



FACULTY SENATE

**Executive Council**

June 23, 2020 10:00 – 11:30 AM

Microsoft Teams

**Draft Minutes**

**Present:** Professors Allen, Almstead, Burns, Borchert, Chittenden, Cushman, Eyler, Garvey, Giangreco, Harrington, Knodell, Paris, Prue, Read, Ross, Toolin

**Absent:** Professors Beckage, Wood

**Guests:** Dave Jenemann, Bill Falls, Nancy Mathews, Julie Roberts, Alexander Yin, Kirk Dombrowski, Shari Bergquist

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The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM online via Microsoft Teams

1. **Chairs Remarks** – Thomas Chittenden made the following remarks:

- The primary purpose of this special meeting was the FPPC resolution regarding restructuring, and to act as a sounding board of faculty representatives on the trajectory of the discussions of the Deans Group. Thomas has engaged in weekly conversations with Dave Jenemann, the Chair of the Deans Group, to keep abreast of the discussions in the committee.
- The secondary purpose is that there is a lot going on at UVM right now, and as elected leaders for stewarding the academic mission in the curriculum, and so this is a time for us to voice and coordinate and also think about next steps. Discuss, but Focus on action – what are the next steps

2. **Degree Corrections** – Laurie Eddy presented degree correction requests from the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

**Motion:** Susanmarie Harrington moved to approve the degree corrections as requested. The motion was seconded and carried.

3. **FPPC Resolution and Dean's Group Outline for Restructuring Conversations & Report for the coming Academic Year.** Dave Jenemann's presentation slides are attached to these minutes. Dave Jenemann is Dean of the Honors College and Chair of the Academic Organization Working Group (AOWG). The AOWG was charged on May 21<sup>st</sup> with the following guiding questions: Can we create administrative efficiencies and eliminate redundancies within and across academic units? Does our current structure enhance or impede the continued development of our research and curricular strengths? Could restructuring units create interdisciplinary synergies that are more contemporary and forward-thinking? The presentation included the driving principles, the approach to the AOWG report, and a review of the history of academic reorganization at UVM. History, data and culture have informed four different models in which a reorganization can take place:

- 1) Do nothing;
- 2) Keep the current administrative structure, but encourage Deans to make changes within units;
- 3) Develop a restructured university by consolidating colleges and moving departments to addresses discrepancies in size and kind, capitalize on research synergies and create efficiencies;

4) A radical reorganization of UVM with a minimal number of Colleges keyed to the themes of amplifying our impact. Shared responsibility for Undergraduate education and student success. Dean Jenemann shared an outline of the AOWG process and timeline. Feedback received from the Executive Council will be integrated into an initial progress report to the President and Provost on June 30. Modeling of scenarios and assessment of financial and cultural impact will occur through the summer and will be reviewed with university partners through early Fall. Discussion included: desire for a presentation by AOWG at the August Faculty Senate meeting, governance of higher ed and the value of including faculty in critical decisions, and the desired level of participation of the Faculty Senate and the faculty at large. The Provost has stated that they are looking for a range of options, and the decision is not fait accompli. All of the AOWG members would appreciate feedback on how to develop a process going forward to be as inclusive as possible.

4. **Faculty Representation** – Thomas Chittenden stated that faculty representation and shared governance have been a great concern. He introduced Julie Roberts, a former Faculty Senate President and current President of the UA. Julie opened discussion of two levels of non-collaboration by the administration with faculty and UA. The administration failed to open budget discussions about the pandemic with UA, and has refused to talk to UA, which has resulted in exclusion from or virtual exclusion from planning. The exclusion of faculty from planning committees has raised concerns about the lack of shared governance. UA will have a statement about the lack of faculty involvement in Fall planning and is soliciting faculty input. There is a strong desire for faculty to be included in both the decision-making process and the approval of decisions. Thomas will draft a letter to the administration calling for specific changes, including faculty representation on the AOWG, clarity on faculty approval of any recommendations by the AOWG, as well as large faculty representation on any subsequent committees. The letter will also include a statement of the value of UA representation on planning committees. A draft letter will be sent to the Executive Council for feedback by the end of the day Thursday.

5. **UVM Strong Subcommittees from Serving members**

a. **Faculty and Academic Affairs Working Group** - Thomas Chittenden reported he and Pablo Bose have had very strong voices on the committee. The academic calendar discussion was a top priority, and the group decided quickly not to start the Fall semester early. Once that decision was made, discussion gravitated around ending in person instruction at Thanksgiving. Thomas was asked by the chair of the work group if a full Senate vote was needed on the suggested calendar changes. Thomas stated that he did not think a full Senate vote was need if the change was temporary and made with health considerations in mind. Thomas sent an email to all Faculty Senators regarding the proposed calendar changes and received nine responses. Eight responses were positive, and one negative response expressed concern about travel issues created for students needing to arrange flights during Thanksgiving week. Bill Falls addressed that concern noting that 80% of our students are within driving distance of UVM. Executive Council discussion around the calendar change included support for the changes, but concerns about the process, especially the lack of faculty representation, and the announcement of the calendar change being made prior to this Executive Council meeting. Concerns were also expressed about the authority of the Executive Council making decisions without full Senate discussion and vote. Thomas Chittenden will draft a letter to the administration regarding concerns about the process. The draft will be distributed to the Executive Council for review by the end of the week.

b. **Student Experience Working Group** – Jenn Prue reported that this subcommittee has focused on what needs to be in place for students, including academic supports, SAS considerations, and how to handle the challenges that students are bringing to campus. They have taken every opportunity to integrate and stress the importance of faculty preparation, support and consideration for faculty health, and what faculty need to best deliver instruction for their students. At the suggestion of Annie Stevens, Jen reached out to Bill Falls to have a conversation about these issues. Alex Yin provided information from the end of Spring semester survey that

went out to students. This feedback from students will be taken into consideration because there are only 2 students represented on the working group.

- c. **Research and Graduate Education Working Group** – Mary Cushman reported that the group has had full and productive meetings. Safety and career progression have been major topics addressed. Work has included creating resources and support for early career faculty to help shepherd them through this process and developing guidance or outlines of safe operation of laboratories including parameters for students in labs.
  - d. **Business and Institutional Continuity Working Group** – Chris Burns reported that he and Jane Knodell serve on this working group, which is looking at a host of issues including cleaning, sanitizing, technology, travel, transportation, retail operations, and contracts. Advanced purchasing is needed using the best knowledge available now. However, there is a competition for supplies, and things are changing rapidly and unpredictably in this emergency situation.
6. **Statement of Principles for Instruction 2020-2021** – In response to concerns for faculty, students, staff and community safety, Ken Allen drafted the attached letter from the Senate Executive Council to the UVM administration and UVM Strong working groups, to outline recommended guiding principles in regard to instruction during the 2020-2021 academic year. Ken Allen moved to approve the attached letter as a statement of principles for restarting instruction in the Fall. Evan Eyler made an amended motion that an electronic vote be held within one week. Jane Knodell seconded the amended motion. Discussion included the process and action planned after the vote. After this meeting, Thomas Chittenden will send an email to the Executive Council requesting an electronic vote on the Statement of Principles. The vote will close no later than Friday at 5:00 PM but will close earlier if all votes are recorded. The result of the electronic vote will be forwarded to the Executive Council and if the motion passes, an email discussion will be held to determine what action will be taken. Suggested actions included communicating with the Administration, the UA, and the full Senate.
  7. **Campus Children’s Center task force representation** – Due to time constraints, Chris Burns will send an email update on this item.
  8. **New Business** – none at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM