

**University Council Minutes
December 4, 2000**

Present: Charles Steger, Dennis Cochrane (for Bob Bates), James Bohland, Gregory Brown, Landrum Cross, Ben Dixon, Peter Eyre, Elizabeth Flanagan, Janet Johnson, Paul Knox, Kim O'Rourke, Leonard Peters, Jennie Reilly, Lisa Wilkes (for Minnis Ridenour), Raymond Smoot, Richard Sorensen, Andy Swiger, Susan Angle, James Martin, Virginia Buechner-Maxwell, Irene Leech, David Russell (for Terry Herdman), Marquea King, Steven Thompson, Joe Hunnings, Jeryl Jones, Tim Pratt, Bob Tracy, Mitzi Vernon, John Hillison, Slimane Adjerid (for Rebecca Crittenden), Sam Hicks, Pat Devens, John Williams (for Suzanne Murrmann), Pete Martens (by phone), Althea Aschmann, Delbert Jones, David Fowler, Brandy Ellen Cowing

Absent: Earving Blythe, Eileen Hitchingham, Bill Stephenson, Tom Tillar, Leon Geyer, Wayne Durham, Skip Fuhrman, Kamal Rojjani, Jack Davis, Dan Dolan, Bernard Feldman, Rodney Gaines, Ashley Marshall, Donna Cassell, Debbie Wilson, Benjamin Poe, Tracey Slotta, Chris DelVecchio, Kylie Felps, Peter Logan, Candace Wiltshire, Mac McCreery, Christina Coukos

Guests: Carole Nickerson, Pat Hyer

1. **Adoption of Agenda**

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried.

2. **Announcement of approval and posting of Council Minutes of November 13, 2000**

Dr. Steger noted that the minutes from the November 13, 2000, University Council meeting have been voted on and approved electronically. Once voted upon, University Council minutes can be publicly accessed on the Governance Information System on the WEB. (<http://intra.vt.edu/govern/>)

3. **New Business – First Reading**

**Commission on Outreach Resolution 2000-2001A
Resolution Regarding Outreach Vision Statement and Strategic Action Steps,
2000-2001**

Irene Leech, Chair of the Commission on Outreach, presented the resolution for first reading. The Outreach Vision Statement and Strategic Action Steps were approved by the Commission on Outreach on May 11, 2000 and they were reviewed by University Council at the October 2, 2000 meeting as part of the minutes from the Commission on Outreach.

A question was raised as to how the Commission on Outreach intends to implement the Strategic Action Steps. Dr. Leech indicated that there was a change approved in the promotion and tenure guidelines last spring that helps to separate and highlight outreach activities. Additionally, within the Commission on Outreach, a rewards committee is charged with the responsibility of identifying ways to acknowledge and reward outreach activities. There has also been discussion of offering programs on a college-by-college basis to assist faculty with this process. Other suggestions are welcome.

Clark Jones, Vice Provost for Outreach, stated that the recent revision to the promotion and tenure guidelines includes a section on outreach. He indicated that implementation of the guidelines and getting this information to the academic colleges and departments can be done primarily through the Commission on Outreach and the Outreach Council. The Outreach Council is comprised of associate deans from each college.

Dr. Steger suggested that it might be advantageous for the Commission on Outreach to seek endorsement from University Council for the Vision Statement without including the Strategic Action Steps as part of the document. This would enable the Commission to make future changes to the Strategic Action Steps without seeking approval from University Council.

4. Council approved the following Commission minutes:

- * Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies
October 18, 2000
- * Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies
November 1, 2000
- * Commission on Outreach
October 12, 2000
- * Commission on Research
September 13, 2000
- * Commission on Research
September 27, 2000
- * Commission on Research
October 11, 2000
- * Commission on Student Affairs
October 26, 2000
- * Commission on Student Affairs
November 9, 2000
- * Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies
October 23, 2000

5. For Information Only

It was noted that the minutes of the University Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning for October 19, 2000 and November 9, 2000 were distributed for information only.

6. Announcements

In answer to a question from the audience, Dr. Steger explained the reason for the change in title for the position of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The change in title stems from a desire to lessen confusion over the duties of the position.

The Provost is the Chief Academic Officer of the University and one of the most important appointments to be made at the university in the coming years.

Dr. Steger commented briefly on the recent contract negotiations discussed in the media for Head Football Coach, Frank Beamer. A comprehensive analysis of compensation across the top programs in America was completed. Dr. Steger is comfortable that the contract offered to Coach Beamer is in line with the salaries of the coaches of other top programs across the country.

7. Discussion

The Americans with Disabilities Act and Employment Virginia J. Reilly, Interim Director, Equal Opportunity & Affirmative Action (EOAA)

Dr. Reilly's discussion of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) included information about the availability of training programs across campus that are designed to update people on the ADA. The training is beneficial for anyone who supervises employees. The program is designed for a full day of training; a shorter version (one-half day) is also available. The full training packet includes scenarios that are developed from experiences at Virginia Tech with employees as well as updated information from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Input on putting together the packet was received from faculty, students and staff with disabilities, the Dean of Students Office, Personnel Services, Residential and Dining Programs, Physical Plant, the University Architect's Office, and faculty serving on the ADA and EOAA Committee. The intent of the training is to provide participants with an in-depth awareness of the ADA and the ability to train their own staff about ADA issues and staff development.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodation, communications, and activities of state and local government. Dr. Reilly made reference to two important policies that are available on the web: VT Policy 178 discusses our beliefs about accommodations for people with disabilities (<http://www.vt.edu:10021/admin/eoaa/index.html>) and VT Policy 4075 outlines the procedures for assisting individuals (<http://www.vt.edu/admin/policies/4000/4075.html>).

The number of people with disabilities on campus has increased over the years. The Dean of Students Office is currently serving approximately 400 students with disabilities per semester (approximately 600 students have documented disabilities; however all of them do not request accommodations). The EO/AA office receives approximately 100 contacts per month (faculty/staff calling with questions or concerns related to the ADA). A Special Services Lab (located in Torgersen Hall) assists approximately 100 faculty, staff and students per month who need assistive technology. The facility is geared toward providing equal access to all faculty, staff, and students. Cutting edge technology in the lab includes: screen enlargement software; document scanners and text input conversion; electronic text to speech software; large print and braille embosser; alternative input devices, keyboards, and trackballs; voice recognition software and recorders; adjustable room lighting and adjustable workstations. A half-time assistive technology coordinator and a full-time lab manager are employed in the lab. Virginia Tech has received national recognition as one of the best special services labs in the nation.

Disability can be defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a record of such an impairment, being regarded as having such an impairment or a family member with a disability. The majority of individuals being served on campus have invisible disabilities (learning disabilities, psychological disabilities, medical conditions that require accommodations).

One objective of the ADA training is to provide information to managers/supervisors on how the ADA relates to their job. The bulk of the training focuses on workplace accommodation guidelines. Secondly, it is important to familiarize participants with the terminology, intent and requirements of the ADA; VT policies that relate to the ADA/disability issues including confidentiality; the relationship of the ADA to other state and federal mandates and policies; and to identify resources and support on campus and in the community.

No individual should be excluded from full participation in any aspect of the Virginia Tech community by virtue of their disability. Four areas of equal access must be considered: the physical environment, programs, information (such as web pages and distance learning), and attitudes of acceptance. One of the biggest areas of concern at this time is electronic ramps. Baseline standards have been developed for all web pages. Everything that carries the Virginia Tech name has to be accessible. Training for accessibility covers areas such as:

- Physical workplace
- Publications
- Signage
- Internal communication
- External communication
- Education and certification programs
- Meetings and conventions

Referrals for individuals with disabilities are as follows:

- Students – Dean of Students, Services for Students with Disabilities (Susan Angle, Assistant Dean of Students)
- Classified Employees – Personnel Services (Muriel Flynn)
- Faculty – EOAA, ADA Coordinator (Virginia Reilly, Interim Director EOAA)
- Extension – Virginia Cooperative Extension (David Travis, Assistant to the Director)

Individuals may contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action for further information or to schedule training on the Americans with Disabilities Act and Employment.

Dr. Steger adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim T. O'Rourke
Assistant to the President

/jcd