



The University of Vermont  
FACULTY SENATE

**DRAFT**

**Minutes**

Monday, March 22, 2021

Online via Microsoft Teams 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Recording of this meeting is available on Microsoftstream:

<https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/dcfefbec-4f9c-4068-bf98-fe74d48c2a80>

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The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM

**Senators in Attendance: 69**

**Absent:** Senators Read/Wood (ERTC), Calkins (Family Medicine), Terrien (Medicine), Moore (Pediatrics Rep2), Gorres (Plant & Soil Science), Maruti (Psychiatry Rep1), Lach (Radiology Rep1), Ali (Radiology Rep2), Borchert (Religion), Jaffe (Sociology)

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1. **Faculty Senate President's Welcome Remarks** – Christopher Burns made the following remarks:
    - Welcome Thomas Ahern from the Larner College of Medicine as the newest at-large member to the Senate Executive Council.
    - In response to the Faculty of Color Retention resolution passed by the Senate, an ad hoc Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee is being proposed for next year. The proposed charge and membership of the ad hoc committee was presented in a slide attached to these minutes and will be sent to Senators for review by email.
    - The Rainbow Graduation, a chance for the UVM community to come together to celebrate LGBTQ+ students, is scheduled for May 6th at 4:00 PM.
    - The 13<sup>th</sup> annual Blackboard Jungle begins March 23 and runs through Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup>.
  
  2. **Consent Agenda** - The following items were voted as a consent agenda:
    - Minutes of the February 1, 2021 Senate Meeting
    - Curricular Affairs
      - a) Name Change MEd Educational Leadership (CESS/GRAD)
      - b) Certificate of Graduate Study in Resiliency-Based Approaches with Families, Schools & Communities (CESS/GRAD)

**Motion:** To approve the Consent Agenda  
**Vote:** 98% approve, 0% oppose, 2% abstain. **The motion carried.**
  
  3. **Call for Nominations: Faculty Senate Vice President and two (2) Members at-Large**

The Faculty Senate is seeking nominations for Faculty Senate Vice President, and two Members At-Large to the Executive Council for the two-year term beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2023. The following nominations have been received and the candidates have accepted the nomination:

- For Vice President – Evan Eyler, LCOM,
- For At-Large Members – Ignacio Lopez-Vicuna, CAS, and Tony Julianelle, CEMS.

Chris Burns called for additional nominations from the floor. No nominations were received. The deadline for nominations is 6:00 PM, Monday, March 29, 2021. Nominations may be submitted via email to [Faculty.Senate@uvm.edu](mailto:Faculty.Senate@uvm.edu), or by the nomination webform on the Faculty Senate website. Ballots will be distributed by email in early April and will be open for one week.

- 4. Residential Learning Communities** – J. Dickinson and Rafael Rodriguez presented an overview of the new structure for academic integration of UVM Learning Communities (LCs). The presentation slides are attached to these minutes. Rafael Rodriguez described the organizing structure (slide 5), which consists of an Implementation Planning Committee and four sub-working groups that report up to the broader Implementation Planning Committee (IPC). The IPC makes sure that all the dots are connected, and the academic integration is executed. J. Dickinson presented some of the key changes anticipated in the next four to five years (slide 6). J. emphasized that all of the courses will be 3-credit offerings that are offered by college/schools and go through the regular curricular approval and oversight processes. A goal is that students will have good options in every LC, including the Wellness Environment (WE) Community, where courses in Nutrition and Intro to Health Sciences have been put forward as potential partners. J. reminded the senators that it was decided last year that the revenue from the COMU1 course for WE would be distributed according to the college of the individual student. The Associate Deans Group is coordinating the process for choosing the course options for the LCs. Faculty should contact their Associate Dean or Chair to put forward ideas for a class to be linked to an LC. Please contact J. Dickinson with questions about the academic integration plan for LCs, or if you are interested in serving on the Implementation Planning Committee.
- 5. Review Process for Proposals to Restructure within an Academic Unit** – Chris Burns introduced three draft procedures intended to provide guidelines where no process currently exists for restructuring within an academic unit. The processes follow very closely the steps and language of existing CAC processes, including the format for proposals, and how they are to be initiated, prepared and reviewed. The draft procedures are for proposals that are more administrative in nature rather than curricular. Drafts of the three proposed processes were distributed with the meeting materials, and include:
  - Procedures Related to the Establishment, Reorganization, and Termination of Colleges and Schools (outside a College)
  - Procedures Related to the Establishment, Reorganization, and Termination of a School within a College
  - Procedures Related to the Establishment, Reorganization, and Termination of a Department

Chris Burns opened discussion. Feedback received at this meeting will be incorporated into a version that will be presented to the Senate for vote at the April Faculty Senate meeting.

Discussions topics included:

- The configuration of the ad hoc committee for proposal review
- The role of the Curricular Affairs Committee in the process
- A proposed addendum to the item C in the timeline section: the 30-day comment period shall fall wholly during the normal appointment period for 9-month faculty, and no more

than five days of a 30-day comment period should occur between fall semester grades admission and the start of spring semester classes.

- The desire to clarify the impacts of proposed restructuring on curriculum within the proposal and review process.
- A need for clarity around what happens at the end of the review process. What happens if the Senate votes no? Must the Senate vote yes for the proposal to move forward to the Board of Trustees?
- The desire for more specific language on the requirement for voting on a proposal at the department level.
- The possible need for a fourth set of procedures for proposals to move a program or unit between or across schools or colleges, or to move cross college programs into colleges.
- The desire for more specific budget and benchmarking, similar to proposals for new programs.

Chris Burns asked that additional comments and suggestions be forwarded to him by email. A new draft of the processes will be distributed to senators before the April meeting.

6. **Black Lives Matter Flag Resolution** – Chris Burns read the following resolution that comes to the Senate from the Student Affairs Committee as a warned and seconded motion:

**Resolution In Support Of Black Lives Matter**  
**Approved by the Student Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate**  
**February 4, 2021**

**WHEREAS**, The Black Lives Matter Movement has at its heart, a strong message that acknowledges the value, contributions, and promise of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), and decries racial inequality;

**WHEREAS**, The BIPOC community has been victimized by systemic racism;

**WHEREAS**, the faculty has a responsibility to embody a culture of equality and respect for all, by expressing clearly and publicly its support for the global movement toward racial justice;

**WHEREAS**, the faculty defends the rights of all people and acknowledges the struggles faced by BIPOC persons;

**WHEREAS**, the faculty wishes to demonstrate its support to the Black Lives Matter movement by acknowledging the long history of racism in our country and the pressing need for change, recognizing that systemic change will not come solely from awareness of racism, but from dialogue and action within our government and our institutions of higher education, which have the power to be transformative;

**WHEREAS**, the administration has pledged their commitment to Justice in its *Our Common Ground* statement that calls on the UVM community to “unite against all forms of injustice”; and

**WHEREAS**, the administration has pledged to give “stewardship over the third flagpole at the Davis Center” to the Student Government Association (Sept. 29, 2020 memo, from President and Provost);

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Faculty Senate of the University of Vermont supports the Black Lives Matter movement and recommends that a BLM flag fly at all times except when honoring other persons or groups as determined by the Student Government Association (in adherence to the SGA Flagpole Policy).

Terry Delaney, Co-Chair, Student Affairs Committee (SAC) started discussion on the resolution. The SAC began working on the resolution in November 2020. The language has been revised to more forcefully recognize the SGA's role. The SGA President has voiced appreciation for the support of the Faculty Senate. Discussion included a request to remove the underlining of the final sentence in the resolution. Terry noted that the underlining was used to highlight a wording change in the final draft for the SAC, and was not meant to remain in the resolution presented to the Senate for vote. **A motion was made to amend the resolution by removing the underlining. The motion was seconded and carried.** Chris Burns called a vote on the amended resolution. **Vote: 98% approve, 2% oppose, 0% abstain. The resolution passed.**

7. **Senate Constitution and Bylaws Revisions** – Chris Burns provided an overview of the report from the Ad hoc Comprehensive Constitution and Bylaws (CBL) Review Committee. The majority of changes the Committee is proposing are to clarify procedures and roles and address issues that were not previously handled in the CBL, such as electronic voting and electronic meetings. The [report of the Committee](#) is included with the agenda for this meeting. Chris Burns opened the floor for discussion. No questions or comments were received. The proposed amendments to the Faculty Senate CBL will go to the full faculty as a referendum ballot. The amendments will be adopted if at least two thirds of the responses favor it.

## 8. New Business

- Suzy Comerford asked to have a standing item on the agenda where the faculty elected to serve on the reorganization committee could respond to questions from senators. Chris Burns stated that he would bring the request to the Executive Council for the framing of the April meeting. The reorganization update is on the agenda for May.
- Trisha Strum made the following motion:
  - Whereas there is now a major outbreak among UVM students,
  - Whereas many instructors are teaching in person and are not currently empowered to change their course to remote,
  - Whereas it was confirmed through the Vermont Department of Health that 4 of 5 random samples from UVM tested positive for the UK variant (B.1.1.7) of COVID-19,
  - Whereas the UK variant (B.1.1.7) of COVID-19 is more transmissible and possibly more deadly than previous variants,
  - Now, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of the University of Vermont supports asking the State of Vermont to provide vaccine eligibility for higher education in person instructors and staff as soon as possible and to allow faculty who are not vaccinated to opt into switching to remote only instruction.

The motion was seconded. Discussion on the motion included the policy of the Vermont Department of Health to prioritize people at highest risk in order to minimize death and hospitalization, and the recently accelerated timeline for vaccines will enable everyone in the

state to make an appointment within less than a month. Provost Prelock stated that more than 50% of classes are already remote online with only a small percentage that are fully in person. Transmission is not occurring in the classroom, but is occurring in residential halls, and in the community. Yves Dubief stressed the importance of wearing good quality (N95) and good fitting masks. Dave Barrington moved to amend the motion as follows:

The Faculty Senate of the University of Vermont supports 1. Asking the State of Vermont to provide vaccine eligibility for higher education in-person instructors and staff as soon as possible and 2. Asks the administration to allow faculty who are not vaccinated to opt into switching to remote only instruction.

The motion to amend was seconded. Chris Callahan made a motion to divide. The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was called on the motion to divide. The vote received 51 responses, which raised concern that a quorum was not present. The quorum required for motions without prior notice is three-quarters of the total number of currently elected senators. The number required for quorum on unwarned items is currently 59. A quorum count was held, and 46 voting members were present.

**Without a quorum present, discussion on the motion ended and no vote was held.**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 PM.



## Ad hoc Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

University of Vermont Faculty Senate

Last Modified 2/19/2021

**Issue:** The Faculty of Color Retention Efforts Resolution passed by the Faculty Senate on February 1, 2021 resolved, among other things, that the “Faculty Senate recommends the creation of a Faculty Affairs or DEI Subcommittee to specifically address faculty concerns.”

**Proposal:** To charge a Faculty Senate Ad hoc Committee to convene during the 2021-22 academic year to make recommendations for the charge and membership for a standing committee of the Faculty Senate on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. This Ad hoc Committee would be specifically charged with:

1. Consulting with the key units and stakeholders including but not limited to the Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, the President’s Commission on Inclusive Excellence, the Prism Center, the Mosaic Center, the Faculty of Color, the Faculty Women’s Caucus, and LGBTQ faculty on potential issues of concern for a Faculty Senate DEI Committee.
2. Consulting with Faculty Senate standing committees on DEI issues as they relate to the charges of these committees.
3. Considering the following as possible areas for a Senate DEI committee:
  - a. Assess the campus climate survey and propose actions related to issues of concern to faculty.
  - b. Review Senate initiatives to assess their probable impact upon equity, diversity, and inclusion, play an advocacy role for its constituencies, and initiate proposals.
  - c. Identify and promote best practices for faculty development, mentoring and work environment to facilitate faculty success at all career levels.
  - d. Evaluate and advocate processes for faculty recruitment, promotion, and retention that promote diversity equity, and work/life balance for the faculty.
  - e. Work with the Faculty Senate Executive Council to ensure diverse membership and leadership in the Faculty Senate.
4. Drafting a proposed charge and membership for a DEI committee for consideration by the University of Vermont Faculty, Faculty Senate by March 2022.

*Committee Composition:*

1. Faculty Senate Vice President
2. Three currently serving Faculty Senate Members (Senators or Standing Committee members), including one member of the Executive Council.
3. Three Faculty members at large selected with input from the Faculty of Color, the Faculty of Women’s Caucus, and any other appropriate groups.

# New Structure for Academic Integration: UVM Learning Communities

Raf Rodriguez

J. Dickinson



The University of Vermont

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# CURRENT SYSTEM: REQUIRED COURSEWORK\*

**Wellness Environment, one 3-credit course, fall only**

**All other communities, one 1-credit course, fall only** (Arts & Creativity, Cultural Crossroads, Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Leadership & Social Change, Outdoor Experience, Sustainability)

\*HCOL and LASP have full year or multiyear curricula and are not included here

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# CURRENT SYSTEM: CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

**EXPENSE:** The current model requires significant overload pay and other compensation

## STAFFING

- Administrative oversight, management and coordination from both academic and Res Life sides
- Given the many demands on staff and faculty time, difficult to staff the 1-credit courses

## EFFICACY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The shift to Learning Communities increased community and contributed to retention **BUT:**

- Role of the courses in these positive outcomes was unclear
- Courses did not provide the vehicle for bridging academics and co-curricular components
- There was variability across the individual courses/experiences associated with the LCs and within LCs

## CONTRIBUTION TO ACADEMIC MAJORS/DEGREES

- 1-credit courses do not connected clearly to academic programs, goals, or needs

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# NEXT STEPS



**DECISION: ELIMINATE DEDICATED 1-CREDIT COURSES.** 2020-2021 will be the last year for these.

**PLAN: CONNECT LCs TO EXISTING COURSES ACROSS UNITS. PHASE-IN STARTING IN FALL 22.** Rather than have stand-alone courses for each LC that are unconnected from the Catamount Core and program curricula, we want to send students out to existing courses that reflect the themes/issues of each LC. Crucial elements of this, to be phased in over time, would be:

- **Multiple courses available, across units, for each LC:** Ideally we would have a list of 4-5 courses affiliated with each LC, so that students could chose/be placed into ones that fit their interests and their degree needs
- **Programming/supports within LC tied to those courses:** Events/advising/study supports would be planned within the LC for affiliated courses.
- **Faculty engagement:** Faculty teaching affiliated courses would have the opportunity to arrange events and activities associated with their class, but also of interest to the LC

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# Organizing Structure

**Implementation Planning Committee** – Collaborates across multiple working groups and teams to support the creation and execution of a comprehensive Learning Community academic integration plan (reps include: Raf Rodriguez and J. Dickinson (chairs); reps from SSC, Associate Deans group; LCs, Enrollment management; faculty (Lisa Schnell)

**LC Leadership Group** – explore and develop new strategies for (a) creating/maintaining a strong sense of community without a 1-credit course and (b) connecting students with UM faculty in support of the themed learning community experience

**Faculty-in-Residence Working Group** – develop a proposal outlining the Faculty-in-Residence role in the Implementation Planning Committee. Includes two current LC faculty

**Learning Community Campus Partners** – develop plans/pathways to bridge a student's LC experience from the admissions experience through orientation

**Associate Deans Working Group** – establish course options that align with each LC and can be offered in a 'rotating menu' over time; develop curricular connections and ideas for academic components of LC experience in first year and second year LC experience

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## Key points:

- The new system of block-scheduling from a list of linked courses will begin for most LCs in Fall 2022; for the coming year, selected courses will be suggested, but not required
- All of the courses will be 3-credit offerings that are offered by colleges/schools and go through their regular curricular approval and oversight processes
- Associate Deans will play a key role in shaping the course choices and shaping the initiative as it develops
- Faculty participating in LC courses will also have opportunities to develop programming and collaborate on strengthening ties between residential and academic components of the LC experience
- This is a residency requirement for residency on-campus. We are partnering with units to find courses to link that fill program and gen-ed requirements