

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

October 20, 2021

Video Conference on Microsoft Teams

MINUTES

Present: Taka Ashikaga, Richard Branda, Stephen Cutler, Ruth Farrell, Michael Gurdon, Judith Van Houten, Dwight Matthews, Jack McCormack, Beth Mintz, Mara Saule, Lee Thompson

Absent: Alan Gotlieb, Rachel Johnson

Call to Order: Chair Michael Gurdon called the meeting to order at 2:05pm

1. Minutes of September 15, 2021, approved as amended
2. RFAO Board Meeting
 - a. Chair Gurdon welcomed Bryn Geffert, Dean of Libraries, to the meeting for a discussion of library issues as they relate to the research activities and general interests of our members. Dean Geffert started his comments by noting that during the strict pandemic restrictions he made the difficult decision to limit library usage to students and staff. Now he is happy to report that the libraries are open to all retirees and community members as well. The libraries are full again, and the students have been fully compliant with the mask policy. The curb-side policy ended and the libraries are no longer doing scanning services.
 - i. He observed that the libraries budget has been a challenge. To meet a required 5% cut, the difficult decision was made to end the ScienceDirect and associated journals contract, which was \$1.8 million/yr or ¼ of the entire acquisition budget. The Faculty Senate supported this decision. Funding for other acquisitions was lost as well. The Provost recommended that the library administration and advisory board develop a strategic plan going forward regarding acquisitions, staffing and other work. This strategic plan will be for 5 areas framed around the UVM plan.
 1. Teaching and learning: the libraries will work directly with students and faculty for support of research.
 2. Research and knowledge production to achieve University R1 status for research. This will include statistical analysis support for faculty and research data archiving.
 3. Building community: as the library of a land grant institution, developing a partnership with the state library.
 4. Sustainable scholarly communication and publication, which will support publishing that is freely available and with open access journals.
 5. Organizational sustainability: there are many open positions in the libraries now that can be re-imagined.
 - ii. There followed a discussion period with the Board.
 1. Should there be an academic program in library science? The demand in our region is unknown.
 2. Any plan to acquire a limited number of journals? The libraries are looking into which journals are most requested and subscribe to these. Inter-library loans have increased, with a typical turn around time of 9 hours. There is also a contract with a company that buys an article if it is not available through inter-library loan.
 3. Retirees can obtain an inter-library loan if they have a NET ID and password. The charge to the library is \$25-30 per article.
 4. Open access publications can be expensive without a grant. UVM is considering a journal that removes barriers but requires funding to develop. Examples of open access journals can be found at PubPub.org.
 5. The Vice-President for Research is looking into ways to provide biostatistical support such as providing vouchers.
 6. The Board suggested that Dean Geffert consider adding an emeritus faculty member to the library advisory board.

- b. Faculty Senate Report (Mara Saule)
 - i. Faculty Senate Meeting 9/20/21 (attended and reported by Rachel Johnson)
 - 1. There are two new Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committees 1) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and 2) Responsibility of Senate Authority-Advisory Role. These committees have been hard to staff and volunteers are needed.
 - 2. UVM has 100% of students in compliance with the vaccination policy and high compliance with the mask policy.
 - 3. The procedures for program elimination were discussed with special emphasis on CAS.
 - 4. Kirk Drombrowski gave a presentation about why UVM is pursuing the status of a Research 1 institution.
 - ii. Faculty Senate Meeting 10/18/21.
 - 1. Continued discussion of the Senate procedures related to the establishment, reorganization and elimination of Colleges and Schools; of a School within a College, or a Department. The procedures were approved by majority vote.
 - 2. Update by Prof. Pablo Bose and Associate Provost Jennifer Dickinson of the evolving Catamount Core Curriculum for implementation for students entering Fall 2023.
- c. United Academics Update (Beth Mintz). There was a UA discussion of course work, work-load and course equivalency. The number of students that represent a course load varies considerably among departments and some small courses represent more work than large lecture courses.
- d. Determination of election list to be presented to the Annual General Meeting.
 - i. The slate for 2 year terms of officers are: Michael Gurdon, President; Beth Mintz, Vice-President; Richard Branda, Secretary/Treasurer.
 - ii. There are 5 nominees for elected members of the Board: Alan Gotlieb, Lee Thompson, Steve Cutler, Rachel Johnson, and Alison Pechenick.
 - iii. Chair Gurdon moved and Beth Mintz seconded a motion that the current *ex officio* members be retained for 2 year terms, and that future changes in membership be recorded by the Secretary/Treasurer. The motion passed. The current *ex officio* members are: Mara Saule, Ruth Farrell, Taka Ashikaga, Dwight Matthews, Jack McCormack, and July Van Houten.
 - iv. A reminder about the general meeting will be sent out to the membership for in person or Zoom participation.
 - v. There will be a report of activities during the past 2 years, the slate for election, and a discussion of the proposed changes to the constitution. Comments, suggestions and feedback will be solicited.
- e. Other business.
 - i. Some retirees received a flier from UVM regarding an offer of vision benefits through VSP Vision Care. This plan, while welcome, may not be quite as attractive as the advertised coverage indicates because of an overlap of benefits with our exiting Medicare Advantage insurance. The VSP plan could be of benefit to those retirees who regularly purchase frames and lenses, a feature lacking in the medical plan, though it should be noted that it does not include no-line bifocals. The Committee should consider e-mailing the membership about this limitation and the overlap with other benefits.
 - ii. Greg Paradiso and Jes Kraus will be invited to the November meeting to discuss HR issues such as the vision and medical plans, and which e-mail notices of UVM business and announcements should be sent to RFAO members. There are particular announcements that are relevant to many of our members but others are of no interest. Their advice will be solicited regarding the level for a filter.
 - iii. Kirk Drombrowski will be invited to a future meeting to discuss research issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:41pm

A meeting of the general membership is scheduled for Friday, November 5th, from 3:00 to 4:30pm in Waterman Lounge. It will be a hybrid meeting in-person or via Zoom.

The next meeting of the RFAO Board is scheduled for: **November 17,2021, at 2pm as a Videoconference**

Respectfully submitted, Richard Branda