

Student Affairs Committee (SAC) of the University of Vermont Faculty Senate

2017-2018 Annual Report

Committee Members: Kenneth Allen, Jamie Benson, Zail Berry, Carly Bidner, Thomas Chittenden (Co-Chair), Dan DeSanto, Mia Hockett, William Louisos, Trish O'Kane, Omar Oyarzabal, Stephen Pintauro, Jennifer Prue (Co-Chair), Martin Thaler, Nancy Welch
http://www.uvm.edu/faculty_senate/student_affairs_committee

The Student Affairs Committee (SAC) addressed the following topics this year.

1. **Global Gateways Program (GGP) at UVM.** Discussed at multiple meetings, the SAC heard concerns and presentations from faculty & staff about the GGP. Gayle Nunley visited the committee and presented program metrics. Concerns were raised in the following areas:
 - a. **Structure & Timing of the GGP Three-Semester Student Track.** GGP students who earn a TOEFL score below 65 are accepted into a 3-semester GGP track¹ that spans one calendar year (Fall + Spring + Summer). This mid-August timing for admissions consideration puts the students and the University in an awkward time frame for consequential decision making impacting the lives of these students and the admission standards for our University.
 - b. **Assessment of Necessary Language Skills.** University admission standards require a passing score on the TOEFL (90) or the IELTS (6.5)² for international applications. The 3-Semester GGP track students are circumventing this admissions requirement creating difficult learning conditions for some of these students who do not acquire the necessary language skills during their year in the GGP. This has resulted in units on campus (e.g. GSB) raising their admission standards from the GGP program denying students their first preference of major and redirecting these language related pedagogical pressures to other units on campus.
 - c. **Supports for Matriculated International Student.** Faculty on the SAC relayed the pedagogical challenges language barriers present in the execution of our academic mission *“To create, evaluate, share, and apply knowledge and to prepare students to be accountable leaders who will bring to their work dedication to the global community, a grasp of complexity, effective problem-solving and communication skills, and an enduring commitment to learning and ethical conduct.”*³ There was an identified need for formalized language support for matriculated students (reading and writing support, especially) to be offered each semester, and formalized training and support for faculty, preferably individualized for each department.

The SAC will be considering for action a resolution calling for the formation of a GGP Advisory Committee at our May meeting (a week after this annual report was submitted). This advisory committee should serve as forum for GGP related concerns to be addressed by those administering this program.

2. **Bicyclist and Pedestrian Safety on the UVM Campus.** Jim Barr & Abby Bleything presented to the committee on current initiatives related to bicycle and pedestrian safety. This conversation included discussion of campus lighting, the new Bike Share program throughout campus area, bike storage options, helmet policies and more.
3. **myUVM Integrated Course Evaluation Platform.** On October 23rd 2017 the full body of the Faculty Senate passed the resolution in Appendix A stating that the “Faculty Senate supports the implementation of a myUVM-integrated departmentally controlled course evaluation platform” and calls for UVM to “charge a joint Administration/Faculty Senate committee to develop a Request For Information (RFI) to solicit vendor proposals on a course evaluation platform to meet the desired characteristics outlined above.” This resolution was a joint introduction by two standing committees of the Faculty Senate (ERTC and SAC).

After the passage of the resolution, Provost Rosowsky asked for statements of support from units on campus to confirm there is a critical mass of departmental buy-in to justify the commitment of attention resources for this

¹ http://globalgateway.uvm.edu/-/media/ISC/Vermont/PDFs/Vermont_prospectus.pdf - University Degree Timeline on page 11 of the PDF.

² https://www.uvm.edu/admissions/undergraduate/apply/international_applicants

³ <http://www.uvm.edu/president/?Page=mission.html>.

endeavor. The Provost also requested slight wording changes to a where-as clause because of term implications for the word 'Auditing'. Efforts to form the RFI committee to identify vendor solutions for this initiative are on-going.

4. **Active Shooter Training.** Guest speaker Sue Roberts from the University of Vermont Care Team spoke to the committee about the potential warning signs of workplace violence, examples of workplace violence, risk factors and prevention methods.
5. **Advising Software.** The university has engaged the services of EAB to design and implement the use of advising software. Multiple multi-disciplinary committees have been created to spearhead different aspects of this initiative. EAB updates were provided intermittently throughout the year. Implementation/use of the software goes "live" in August with the incoming first year class. Sarah Warrington presented a formal update at the last meeting of the semester.
6. **Interfaith Inclusionary Academic Calendar Listings.** Laura Engelken, UVM Interfaith Coordinator, spoke of 'religious ergonomics' efforts at UVM and the committee notion of expanding the official UVM academic calendar to include widely celebrated holidays to improve faculty sensitivities in their course scheduling & planning.
7. **myUVM Portal Content Posting Process and Authority.** At multiple times over the past ~3 years, SAC conversations have included the phrase 'couldn't we put that in the myUVM portal'. More specifically, these actions were suggested to be announced/communicated through the Student Portal:
 - A reminder at the beginning of the semester to declare interfaith holidays.
 - A reminder to declare ACCESS needs.
 - Advising opportunities.
 - Academic Integrity Policy reminders.
 - Course Evaluations.
 - Annual campus address update prompt.

It is unclear to the committee who has authority and oversight of what is promoted through the portal. The SAC is taking this topic up at our May meeting (occurring after the writing of this annual summary) and will likely continue this conversation into the next academic year.

2018-2019 Potential Topics

The priorities for the next academic year are yet to be determined but likely to include discussions on the Residential Learning Communities and the credit bearing offerings aligned with them, myUVM portal posting authority & administration, ongoing initiatives/conversations updates (GGP, course evaluations, student accommodations...) and more.

Appendix A: Faculty Senate Resolution Passed October 23rd, 2017 on Online Course Evaluations.

WHEREAS the University of Vermont Faculty Senate passed a motion on online evaluations on April 9th 2012 (FS2012-174) supporting the creation of an online course evaluation platform for UVM courses; and

WHEREAS the University of Vermont Student Government Association passed a resolution supporting the revitalization and standardization of academic course evaluations on November 18th 2014 (SGA2014-04); and

WHEREAS the Student Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, the Educational Research & Technologies Committee of the Faculty Senate and the Student Government Association passed additional resolutions calling for an integrated course evaluation system to have the following operational and policy parameters:

- The anonymity of respondent submissions should be maintained in all presented results with specific attention to semantic security limiting multi-dimensional response parsing to only include sub-populations with a minimum number of five collected responses from that sub group;
- Such a platform would make available the course questionnaire to students to complete up until being able to view their final course grade, and that a prompt would ask students if they would like to opt out or in to completing the evaluation;
- If the student opts to complete the course evaluation, this would only occur before the final grade is viewable ensuring that students must complete the course evaluation before their grade is viewable through the online portal;
- Functional units or departments on campus would not be under any obligation to use this integrated platform for course evaluations, and that the determination to do so rests with the governance structures in place within each functional unit/department;
- This platform would place full autonomy and control of the questions, responses and managed access to the responses solely with the functional units or departments on campus currently responsible for managing course evaluations;
- Any implemented system would include data access and access attempt auditing to maintain verifiable integrity over the departmentally controlled responses to these course evaluations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that

- The University of Vermont Faculty Senate supports the implementation of a myUVM-integrated departmentally controlled course evaluation platform.; and
- The University of Vermont should charge a joint Administration/Faculty Senate committee to develop a Request For Information (RFI) to solicit vendor proposals on a course evaluation platform to meet the desired characteristics outlined above.