

**University Council Minutes**  
**October 7, 2002**  
**3:00 — 5:00 PM**  
**1045 Pamplin Hall**

**Present:** Charles Steger (Presiding), Jeb Stewart for Earving Blythe, Lay Nam Chang, Landrum Cross, Ben Dixon, Karen DePauw, Elizabeth Flanagan, Melvin Gillespie, Eileen Hitchingham, Mark McNamee, Malcolm McPherson, Jerry Niles, Kim O'Rourke, Len Peters, Lisa Wilkes for Minnis Ridenour, Raymond Smoot, Richard Sorensen, Andy Swiger, Tom Tillar, Pat Ballard, Ruth Grene, Donald Hatfield, Brian Montgomery, Eric Pappas, Bob Hendricks for Joe Pitt, Diane Zahm, Mark Barrow, JoAnn Emmel, Don Orth, Bob Tracy, Mitzi Vernon, Imad Al-Qadi, Bernice Hausman, John Hillison for Peter Kennelly, Althea Aschmann, Delbert Jones, Maxine Lyons, Jimmy Martin, Randy Stith; Marquee King, Allan Bradley, Blair Price for Christina Coukos, Sterling Daniel, Andrew Jayne, Rachel Luken, Brian Montgomery, David Ford, Pat Hyer

Dr. Steger called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

**1. Adoption of Agenda**

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

**2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of May 6, 2002.**

Dr. Steger noted that these minutes have been voted on and approved electronically and can be publicly accessed on the Governance Information System on the WEB (<http://www.governance.vt.edu>).

**3. New Business**

**First Reading**

**Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies**

Resolution CGSP2002-03A

Resolution establishing the MS and Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering

Elaine Scott, Director of the Center for Biomedical Engineering, introduced the resolution for first reading. Dr. Scott gave a brief presentation of the proposed graduate degree programs in Biomedical Engineering. The School was approved previously by University Council and presented to and approved by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors in September 2002. The presentation looked specifically at the educational programs in effort to achieve the overall goal for the school and to serve as a resource for Biomedical Engineering throughout this region. The proposed graduate programs help fulfill all of these goals. Dr. Scott then went on to explain the program in further detail of offerings and the credits for each.

**University Council**

Resolution UC2002-03A

Resolution amending the University Council Constitution to Establish a Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

**University Council**

Resolution UC2002-03B

Resolution amending the University Council By-Laws to Establish Membership for the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Dr. Pat Hyer explained the minor modifications made to the membership of the proposed new commission to bring it into compliance with the recent directive from the Attorney General. Rather than naming the specific communities to be represented, thereby suggesting that the representative must be of the stated race/ethnicity/gender, responsibility has been assigned to relevant organizations, programs or offices, to conduct an open election or selection process to identify members to serve on the commission.

Dr. Ben Dixon reported that these resolutions reflect the University's Strategic Goals and Diversity Strategic Plan. The issues of diversity, inclusiveness and equity cover all parts of our university (organizations/colleges/disciplines, etc.) There needs to be a central forum within our governance system to discuss all issues of equity and diversity. It is important that as Virginia Tech moves forward into the top 30 research universities, we focus on both excellence and equity in the context of a diverse environment. This is the quality education our students need and their potential employers want.

The proposed resolutions on Equal Opportunity and Diversity are presented as two different resolutions due to the different voting requirements for each. The establishment of a commission is an amendment to the University Council Constitution and thus requires a two-thirds positive vote of University Council as well as approval by the Board of Visitors (University Council Constitution, Article XIII, Sections 1 and 2). Changes to By-Laws require only a majority positive vote of University Council members and nothing further (University Council Constitution, Article XIII, Section 3).

**4. Council accepted the following Commission minutes:**

- Commission on Classified Staff Affairs  
April 19, 2002
- Commission on Faculty Affairs  
September 13, 2002
- Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies  
April 17, 2002  
September 13, 2002  
October 2, 2002
- Commission on Research  
April 24, 2002
- Commission on Student Affairs  
March 28, 2002  
April 11, 2002  
April 25, 2002
- Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies  
April 22, 2002  
September 9, 2002
- Commission on University Support  
April 11, 2002  
May 9, 2002  
(References attachment Security: Progress Report for 2001-2002  
dated May 6, 2002)

**5. For Information Only**

Minutes of University Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning:  
April 18, 2002  
May 23, 2002  
August 22, 2002  
September 4, 2002  
September 16, 2002

**6. Discussion**

**Overview of each Commission's goals/agendas for the upcoming academic year**

**Commission on A/P Faculty**

1. Replacing retired members
2. Reinstatement of grievance panels

**Commission on Classified Staff Affairs**

1. Continue professional development opportunities - McComas Leadership Seminar, Fiscal Bunch for Lunch and Laboratory Employees Professional Development Activities.

2. Encourage more staff to take leadership roles as they develop professionally. Promote supervisors to actively encourage staff to become involved in leadership roles.
3. Continue to provide information (legislative information, educational opportunities) for all staff employees using the Staff Senate and their website as a conduit for getting the information out.
4. Work to promote effective change where possible. In view of budget problems, increased workloads and decreased staff, change will be of critical importance in the future.
5. Work with Benefits Committee to continue to improve quality of work environment through increased or enhanced benefits (tuition, day care, group insurance for home, fire, etc. for employees)

### **Commission on Faculty Affairs**

1. Policy on Faculty Commitment to the University
2. General updates to, and streamlining of, the Faculty Handbook
3. Faculty morale, and opportunities for non-cash compensation or other forms of appreciation
4. Faculty diversity
5. University restructuring
6. Implications of university fundraising on individual colleges
7. Hiring policies and procedures for faculty and administration
8. Tentative grades, grade submission procedures, and diplomas at graduation

### **Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies**

1. To work with Dean DePauw to streamline procedures for evaluation of graduate student progress.
2. Review existing graduate degree requirements that are specified by the Graduate School.
3. Review the format and content of new graduate degree programs that follow changes made in SCHEV's degree review and approval format and guidelines.
4. Seek out means for more of our graduate students (individual future faculty) to be afforded opportunities to teach (i.e. seek out ways to fund more GTAships across the university).

### **Commission on Outreach**

1. Increase the participation and influence of international programs through the Outreach Commission.
2. Continue to strengthen the rewards in the promotion and tenure process for faculty members performing outreach work.
3. Assist specific colleges in organizing outreach activities and increasing the visibility of outreach activities in those colleges.

### **Commission on Research**

1. We will continue to provide a presentation to interested parties regarding the legal constraints under which the University must work regarding Intellectual Property in an effort both to inform the university community and to gather suggestions for the university's Intellectual Property policies.
2. We have requested of the Intellectual Property Committee that they review the current Intellectual Property policy and develop a new policy statement reflecting recent developments and areas of concern.

\* Clarification of the role of the Commission on Research regarding the new research centers and institutes that are being created and their place in the university governance structure.

\* We are concerned about the amount of time devoted to the 5-year review of University research centers by the Commission on Research. We will be examining the process and considering changes to expedite this activity.

### **Commission on Student Affairs**

1. Communication about impending change in the following
  - i. Bond Referendum
  - ii. Tuition
  - iii. Fall Commencement
  - iv. Construction on Campus
  - v. Faculty and Staff reductions
2. Formation of a new Tenant Association in Blacksburg
3. Confidentiality of Student ID numbers
4. Graduate Student Health Insurance Policies
5. Fallout from new noise ordinance

7. Share reasoning for tough decisions with students, as they are acutely aware of decisions made by administration, governance. Communication is essential.

#### **Commission on Undergraduate Studies & Policies**

1. Adjusting to the restructuring of the university,
2. Adjusting to the inclusion of the Martin Luther King Holiday in our university calendar, and
3. Modifications of current undergraduate procedures and policies.

Policies being considered are:

1. Course Withdrawal Policy
2. Elimination of untaught courses

#### **Commission on University Support**

To be reported at a later date after appointment of Chair.

#### **7. Adjournment**

Dr. Steger adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.