



FACULTY SENATE

Minutes
September 8, 2014

Senators in Attendance: 52

Absent: Ambaye (Pathology), Brayden (Pharmacology), Cohen (Family Medicine), Forbes (Theatre), Franklin (Classics), Green (Radiology), Hehir (Neuroscience), Heiss (CDAE), Khanna (Sociology), Mares (Anthropology), Naylor (Psychiatry), Okech (Leadership & Developmental Sciences), Prue (SAC), Salambier (Education), Schapiro (Anesthesiology), Stratton (Plant Biology), Tyzbir (Nutrition & Food Sciences), Rodgers (PSC), Wilcox (Pathology), Wu (Rehabilitation & Movement Science),

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- 1. Approval of the Minutes.** The minutes of May 15, 2014 were approved.
 - 2. Senate President's Remarks & Introduction of New Senators.** President Roberts began her remarks by welcoming the new and returning Senators. She also wanted to remind all Faculty Senators that the election for the next Faculty Senate President will be taking place this fall. Nominations will be collected until September 26th at 4pm. Nominations may be made either on the floor of the September Senate meeting (warned ahead of time), or via email to Ashley Clark, or Julie Roberts. Once the nominations have been collected, President Roberts will confirm that the nomination is accepted by that individual. The term for this position will begin on July 1, 2015 and run through June 30, 2017. The elected individual will serve as President Elect in the current academic year, allowing that person a year to learn about the Senate, and the role of the President. When President Roberts opened the floor of the Senate for nominations there were none made.

President Roberts also informed the Faculty Senate that there are two vacant seats for Members At Large to serve on the Executive Council. Nominations may be made on the floor of the Senate, or by email to Ashley Clark, or Julie Roberts. These individuals will be required to attend regular Executive Council meetings, Executive Council meetings with the President & Provost, in addition to Faculty Senate meetings. Nominations will close for this position on Friday, September 12, 2014. When the floor of the Senate was opened for nominations, none were made.

Finally President Roberts took the time to introduce the new staff member in the Faculty Senate Offices, Tiera Porter.

3. UVM President's Remarks. President Sullivan began his remarks by welcoming the faculty back to campus. He also wanted to take time to introduce Stacey Kostell, the new Vice President for Enrollment Management. President Sullivan shared the enrollment numbers for the incoming class of 2018. Retention has risen, and the University has the highest ever international enrollment at 635 students enrolled in at least one course. President Sullivan also spoke about the growing importance of academic excellence, and is pleased that the University community embraces this as an institutional goal. The University of Vermont has a philosophy of educating students for a lifetime of success, and urged faculty to consider the following four questions during their daily teaching duties:

- What does it mean to be educated?
- What does it mean to be educated at UVM?
- What does a UVM degree mean?
- What is the right balance between education and training for a job (or a career)?

Considering these questions, President Sullivan reminded the faculty that enrollment management (retention, future student enrollment, etc.) is owned by all members of the University community. Enrollment management is something that doesn't just end at the admission of a student to UVM, rather it extends all the way through graduation. One way to think about how to assist with enrollment management across a student's career is to assist them not only in the classroom but also through long term planning of degree programs, majors, minors, concentrations, internships, career opportunities, or trainings. UVM faculty and staff are urged to think about asking students "how can I help you" whether it is providing directions to a lost student during orientation, or advising through career selection.

4. UVM Provost's Remarks. Provost Rosowsky reminded Faculty Senators to look for Across the Green, a publication that comes out of the Provost's Offices about three times a year. This publication is an easy way to read through progress and interesting news across the University community. Provost Rosowsky also wanted to welcome Stacey Kostell, Richard Galbraith (Vice President for Research), and Nancy Matthews (Dean of the Rubenstein School for Environment & Natural Resources) to their new positions.

Provost Rosowsky informed the Senate that the migration to Incentive Based Budgeting is going well, and is on track. Any information about IBB that has been communicated through his remarks across campus may be found on the Provost's Office website on the [IBB Reports page](#).

The Provost also discussed the Academic Excellence Goals that had been circulated and revised based on campus feedback. These goals were decided to be unassailable, appropriate, and positive for our campus. This summer the President and Board of Trustees asked the Provost to produce a narrative that further explained the content and context for the Academic Excellence Goals. This will be delivered in the near future as a document titled "Academic Excellence Goals for the University of Vermont". Goals included in this document include but are not limited to:

- Increasing the percentage of undergraduate students that graduate in 4 years;

- Improve student advising through a continuum of academic advising (career, military, graduate education, etc.);
 - Increasing interdisciplinary research, teaching, and scholarship;
 - Increase both domestic and international enrollments.
5. **Doctoral Regalia.** Dean of the graduate college, Cindy Forehand introduced the Assistant Dean of the Graduate College and Chief of Staff for the Office of the Vice President for Research, and Dr. Elizabeth Fenton who both worked to design Doctoral Regalia for the University of Vermont. The new regalia is a stunning deep green gown with a black lapel trimmed in gold cording and the UVM seal on either side. The regalia also has a Doctoral cap made of velvet. The Doctoral regalia is now available for purchase for past graduates and retails for \$756.00 through the UVM Book Store.
 6. **Curricular Affairs.** Chair of the Curricular Affairs Committee, Cathy Paris, brought one item of business for Faculty Senate consideration. The proposal was for a new online concentration in Leadership for Sustainability in the existing Masters of Science Program in Natural Resources. This concentration is targeted for the mid-career professional, and has a primarily online delivery mode with some residential components. The proposal to approve the new online concentration had been circulated for review prior to the Faculty Senate meeting. There were no questions or comments regarding the proposal, and when it was put to a vote, the Faculty Senate approved the new concentration.
 7. **New Business.** Professor Alison Pechenick from the Department of Computer Science asked for a discussion (sometime this academic year) on new ways of reviewing faculty members besides using student feedback. This would especially be interesting and helpful to accomplish University goals in the new budget model. It was answered that the administration has been talking about this with the faculty over the past year. This is a concern shared by faculty across campus, and the administration welcomes the opportunity to have a robust campus-wide conversation. The focus of the review should be about academic, and professional development and this may be done through a portfolio, peer review, or other ways. It was suggested that UVM explore how other peer institutions are reviewing faculty, and perhaps start the process there.

Professors Richard Vanden Bergh and David Jones from the School of Business shared how their school reviews faculty through a faculty mentoring team. Both spoke highly of this method as it is a supportive way of developing a culture of supporting colleagues throughout their career. The mentoring team model ensures a certain number of classroom visits so faculty may be observed. If there is a concern raised during one or more of these visits, the mentoring team can schedule additional observation time as well as provide guidance for improvement. This method, it was noted, is also especially good at identifying problems early on.

Vice President, Stephanie Kaza, was interested in what the Faculty Senate's agenda is forecasted to look like over the next year. President Roberts responded by informing the Senators that she will be inviting each Faculty Senate Subcommittee to be giving an update on their projected work for the coming year over the next few meetings. Other

priorities that the Senators think the Faculty Senate should work on are welcome and may be either raised on the floor of the Faculty Senate meetings or via email to Julie Roberts.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:52 pm.

Memo To: The Faculty Senate
From: The Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, Cathy Paris, Chair
Date: May 8, 2014
Subject: Approval of a new concentration with the existing M.S. Natural Resources degree program in the Rubenstein School of the Environment and Natural Resources.

The Curricular Affairs Committee at its May 7, 2014 meeting unanimously approved the action recommended in the following memo.

The Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee received a request from the Rubenstein School of the Environment and Natural Resources, the Gund Institute of Ecological Economics, Continuing and Distance Education, and the Graduate College to create a new online **concentration in Leadership for Sustainability** (LSC) within the existing Master of Science program. Dr. Deane Wang, Associate Professor, Dr. John Erickson, Professor, and Dr. Matthew Kolan, Senior Lecturer, will serve as Faculty Co-Directors

Overview

The LSC is a 30-credit distance education professional master's degree program with a combination of online courses and short, intensive residency components. Three tracks within the concentration, in Ecological Economics, Ecological Leadership, and Ecological Land Management, allow students to more precisely focus their studies in an area of specific interest. The program is designed to meet the needs of mid-career professionals who want an educational opportunity outside the framework of a residential program, one that will allow them to maintain employment while acquiring knowledge, skills, and relationships to advance their careers. The LSC is an excellent fit with UVM's vision and mission and complements our current focus on developing an Institute for the Environment. The core curriculum and innovative pedagogy explores three central competency areas, sustainability, leadership, and systems thinking. The LSC is a collaboration of students, their employing businesses and organization, UVM faculty, and professional affiliates with a successful track record of applying sustainability-based solutions to complex problems. The substantial role of full-time graduate faculty at UVM is a strength of the program that will ensure an educational experience equivalent to that of our residential masters programs.

At the heart of the program is an innovative blend of intense residential and distance learning experiences. The program features five residential modules, ranging from four to seven days. These gatherings provide an opportunity for intensive experiential learning opportunities as well as relationship building within each cohort.

Rationale for the Program

In many areas of employment, a graduate degree has become a necessary preparatory step for professional development and promotion. In the area of environmental science, management, and sustainability, the national need for graduate education is growing rapidly. Public acknowledgment of the importance of global climate change, “green” development, and environmental justice paves the way for the University of Vermont to increase its investment in this educational arena to better serve its local and national constituency.

Moreover, professionally oriented masters level education is an emerging trend in academia. For example, the Professional Science Master’s (PSM) initiative started by the Sloan Foundation in 1997 has resulted in more than 120 such programs across the country. The National Science Foundation supported the PSM concept with a new \$14.7 million funding initiative in 2009 to further develop Science Master’s Programs in the U.S.

Many institutions of higher education are competing to establish themselves as leaders in “sustainability.” UVM still has a competitive advantage over most other institutions in most areas of sustainability and should continue to enhance its reputation and credibility in this area; we are well positioned to take a leadership role on a national scale by meeting the increasing demand for professional masters degrees specifically with a focus on sustainability, interdisciplinary education, and scholarship across the natural and social sciences.

There is increasing demand for online graduate education. Currently, most full-degree graduate coursework is offered in a “brick and mortar” setting at UVM, but by launching a low-residency, online degree program, UVM can target highly capable graduate students and working professionals for whom campus-based education is not an option.

Anticipated Enrollment

Each track begins with a first-year cohort of seven students, for a total of 21 students in the concentration enrolled in 2015. Enrollment is anticipated to increase incrementally to 20 first-year students per year in each track over five years, bringing the total anticipated enrollment for 2020 at 120 students.

Admission Requirements and Process

As is the case with all of the RSENr graduate degree programs, viable candidates for acceptance into the LSC program are required to have four RSENr Graduate Faculty signatures indicating the applicant’s acceptability. Students receiving this faculty approval typically have mid-3.5 or higher GPAs from strong undergraduate programs and GRE scores in the 60% or higher range. Selected applicants will be forwarded onto the Graduate Program Coordinator for an admissions recommendation to the Graduate College.

Advising

Concentration track leaders (faculty managing the Ecological Economics, Ecological Leadership, and Ecological Land Management tracks) will serve as major advisors for incoming students. Because of additional hires for this concentration, this advising structure will not have an impact on advising for current residential graduate students in RSENr.

Curriculum

The 30-credit LSC curriculum comprises six parts:

1. The Core Curriculum – 6 credits. The core curriculum addresses fundamental competency areas common to all LSC students. The core will be delivered through a combination of residential courses, and will include three central themes:
 - Sustainability frameworks
 - Ecosystems thinking
 - Leadership skills, models, and styles
2. Track Requirements - 9-12 credits. Each of the three tracks has additional requirements and learning objectives.
 - Ecological Economics students have 3 required courses (9 credits)
 - Ecological Leadership students have 4 required courses (9 credits)
 - Ecological Land Management students have 4 required courses (12 credits)
3. Electives – 6-9 elective credits are also required for each track.
4. Required Content and Competencies - Students must demonstrate competency in specific areas not covered in the required core and track courses. These competencies can be taken as electives through elective coursework at UVM and/or demonstrated as pre-requisites prior to enrolling in the program by appropriate graduate coursework at UVM or elsewhere, or by prior professional experience.
5. Comprehensive Exam - The comprehensive exam will take the form of a design solution to a leadership challenge. It will take place at the beginning of the second year of study. At least two program faculty members (to include the track director) will assess the comprehensive exam to determine whether a student passes.
6. Master's Project - 6 credits. The capstone project is designed for students to apply newly developed knowledge and skills in a culminating experience/project that addresses research and/or practical leadership needs of their home community or organization. It is expected that most students will work with their primary employers or organizations to develop a project concept that meets the program's project criteria.

The RSENR Curriculum Committee has approved all courses required for completion of the program.

The program is designed to run on a 12-month calendar. It can be completed in two years, including summers.

Staffing Plan, Budget, and Resource Requirements

A staffing plan has been designed to provide the LSC program with high quality teaching resources without compromising existing RSENR teaching, research, and service efforts. By maximizing summer programming (course offerings, comprehensive exams, and project defenses), current faculty can be involved - on summer salary - without removing them from

core teaching responsibilities. New faculty hires (2.5 FTE in the first year, with an additional 1.0 FTE to be added as the program grows to its intended size) will bring additional expertise to the RSENr community, providing teaching and advising to LSC students as well as support for existing RSENr teaching, research, and service.

The collaboration between RSENr and CDE includes a plan for CDE to hire and support administrative staff. From tuition revenue, CDE will collect 10% for overhead. This will include course set-up, registration, faculty letters, BlackBoard set-up, assessment, faculty support in instructional design, technology support, social student engagement, media development. CDE administrative staff will utilize current CDE office space and infrastructure.

The total expense for the first five years, including the pre-launch expenses, is \$4.2 million. By year 2, after an investment of \$566,000, the program is projected to generate revenue. By year 5, the total return on investment is projected to be about \$1,050,000, including pre-launch expenses.

There is a commitment from RSENr and CDE to ensure funding for a minimum of five years and a guarantee that all students who begin the program will have the chance to complete it. At the end of the first three years, program viability will be assessed.

Assessment Plan

The LSC will undergo UVM Academic Program Review on the standard eight-year review cycle. In addition, the co-directors will work with partnering organizations through surveys and selected exit interviews to evaluate program success using the program objectives outlined in the proposal. The new Dean of the Rubenstein School is committed to the development of a robust assessment scheme for this program.

Evidence of Support

The proposed LSC program enjoys widespread support among the RSENr faculty and has been endorsed by the Deans of the Graduate College, CDE, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The Directors of the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics and the Sustainable Entrepreneurship MBA in the School of Business Administration have also endorsed it. All of these parties have provided letters of support for the proposal.

Review Process and Recommendation

A subcommittee of the Curricular Affairs Committee considered the proposal for the establishment of Leadership for Sustainability concentration. The subcommittee submitted to the program a request for additional information and clarification on several aspects of the proposal and received a satisfactory response. The full CAC received an electronic copy of the subcommittee's report prior to its meeting of May 7, 2014. The Curricular Affairs Committee unanimously approved the request to establish a new M.S. Natural Resources concentration in Leadership for Sustainability.