

ANNUAL REPORT: Fall 2020-Spring 2021

Committee Members: Scott Van Keuren (CAS), Sin-Yee Chan (CAS), Terry Delaney Co-Chair (CALs), Steve Gove (GSB), Jennifer Prue, Co-Chair (CESS), William Louisos (CEMS), Kris Stepenuck (RSENr), Denise Hersey (LIB), Jonathan Flyer (LCoM), Sarah Twitchell (LCoM), Kenneth Allen (CNHS), Charlie Borah (SGA), Berke Tinaz (GSS)

The Student Affairs Committee (SAC) work continued from last spring, through the summer in part due to the challenges posed by our uncertainty associated with COVID-19. During the 2020-2021 academic year, the SAC met nine times.

A. Prior to the fall semester, on July 4, 2020, the SAC acted on an urgent request from Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Jennifer Dickinson, to consider a proposal from Admissions to waive for one-year standardized tests (e.g. SAT, ACT) from the admissions process (i.e. a Test-Optional Pilot), due to the challenges students faced in accessing testing due to COVID-19. All nine SAC members that voted accepted this proposal, which was then adopted by the Faculty Senate without objection.

Both co-chairs of the SAC volunteered to participate in the UVMStrong, Student Experience Working Group that ran through the summer (2020) to the present. That group was tasked with addressing issues related to COVID-19 and the UVM response, from the lens of the student experience. Going into the fall semester, the committee was ready to focus on COVID-19 related student concerns and issues.

B. Our newly appointed Vice-President of Enrollment Management Ryan Hargraves attended our November meetings to discuss a continuation of the **Test-Optional Pilot** instituted during the Pandemic in our July 4 action. The discussion with the committee also included concerns with standardized tests regarding inequity and bias that may be ingrained tests like the SAT. The SAC voted to extend the test-optional option for UG admission, for TWO admission cycles, with later consideration of making this change permanent. This would apply to students entering for the fall of 2021 through 2023 (Voting results: Approve: 14, Oppose: 0, Abstain: 0).

C. Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, J. Dickinson and Registrar Veronika Carter came to the committee to discuss **Grade Change Policy** recommendations and reported that the UVM Auditing Office completed an audit of the processes and procedures for grade changes. The auditors recommended that faculty be asked to document a reason whenever a grade is changed. A drop-down menu is proposed with language general enough to cover all reasons for a grade change. The following drop-down menu was proposed and voted on:

- To enter a grade to replace an I, AF, ANP, AUP, SP, UP, XC or M
 - To correct an error in grade submission
- (Voting results: The motion was voted on and carried unanimously).

- D. As a follow-up to the discussion started last year, a **Black-Lives-Matter Flag Resolution** was brought to the committee and discussed in several meetings and voted on. (Voting results: 9 approve, 0 oppose, 1 abstain. The motion carried).
- E. Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, J. Dickinson brought a proposed resolution to the committee which was a continuation of the **Late Withdraw Rule** (Voting results: 12 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain. The motion carried).
- F. Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, J Dickinson asked the committee to review and vote on a Proposed temporary change for 2021 Commencement changing the **Walk Policy** (Voting results: 12 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain. The motion carried).
- G. Students and staff presented a resolution to the committee proposing a data collection policy to include and improve supports for the **Queer and Transgender population** (Voting results: 12 approve, 0 oppose, 0 abstain. The motion carried).

It was a busy year, as always the SAC remains committed to supporting students in any manner possible.

Report submitted by Terry Delaney and Jennifer Prue, Co-Chairs, SAC. May 18, 2021