

**EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE**

A meeting of the Educational Policy and Institutional Resources (EPIR) Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College was held on Friday, September 25, 2020 at 10:05 a.m. The meeting was held via remote conferencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Carolyn Dwyer, Vice Chair Jodi Goldstein, President Suresh Garimella, Cynthia Barnhart, John Bartholomew, Otto Berkes, Frank Cioffi, Johannah Donovan, Carol Ode, Shap Smith, Berke Tinaz and Samuel Young

OTHER TRUSTEES PRESENT: Board of Trustees Chair Ron Lumbra, Briar Alpert, David Aronoff, Robert Brennan, Kevin Christie, John Dineen, David Gringeri, Don McCree¹ and Tristan Toleno²

MEMBERS ABSENT: Curt McCormack

REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Faculty Representatives Laura Almstead³ and Chris Burns; Staff Representative Sarah Heath; Alumni Representative Susan Wertheimer; Foundation Representative Wolfgang Mieder, Student Representatives Finlay Buchanan-Jacobs and Sam Pasqualoni and Graduate Student Representatives Rosie Chapina and Max Cordes Galbraith

REPRESENTATIVES ABSENT: Staff Representatives Amanda McIntire and Faculty Representative Mary Cushman

PERSONS ALSO PARTICIPATING: Provost and Senior Vice President Patricia Prelock, Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Wanda Heading-Grant, Vice Provost for Research Kirk Dombrowski, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs Jennifer Dickinson, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs Jim Vigoreaux, Chief Information Officer Simeon Ananou and Associate Chief Information Officer Julia Russell

¹ Joined the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

² Joined the meeting at 10:24 a.m.; departed at 10:49 a.m.

³ Joined the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Chair Carolyn Dwyer called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. and welcomed new representatives Finlay Buchanan-Jacobs, Sam Pasqualoni, Rosie Chapman and Max Cordes Galbraith to the committee.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the May 15, 2020 meeting were presented for approval. A motion was made, seconded and voted to approve the minutes as presented.

Provost's remarks

Provost Patricia Prelock provided a number of updates on admissions, enrollment, retention, graduation rates and orientation in the context of the COVID pandemic impact. She noted some data was not available until last week and therefore not included in her written report. As is the case across the nation, the pandemic has had an overall impact in these areas. Provost Prelock reported that UVM was uniquely poised to meet the many challenges presented by the pandemic due in part to the physician experts in public health, epidemiology and infectious disease as well as the University's strong relationships with state public health officials and leaders. The Provost expressed her gratitude to the entire University of Vermont community for their tireless efforts in response to the pandemic.

On the positive side, Provost Prelock reported that UVM has more in-state students enrolled including 30 more first-time first-year Vermonters compared to last year. The University also saw an increase in the one-year retention rates for Vermonters. Two-year retention rates, the best indicator of those students who actually graduate from UVM, also increased. This suggests that if a student had a positive full year experience at UVM they are more likely to stay than someone who did not have that same experience.

On the negative side, out-of-state students were more likely to take a leave of absence or defer their acceptance either to the spring or fall. There is a slight decrease in graduation rates, an estimated 1% is likely related to students not being able to complete their practicum experience and the course work required before graduation, particularly in the professional schools when UVM had to go fully remote in March last spring.

The reputation of the University is changing as demonstrated in the eyes of academic peer assessments according to U.S. News and World Report, a publication parents and students look at. UVM is now ranked at 118 (was 121 last year) and our peer assessments score (which is how other university presidents, provosts, enrollment managers, and others perceive us) went from a 3.0 to a 3.1 tied with Iowa State and the University of South Carolina. This is the first time UVM has been able to raise the peer assessment in five years. Additional good news is that UVM is no longer considered a top party school, which was one of Provost Prelock's key goals.

Admit rates increased from 67 to 71%, with the greatest increase for Vermonters. The yield rate, meaning how many students who were offered admissions came to UVM, went down about a percent and a half from 20.4% to 18.8%. The target yield rate is 25 to 30%. The first-time first-year class was 2,487 representing almost a 5.7% decrease from last fall (2,636). Approximately 249 first-year students picked either the at home option or had a remote online instruction assignment. Of the students admitted, 270 requested to defer their admissions, about 75% deferred to fall 2021 and almost 78% requests were from out-of-state students. The University remains on a mission to bring back deferred students, and all academic units are working on aggressive strategies. Typically, the University has been successful in bringing about 50 to 58% of students who defer back and the goal is a minimum of 80%.

Provost Prelock shared enrollment data for this semester. Overall enrollment decreased by 1.9% from 13,548 to 13,292 (this number includes all students: undergraduate, graduate, continuing and distance education and medical students). Vermonters represent about 31.5% of enrollment this year. About 1,444 students chose the at-home option. This option was given to all students enabling them to choose to stay at home and have classes that were either online or remote.

The graduate population increased slightly, about 2.8% and is typical of what is occurring nationwide. The medical student population increased by 6 students.

Provost Prelock next commended the amazing student services and student affairs teams, academic units and admissions staff for a very successful virtual orientation that will be used in the future. There were four primary components: an academic overview session in June; advising and course registration in June and July; a faculty focused series in July and August; and five modules when students came on campus August 24 – 28. All included video series around academic success and preparation and are available on-line.

Provost Prelock next reported on mental health utilization acknowledging the increased level of stress and anxiety for students during the pandemic and the University's goal to make sure that students know, that whether virtual or in-person, that the University can support them. She cited telepractice as a great example of this success. Visits to the Counseling and Psychiatry Services (CAPS) are down the first five weeks, about 12%, likely due to the fact there are less students on campus, more students learning at home and the overall decrease in enrollment. The CAPS program had over 1,070 appointments and have served 550 students in the first few weeks. About 15% of students have a mental health diagnosis compared to 19% last fall. Following are examples of efforts made to support students in the virtual world: transitioned to phone or video through Microsoft Teams; offering virtual drop-in sessions with counselors, not only with CAPS but CAPS counselors are now working with our Mosaic Center for students of color, the Prism Center, and the Women and Gender Equity Center; and CAPS is prioritizing rapid access for students to triage appointments. Additionally, more staff time is devoted this semester to support case management which includes helping students access resources in Burlington or in their home communities. The top concerns that students have are relational concerns, adjustment, anxiety, moving away from home and coming to campus, and identity development. The top six reasons students seek assistance from CAPS are to manage stress, connect to resources, increase coping strategies, navigate a potential challenging situation, to increase their own understanding and self-awareness as a new college student, and to seek support on making healthier life style choices.

In closing, Provost Prelock recognized that she had shared a lot of data and that in the interest of time would proceed with the remaining agenda topics with perhaps an opportunity to continue discussions at a future meeting.

Faculty development and the four instructional modes/instructional technology

Associate Provost for Academic Affairs Jennifer Dickinson, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs Jim Vigoreaux, Chief Information Officer Simeon Ananou, and Associate Chief Information Officer Julia Russell presented information on the four fall 2020 instructional modes: in-person, mixed, remote and online. The process for preparing faculty to provide the various modes of instruction included providing equipment and setting up the teaching space with the technology, assisting faculty in converting courses, and supporting faculty in the utilization of the technology. Presenters highlighted that the pandemic required UVM to be agile, innovative and adaptable and it's helped the University orchestrate and build an environment that will have a positive long-lasting impact on the institution and its future, and that the investment and hard work will pay off not just for this academic year but going forward.

Vice President for Research Fiscal Year 2020 report

Vice President for Research Kirk Dombrowski shared highlights from his office's annual written report by offering an overview of a few of complex networks required to support, regulate and advance the research enterprise.

In the last year, Research Administration supported the development and submission of 1,300 proposals, 680 external awards were accepted representing over \$181 million in funding, and over \$143 million was billed and collected in sponsored projects.

The Office of Animal Care Management promoted the well-being of animals used in research and teaching and facilitated high-quality research by providing animal husbandry and veterinary services for laboratory animals and program care support for an average daily census of 8,000 animals a day. These include primarily mice and rats, and occasional guinea pigs, rabbits, and pigs, used in approximately 200 active research and teaching protocols.

Instrumentation and Technical Services (TPS) provided equipment preventative maintenance and repair services to 74 UVM departments, and completed 3,608 work events for those departments. In total, TSP supports an active inventory of 4,508 devices on the University campus including incubators, centrifuges, biological safety cabinets, anesthesia systems and a variety of other complex instrumentation.

Vice President Dombrowski concluded by noting that the Office of Vice President for Research has faced unprecedented challenges in areas like animal care and protecting critical research assets. He commended the research team for successfully bringing the entire research capacity back online in a matter of a couple of months with individual safety plans that were guided and meticulously reviewed by their safety professionals for every single lab and have met every protection and compliance deadline.

Annual diversity report

Referring to her written report, Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Wanda Heading-Grant offered highlights of summer and fall diversity, equity and inclusion activities including the teach-in and webinars offered to bring the community together and have conversations to inform and move to action together. All of the videos of the teach-ins and webinars have been recorded and are available on-line.

Vice President Heading-Grant expressed her appreciation to Provost Prelock and Vice Provost for Student Affairs Annie Stevens for their support in the relocation of the Prism Center to the Living and Learning C Building. She reported that she is working with President Garimella on his initiative to dedicate a prominent area in the Davis Center to honor and celebrate the University's common commitment to unity, respect, diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging. In addition, the University is initiating a focused fundraising campaign to establish the President's Common Ground Scholarship program for students from historically underrepresented groups to attend UVM.

Vice President Heading-Grant concluded her report by acknowledging a formal commemoration of the Black Lives Matter flag to be permanently and prominently displayed in the University's Mosaic Center for Students of Color.

Action items

Chair Dwyer presented the following resolution:

Resolution approving the creation of a Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study in the Graduate College

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the creation of a Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study in the Graduate College as approved and advanced by the Provost and President on September 21, 2020.

An opportunity for discussion was offered. There being none, a motion was made, seconded and it was unanimously voted to approve the resolution as presented.

Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Dwyer, Chair