

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

2018-2019 Annual Report

Committee Members: Kenneth Allen, Sin-Yee Chan, Thomas Chittenden (Co-Chair), Jonathan Flyer, Mia Hockett, William Louisos, Charlotte Malling, Patricia Mardeusz, Trish O'Kane, Omar Oyarzabal, Stephen Pintauro, Jennifer Prue (Co-Chair), Berke Tinaz, Nancy Welch
http://www.uvm.edu/faculty_senate/student_affairs_committee

- 1. Academic Year Calendar Change:** The committee voted to bring to the Faculty Senate a resolution (Appendix A) to move the Fall Recess from a Monday to a Friday. We also discussed but a proposed resolution seeking the creation of a Spring semester recess day so that faculty can participate in professional development concerning race, gender, and sexuality in relation to teaching, mentoring, and advising. We did not take action on this item, however, committee members feeling that it needs input and development from other Senate committees and faculty and units on campus already involved in such professional development initiatives.
- 2. Academic Learning Communities/Wellness Environment:** The committee met with representatives of the WE Learning Community, the committee's questions focused in particular on the impact for Wellness Environment dorm students in being required to enroll in a three-credit learning community course as compared with the one-credit course associated with other learning communities. While the discussion is ongoing and overlaps with other Senate committees concerned with curriculum and financial policy, key committee concerns include the de facto exclusion from the WE dorm of students whose professional degree requirements don't allow for an additional three-credit course and the justification for three credits for a course whose outcomes are focused on behavioral change rather than academic understanding and advancement.
- 3. Required Attendance at Events Outside of Class:** The committee met with SGA and GSS student representatives and also, with the help of the Office for Institutional Research, surveyed students regarding their experiences with being required for a class to attend lectures, performances, and other events outside scheduled class time. Preliminary results from the survey suggest that respondents find these events beneficial but are also distressed particularly when attendance is required without the instructor providing an alternative when the event conflicts with another course the student is taking. One early recommendation of the committee is that when faculty are prompted to complete expanded course descriptions, they also be counseled to flag any off-schedule events and activities and to plan such activities mindful of students' other courses and obligations.
- 4. Residential Life Housing Questions.** The SAC had discussion with Rafael Rodriguez representing Residential Life which resulted in a request/suggestion for a 1-pager from Res Life explaining the process of the housing selection, room changes and the statistics representing how well the system manages student needs and complaints. This 1-pager would be for all faculty and staff, additionally advisors and anyone working with first year students would be targeted to receive the information.
- 5. University Demonstrations and Infraction Processes.** The committee discussed recent demonstrations in Waterman and questions related to: access to Waterman as a site for demonstrations, protection of students right to protest and protection from disciplinary sanctions when exercising the right to protest. Concerns regarding the rights of students working in classes and faculty teaching during demonstrations were also raised and discussed. Two committee members suggested exploring convening a forum for discussion on the topic with representation from the wider University community. Information regarding both preparation for the protest and the subsequent disciplinary response were shared. A review of current Campus Demonstration policies will be reviewed and as always, shared for comment.
- 6. Student Accessibility Services:** The committee met with representatives from SAS and, learning about the challenge of finding classroom space for final exam proctoring, asked the Provost's office to send an email each semester to faculty explaining how and why to release unneeded final exam classrooms.



Academic Calendar Fall Recess Day and Spring Faculty Day Resolution
Student Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

Passed Unanimously by Student Affairs Committee on 1/17/19

SAC Academic Calendar SP19 Resolution #1 - Monday to Friday Fall Recess Day

WHEREAS the current University Academic Calendar for Fall Semesters has 68 regular class meeting days composed of 12 Mondays, 14 Tuesdays, 14 Wednesdays, 14 Thursdays and 14 Fridays;

WHEREAS the current Fall Recess day occurs on the second Monday of October creating a meeting session imbalance for class and lab sessions that only occur only on Monday or on a Monday & Wednesday meeting pattern;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that academic calendars starting in the 2020-21 academic year will have the Fall Recess day occur on the second Friday of October to better balance the number of weekday class sessions occurring with our standard meeting pattern.
