



FACULTY SENATE

Minutes
February 11, 2013

Senators in Attendance: 51

Absent: Anesthesiology (Schapiro), Anthropology (VanKeuran), CAC (Paris), CDAE (Eastman), Engineering (Fletcher), Family Medicine (Nicholas), FPPC (Ross), Geology (Mehrtens), Libraries (Light), Mathematics & Statistics (Buzas), Neuroscience (Hehir), Nutrition & Food Science (Pritchard), Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Zweber), Pediatrics (D'Amico) (Wittpenn), Physics (Headrick), PSC (Rodgers), Psychiatry (Naylor), Radiology (Green), Rehabilitation & Movement Science (Sibold), SAC (Prue), Surgery (Adams), Vice President (Kaza)

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- 1. Approval of the Minutes.** The minutes of January 14, 2013 were approved as written.
 - 2. Senate President's Remarks.** Due to the full meeting agenda, President Roberts refrained from making remarks.
 - 3. UVM President's Remarks.** President Sullivan addressed the Senate first with an update on the Provost search that is now underway. The search committee has been put together and the roster circulated to the campus community via email. The timeline for the search will bring finalists to campus for a final round of interviews in late April or early May. President Sullivan wanted to note that the ongoing search for Dean of the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences will follow a similar timeline. He also wanted to inform the Senate that he hopes to review the scope of the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College before beginning the search process to find Dean Grasso's successor. Sullivan hopes to engage the campus community with particular attention to graduate students when reviewing this position, and plans to do so through a feedback survey. Finally, President Sullivan commented briefly on his investigation into moving the University to a three semester per academic year model. Moving to this model will provide greater choice for faculty and students when it comes to scheduling courses, maximize use of campus spaces, and eventually increase revenue. It was questioned when UVM would transition to this model. Sullivan answered by stating that there is no clear timeline at this point, but he is excited to develop this through conversations with faculty and other campus constituencies.
 - 4. FY14 Budget Update – Interim Provost Bob Low.** Provost Low was unable to present at this time due to illness, however, he conveyed his talking points through a memo

dictated by Vice President of Executive Operations & Chief of Staff, Gary Derr. If there are questions for Provost Low, they can be emailed directly to him for a response.

Provost Low's comments began by informing the Faculty Senate that he will be distributing all the available budget data to the Deans as well as have it posted to the Provost's webpage for faculty access. He also reminded the Senate that he had circulated an email with the major points regarding the budget planning process and where the Administration currently stands in terms of FY14.

5. **FY14 Budget Update – Vice President Richard Cate.** Vice President for Finance and Administration Richard Cate had no additional information to add to the Provost's remarks on the FY14 budget planning process.
6. **Travel Policy Update – Vice President Richard Cate.** VP Cate informed the Faculty Senate that the new travel policy which includes an extension on receipt submission date for both national and international travel has been in operation for the past six weeks. The process has also changed in that the Administrative Business Service Center now processes all reimbursements for travel rather than individual unit budget managers.

Mathematics & Statistics Senator Dummit brought comments and a suggestion to the Faculty Senate and VP Cate during the question and comment period of VP Cate's travel policy update. His comments related frustration of the faculty that is coming from the attention of policy modification and implementation to minimize administrative effort rather than serve the faculty. Through some research, Professor Dummit had found a model for a travel policy that he envisioned would be appropriate to implement at UVM as it comes from another large, publicly-funded institution of higher learning, the University of Minnesota. Dummit read excerpts from the policy to the Senate to show its functionality and simplicity. He also relayed information gained from conversations with University of Minnesota officials on complications the UMN had faced while implementing this policy and it was noted that there were none. Finally, he closed by suggesting that the "University of Vermont move immediately to implement this common-sense travel policy".

Conversation continued questioning the feasibility of utilizing government per diem rates and the cost that the University would incur as a result of moving to this method. It was also noted that although the University of Minnesota's model works very well for them, UVM is a very different institution and the travel policy model needed to be looked at in context. Complications as a result of moving to this model are caused by some departments requiring much higher travel budgets than others and not all UVM travel being done by faculty. There was no clear resolution to the travel policy conversation at this time.

7. **Research, Scholarship, & Graduate Education Name Change – Richard Galbraith.** Chair of the Research, Scholarship, & Graduate Education committee, Richard Galbraith introduced the suggested name change for the Research, Scholarship, & Graduate Education committee to the Research, Scholarship, & Creative Arts Committee to the Faculty Senate. This name better reflects the charge of the committee, and addresses the concern that there is a perception that creative arts are not represented. Removing the

term “graduate education” does not alter the work of the committee as graduate education is still addressed through the Graduate Exec committee, and curriculum for graduate education will still be processed through the Curricular Affairs Committee. This name change is being suggested by the RSGE as a committee, and they ask the Faculty Senate for their support. Senator Goodnight moved that the Faculty Senate vote in support of this name change; the motion was seconded by Senator Greene. When asked, the Faculty Senate voted in support of the decision to change the name of the Research, Scholarship, & Graduate Education Committee to the Research, Scholarship, & Creative Arts Committee. As this is a bylaws change, a referendum ballot will be circulated to all faculty for a vote. If two-thirds of the votes cast favor the change it will be adopted, and the bylaws amended.

- 8. Envisioning Environment Report Discussion.** Professors Bartlett and Brody continued the discussion of the Envisioning Environment Report as requested at the previous Senate meeting. They reminded the Senators that the report that was released just before the last meeting was now hosted on the Provost’s website and open for comment until next week. Feedback is welcome from all faculty. The committee will also send a survey to collect final feedback as well as to make sure their inventory of environmental activities on campus is complete. Once this is done, they will finalize their report to the President.

Questions about who was included in the process and what was addressed in the report were brought to Bartlett and Brody. One in particular addressed the balance of applied science and hard science. The response to this concern was that no one was intentionally left out of the process, and that this feedback hadn’t been brought to the committee’s attention via the report feedback, forums or survey. It was discussed how these two factions of environmental science could be seen on a continuum and that the balance is hard to see from within the discipline. A suggestion was that once the feedback had been collected, that the committee review the report and try to identify areas that are lacking and seek additional input.

A final inquiry was regarding the recommendation in the report that established new duties for either a new Associate Provost, or an existing one, to focus on environment, sustainability, and health. The committee representatives replied that the report was simply an inventory with recommendations, and that action is ultimately in the hands of the President and Provost. They did want to stress that the recommendation to have these responsibilities outside of one college or another was intentional as to be inclusive of the entire university community.

As discussion was closing, it was suggested that the report be refined with more specifics regarding recommendations then brought back to the Faculty Senate seeking support.

- 9. Social Responsibility Advisory Committee.** The Social Responsibility Advisory Committee came to the Faculty Senate to speak briefly about their charge. The group is working as an advisory committee to the Administration regarding investing endowment funds. The SRAC will be holding town meeting style forums to collect feedback from the campus to make an informed decision on how to report back to the Administration. The

first forum is scheduled for 2/20/13 from 4-6pm in the Davis Center. All faculty are invited to this event.

As a part of this report, the SRAC invited a student group working to gain support for their recommendation that UVM divest from fossil fuels. They gave a brief introduction to their research and proposal. The student group will return to the Faculty Senate with a proposal and resolution later in the semester.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Faculty Senate Meeting - 2/11/13

Comments from Bob Low

I suspect this is the first time a Provost has appeared before a Faculty Senate without voice. Hopefully the last.

I have asked Julie to share with you my thoughts. As for questions, I look forward to hearing them but ask that you email them to me or to Julie, and I will get back as I can. I do this in hopes of preserving what voice I have for the teaching with which I presently am engaged.

I also have asked Julie to post these comments at the appropriate location.

I have two main issues for today. The first has to do with data distribution related to quality assessment; the second with the academic budget.

Data distribution

As you all know, I decided that the best course of action would be to distribute all available data that have been assembled to enable in-depth review of the quality of our academic programs. This is a first step in reshaping them to be in best accord with the strategic directions that President Sullivan has outlined. I felt it essential that those data be reviewed at the local level for reasons of quality assessment and development of a strategic plan.

Thus, and as you also know, those data were provided to the Deans. The Deans have been provided, as well, with the authority and responsibility to use them to move their College / School forward. I did so with the expectation that the Deans would share these data with their Chairs / Program Directors, who in their turn were expected to share with their faculty.

It is my understanding that, as of last Friday, all Deans have answered my request, and I thank them for doing so.

As this process unfolded, it became apparent that there are certain technological difficulties in sharing this information in the broadest possible way. Accordingly, I have arranged for a web site to be set up, at which all faculty will have complete access. I expect this to be accomplished in the next few days.

Budget

As you know, and as has been discussed in a number of venues. This has included the Faculty Senate. In particular, I refer you to the joint communication to the campus community that came out last Friday from the President and myself.

We face a budgetary shortfall in the coming fiscal year (FY-14) and, as well, at least for the subsequent one. This situation caused us to develop a group of principles by which we would move forward with our decisions, principles as well discussed in numerous venues, including with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Perhaps most important to this body was the principle that our academic programs must be protected.

Common agreement with those principles resulted in development of models best suited to them. The model with which we chose to move forward, with widespread concurrence in our academic community, was one in which reductions were to be less for academic programs than for administrative ones; and in which faculty resources were protected.

That model led to specific budget targets for FY-14 that have been shared with your Deans. They have been given the authority and responsibility to develop their individual responses, in the context for a plan that encompasses FY-15 and beyond. Across-the board reductions are to be used in FY-14 as a last resort, to be followed in FY-15 with strategic plans that reshape our academic programs.

As per our memo to the campus community of last Friday, we have asked Deans and Vice President to implement a written communication plan within their units that is transparent, engages unit members, and includes communication within the unit.

For the future, I am developing a protocol by which, while under my leadership, budget planning will be brought before the academy from statement of the problem, to principles, to models, to targets to strategies.

There is much still to do. For example, in preparation for FY-15 and beyond, I have begun to look at the issue of unequal distribution of teaching resources between our Colleges and Schools which, if true, would lead to reallocation between them. I will be asking several groups, including the Faculty Senate, to examine the issue and, if it should be real, to come forward with suggestions about how to proceed.

Other Matters

Briefly, I plan to move forward aggressively in the coming few weeks with examination of alternatives for a summer semester; and, as well, a plan for expanding our presence in Distance Education. Both will involve small working groups that will include Faculty Senate membership.

Apologies for my voice. And thanks.

Now, your questions.