).

The first question from the Senate was regarding the ability to accept transfer students into programs that have capacity issues on a regular basis. Although these programs would like to offer opportunities to transfer students, it is not always possible because of the volume of first year, first time students that are admitted. President Sullivan agreed that the University should do its best to set transfer students up for success and provide a positive UVM experience. The right mix of transfer and first year students will have to be found to make this possible.

The next question that came from the floor of the Senate asked how the administration plans to make up for lost tuition dollars if the undergraduate population is reduced, and the University is investing in additional tenure track positions and facility upgrades. Sullivan answered by stating that there are a number of different aspects of the budget that need to be considered when balancing the loss of some tuition dollars from reducing the undergraduate population. Other factors such as the international student tuition scale, graduate student population, financial aid packages, and scholarships can be evaluated to recapture lost revenue. It is important to note that the reduction in undergraduate students is projected to happen over many years. This conversation continued with a suggestion to look at CCV and pathway programs to assess affordability and access for students in Vermont. This could also increase overall campus diversity as well. President Sullivan stressed the importance of communication to all Vermonters about available scholarships. Currently 45% of Vermont students attend UVM tuition free.

It was asked why there was no specific target assigned to domestic diversity recruitment but one attached to international student recruitment goals. It was answered that this may pose legal problems down the road. President Sullivan stated that increased diversity is of the utmost importance, and is a number UVM should strive to grow.

- 4. General Education Update.** Co-chairs Char Mehrtens and Susanmarie Harrington gave a brief history and overview of the past work of the writing and information literacy work group. This work includes the design and implementation of a first year writing program. They also presented the work they had accomplished this academic year which has been focused on developing writing and information literacy as a general education outcome for years 2-4. The committee is following the same process as they did when developing a work plan for first year writing. They started by looking at an inventory of what already exists, and identified gaps. Future work will include designing a pilot, and reporting back to the Senate with a new proposal. The results of the inventory showed that the current structure for teaching writing and information literacy is decentralized and has varied

definition and focus across campus. This is further complicated with accreditation requirements for professional schools.

Work this year has also included researching other writing programs at peer Universities and investigation of possible models that would fit the culture and needs of UVM. The committee currently supports a department-based approach to solve this problem. By having a department focused design, accreditation processes may be accommodated, programs can emphasize what they are already doing, doesn't require major academic restructuring or curriculum revision (works with existing courses), and is driven by disciplinary work. A form this model could take would allow for departments to formulate their own learning outcomes with the support of a department liaison. Structuring learning outcomes within a department will allow for customization of writing outcomes to include discipline specific writing techniques. It is important to note that assessment of the learning outcomes would be supported centrally but developed by departments.

The pilot of this program would ideally be made up of a mix of programs including some that follow an accreditation process. Discussions on crafting learning outcomes around writing and information literacy would be led by both the Libraries and the Writing in the Disciplines staff. Additionally, workshops would be available for developing department leadership (liaison). This position would ultimately provide support for writing and information literacy in both teaching and assessment. All of this information can be found on the General Education website (Faculty Senate presentation 11-12-12 [WEB LINK HERE](#)).

It was questioned how this would address the issue of large class size (such as in the Psychology department) where it is extremely difficult to teach writing. Professor Mehrtens answered that there have been many strategies to deal with this complication that departments could model after. One example from the committee's research was a department that broke down their writing outcomes by course and graphically represented them in a flow chart creating a holistic view of the program and what writing will look like over four years.

Another question asked what kind of resources had been secured to run this pilot and the program implementation in the future. It was answered that the committee has been consistent in saying that it will take funding to run a pilot program to generate data for a larger implementation. Collecting data to scale the project up is an essential piece of information to have before budget discussions continued and decisions are made about future funding.

It was asked if the proposed model was based on the University of Minnesota's writing intensive program. Professor Mehrtens clarified that it was fashioned after a new UMN writing initiative that had been combined with the intensive writing program to form a more comprehensive campus wide writing program.

Finally, it was suggested that departments are encouraged to talk to each other during this process in an effort to learn from one another. The co-chairs responded by saying they

would try and come up with a way to do this effectively while they design the pilot. A possible place this would fit in the model is during the facilitated discussions.

The committee would like to hear feedback on the following aspects of their work:

- The preliminary model
- Department based outcomes
- Implementation and assessment support at the department level
- Development of faculty writing liaisons

Feedback should be sent to either Susanmarie Harrington (susan.harrington@uvm.edu) or Char Mehrtens (cmehrten@uvm.edu).

5. Envisioning Environment. Professors Beverley Wemple and Alison Brody gave an update on the progress and timeline of the Envisioning Environment committee. The committee's website is up and running and they encouraged faculty to check it out. The charge of the group can be found on the website along with a list of presentations from the forums they have been hosting weekly. The purpose of these forums is to conduct a campus-wide inventory of environmental activity including education, research, and outreach. Professor Wemple informed the Senate that there are three more forums to take place. They are as follows:

- Research and Academic Support for Environmentally-engaged Programs (11/28/12)
- Student Forum on Environmentally-engaged Education (11/29/12)
- Campus-Wide Call for Good Ideals of All Scales (12/5/12)

Interest in participating in these forums as a presenter should be emailed to either Beverley Wemple (bwemple@uvm.edu) or Stephanie Kaza (skaza@uvm.edu).

Feedback from the previous forums has suggested that there is great value in having conversations across campus. These conversations have shown a great level of expertise in fields related to the Environment at UVM. They have also helped to identify limits and barriers the University faces in this field. The committee plans to draft a report in December, and put it out for a comment period in January. It is hoped that the website will soon have a mechanism to collect feedback as well.

It was questioned if there was a role for those involved in the humanities to participate in this discussion. Professor Wemple answered that the committee is actively seeking out participation from this group. Any interest, or suggestions of who to contact should be directed to the committee. A membership list can be found on the Envisioning Environment website.

6. New Business. There was no new business at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.



The University of Vermont

**Enhancing Quality and Affordability
Strategic Action Plan**

President Tom Sullivan

**To the University of Vermont Board of Trustees
Wednesday, November 7, 2012**

- I. **“Access to Success”: Promoting Affordability, Financial Access, and Academic Support**
 - A. Focus on the “relationship” between tuition and scholarships and financial aid: What is the right balance to maximize prospects for student enrollment and retention and minimize student debt?
 1. Moderate tuition growth and maximize financial support to achieve a tuition level that is financially sustainable for both students and the institution
 2. Prioritize scholarships and financial aid in the upcoming Comprehensive Campaign
 3. Limit tuition increase for 2013-14 below 3%, the lowest tuition increase in 36 years
 - B. Ensure optimal academic support to achieve academic and career success
- II. **Promoting a culture of advancing academic excellence and cultivating talent**
 - A. Create and nurture an atmosphere of raising expectations and aspirations focused on quality and excellence
 - B. Student focused
 1. Implement a new Enrollment Management Plan that
 - a. Reduces incrementally undergraduate enrollment to approximately 9,800 students
 - b. Recruits and supports transfer students
 - c. Increases international student undergraduate enrollment to approximately 5% to 7% (from the present 1%) by creating a new recruitment and “student preparation pathway” plan
 - d. Continues to annually increase, value, and promote domestic student diversity

- e. Designs and offers graduate education programs in a way that ensures an optimal size, scale, and scope of the Graduate College consistent with and supportive of the “vision statement” of the University
 - f. Broadens student recruitment efforts outside the present, targeted geographic market to offset the effects of regional demographic trends
 - g. Increases the number of applications, selectivity, and yield for a well-prepared, diverse entering class
 - h. Rebalances the student-faculty ratio in order to enhance instruction and advising
2. To improve the whole student campus life experience, (academic, cultural, developmental, and social), review the curriculum and advising to enhance:
- a. Retention of students from first to second year (from present 85% to 90%)
 - b. Four-year graduation rates (from present 65% to 70%)
 - c. Career advising and placement success at graduation
 - d. The optimal use of web-based education to supplement the curriculum and student experience
 - e. Educational standards, quality and vigor for an enriched student experience
- C. Faculty focused
- 1. Promotes increased research and creative scholarship of the faculty that has high impact and recognition
 - 2. Increases the number of tenure-tenure track faculty in high quality programs that are aligned with UVM’s strategic priorities where there has been a substantial enrollment increase over targets in order to advance excellence in teaching and learning

III. **Identifying necessary investments to ensure a bright future**

- A. New investments, along with cost efficiencies, are essential to enhance the quality, impact, and reputation of the University
- 1. Investments in facilities, infrastructure, and information technologies are necessary to advance the educational and research responsibilities and opportunities of the University, particularly in engineering, sciences, and libraries
 - 2. Priorities should include
 - a. Completion of Billings Library restoration
 - b. Laboratory restoration or new laboratories for Engineering, Chemistry, Physics, and health-related sciences
 - c. Completion of the Alumni House restoration

- d. Design and construct a multi-purpose event center to house cultural, social, academic, wellness, and athletic events as well as additional fitness and recreation space primarily for student use

IV. Instilling an institutional commitment to efficiency and effectiveness that optimizes the use of facilities, technology, assets, and shared services that

- A. Considers a three-semester curriculum that increases choices for students and faculty
- B. Examines a winter “J” term that broadens students opportunities for international experience, internships, co-op opportunities, and special curriculum offerings
- C. Reduces administrative costs, redundancies and barriers that do not add value and/or effectiveness by implementing an administrative unit and budget review process similar to academic program review
- D. Encourages joint initiatives with academic institutions that have different comparative advances and qualitative strengths
- E. Uses benchmarks, metrics, timelines, relative comparisons and best practices to measure progress toward goals and aspirations
- F. Engages in continuous strategic planning and implements well-devised actions designed to sustain, promote, and measure academic creativity, research breakthroughs, and impact
- G. Plans and initiates a bold, creative Comprehensive Campaign to increase private support, grants, and endowments in order to support scholarships, faculty support, academic programs, and the restoration and construction of key facilities
- H. Focuses and aligns resources, reallocations, and revenue with academic priorities by undertaking and completing the Strategic Value / Financial Strength Plan regarding academic programs
- I. Encourages state officials to support and invest in direct, “special appropriations” that are closely aligned with state priorities and University goals in order to advance the public good within Vermont and the vibrancy of UVM
- J. Provides transparent communications and open dialogue throughout the University in order to achieve outcomes collaboratively