University Council Minutes
October 1, 2001
1045 Pamplin Hall, 3:00 p.m.

Present: Charles Steger (Chair), Bob Bates, Jeb Stewart (for Erv Blythe), Mark McNamee, Greg Brown, Peter Eyre, Margie Zelinski (for Elizabeth Flanagan), Eileen Hitchingham, Bob Schubert (for Paul Knox), Kim O'Rourke, Len Peters, Joe Merola, Lisa Wilkes (for Minnis Ridenour), Terri Mitchell (for Ray Smoot), Rich Sorensen, Malcolm McPherson (for Bill Stephenson), Andy Swiger, Tom Tillar, Pat Hyer (for Susan Angle), Ed Fox, Ryan Hartman, Bob Hendricks, Marge Murray, Edd Sewell, Susan Sumner, Jeryl Jones, Charles Bostian (for Tim Pratt), Kamal Rojiani, Bob Tracy, Rebecca Crittenden, Pat Devens, Dan Dolan, Bernard Feldman, John Hillison, Philip Huang, Rodney Gaines, Kwaku Kankam (for Ashley Marshall), Randy Stith, Althea Aschmann, Delbert Jones, Linda Correll (for Jimmy Martin), Brandy Ellen Cowing, Melinda Pomeroy, M. D. King (for GSA), Gene Wu (for Nick Amico), Christina Coukos, Robert Kopera, Brian Montgomery, A. N. Smith (for Candace Wiltshire), Mike Martin (by phone)

Absent: Lanny Cross, Ben Dixon, Janet Johnson, Melvin Gillespie, Stephen Boyle, Mike Koechlein, Mark Barrow, Wayne Durham, Mitzi Vernon, Jack Davis, Suzanne Murrmann, Debbie Wilson

Guests: David Ford, Dwight Shelton, Rosemary Blieszner

Charles Steger, Chair, called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

1. **Adoption of Agenda**

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

2. **Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of September 17, 2001**

   There were two changes noted to the minutes of the September 17 meeting. Joe Merola and Elizabeth Flanagan should have been listed as present at the meeting. Marge Murray requested a clarification with regard to the University Core Curriculum Committee. On page 4 of the minutes, it will be revised to say "The University Core Curriculum Committee which reports to the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies is very close to completing the first review cycle for the Core. It is anticipated that UCCC will suggest some modifications in the Core as a result of the review."With the minutes adjusted accordingly, Dr. Steger noted that the minutes from the September 17, 2001, University Council meeting have been voted on as amended 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. **Ongoing Business**

   Council approved the following Commission minutes:

   - Commission on Faculty Affairs
     September 7, 2001

   - Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies
     April 18, 2001

   - Commission on Student Affairs
     September 6, 2001

   - Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies
     September 10, 2001

   - Commission on University Support
     April 9, 2001

4. **Announcements**

   Immediately following the University Council meeting, there is going to be a workshop for those who are interested in an overview of the University Governance System.

   Rosemary Blieszner gave an update on the University Strategic Planning process.

   Dr. Blieszner has been speaking before different groups on campus and is pleased to report that people are excited, enthusiastic, and working hard to make their own plans for their areas. Provost McNamee is sending out a letter to the faculty describing plans for ongoing and new academic initiatives and guidelines for aligning college plans with those initiatives. It will also describe how some unallocated funds will be invested this year. A brochure that contains the full strategic plan and goals chart is at press and will be distributed the end of October or the first of November. She encouraged the group to be sure to pay attention to the chart in the brochure. A video, "Virginia Tech 2010," which takes a futuristic look at what the university might be like when we achieve our goal in 2010, is available. Dr. Blieszner is in the process of having the video catalogued in the library so it can be ordered from the alternative media center. When the video has a library catalog number, she will send it out so people can access it directly (the library has delivery service for videos). Someone asked if the video could be put on the WEB and Randy Stith indicated that could be done. Randy Stith produced the video that is about 10 minutes in length.

5. **Discussion**

   Dr. Steger announced that the State Council of Higher Education has a new chairman, Carl Kelly, Vice President of Oracle Corporation. Among Mr. Kelly's first actions was to declare his support for the base adequacy funding study. On October 17, there will be a day-long workshop involving SCHEV officials, Chairs

of the House and Senate money committees, and Dr. Steger and another university president, to develop the first draft of a vision statement for higher education in Virginia. This is the first time in recent history, 6 or 8 years, where the chairman of SCHEV has taken a positive advocacy role for higher education.

Dr. Steger is hopeful that funding for capital projects will be forthcoming. If authorized by the General Assembly, the College Building Authority will have in the neighborhood of $300 to $400 million to make available almost immediately for projects statewide. Additionally, it is expected that a referendum for a $1 billion general obligation bond will go to the voters in November 2002. The new chemistry building is one of $40 million worth of Virginia Tech capital projects, which have been authorized, but frozen. Drawings are complete for the chemistry building, and the project is ready to go to bid as soon as funds are released. Steger explained that there are two lists — one for the six-year capital plan, which adds up to hundreds of millions of dollars, and then a list of our immediate priorities, which has at the top the projects that were frozen.

Dr. Steger has been working jointly with the Virginia Business Higher Education Council, a group of business leaders from across the state who are very strong advocates for strengthening the funding for higher education. Faculty salary increases need to be kept in the forefront of this drive.

Someone asked how the General Assembly and state officials respond to Virginia Tech's goal to be in the top 30 or to become a more distinguished research university. Dr. Steger responded that they react enthusiastically. Both of the gubernatorial candidates realize that the future of the economy of the state is tied to having a highly educated workforce.

Another question was asked about the possibility of freezing undergraduate admissions or at least not admitting as many undergraduates and going with more graduates to get more research funding. Dr. Steger responded that this is a serious issue because Virginia will have 38,000 more students in the system by the end of the decade. Virginia Tech really does not want to reduce its undergraduate enrollment, but we currently have over 1,600 undergraduate in-state students for whom we get zero state appropriations. That translates into about $9.6 million of base budget allocation per year. As a result, there are not enough faculty. The base adequacy study shows that Virginia Tech is short about 196 faculty positions. Exactly where the major faculty shortfalls occur has not been identified. Also, there are going to be a lot of retirements coming up in the next couple of years. Some departments will have 50 or 60 percent of their faculty eligible for retirement. Allocation of faculty positions is something that will have to be studied carefully.

In response to a question from Ed Fox, Dr. Steger suggested that the issue of security would come under the Commission on University Support (keeping in mind that Commissions are not responsible for resource decisions). Security has been increased across the University. Plain clothes and uniformed police have attended events. The Chief of Police would be happy to address that issue with the Commission.

6. **Adjournment**

Dr. Steger adjourned the meeting at 3:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim T. O'Rourke
Executive Assistant to the President

/cba