

**University Council Minutes**  
**March 17, 2003**  
**3:00 — 5:00PM**  
**1045 Pamplin Hall**

**Present:** Charles Steger (Presiding), Earving Blythe, Gregory Brown, George Crofts for Lay Nam Chang, Landrum Cross, Karen DePauw, Elizabeth Flanagan, Eileen Hitchingham, R. P. Schubert for Paul Knox, Mark McNamee, Ed Henneke, Brian Shabanowitz for Jerry Niles, Kim O'Rourke, John Wilson for Len Peters, Minnis Ridenour, Hap Bonham for Richard Sorensen, Tom Tillar, Donald Hatfield, Pat Hyer for Sharon McCloskey, Eric Pappas, Bob Hendricks for Joe Pitt, Mark Barrow, Mitzi Vernon, Gerado Funtsch for Imad Al-Qadi, Elizabeth Gilboy, Bernice Hausman, Phillip Huang, Peter Kennelly, Maxine Lyons, Delbert Jones, Jimmy Martin, Mike Martin, Terry Kershaw, Randy Stith, Jan van Aardt

**Absent:** Ben Dixon, Peter Eyre, Mel Gillespie, Ray Smoot, Pat Ballard, Ruth Grene, Diane Zahm, Wayne Durham, JoAnn Emmel, Jeryl Jones, Don Orth, Bob Tracy, Bernard Feldman, Gloria Bird, Robert Smith, Althea Aschmann, Myron McClees, Terry Kershaw, Melinda Pomeroy, Brandy Ellen Cowing, Allan Bradley, Sterling Daniel, Andrew Jayne, Rachel Luken, Brant Snyder, Brian Montgomery

**Guests:** David Ford, Dwight Shelton

Dr. Steger called the meeting to order at 3:05 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 February 3, 2003.**

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

President Steger announced that preparations are being made in the event the United States launches an attack against Iraq. It is very important to have the appropriate counseling operations in place. There needs to be outreach to our international students and other support activities. President Steger called on Dr. Cross to give a review of the actions taken and encouraged Council members to share this information with their colleagues and to invite students to their home or find other things we can do to get through this very stressful time. Dr. Cross asked Council to refer questions and concerns to the Office of Student Affairs or the Dean of Students Office. A response team is in place and will be called together immediately if there is war or terrorist activity. The response team will consider calling a town meeting; have teach-ins to allow people freedom to express different points of view, and to give people a place to go to talk about concerns. All support staffs including Cranwell International Center, Counseling Center and Virginia Tech Police are on alert and are reviewing procedures. A web site is being established to let students know what to do if they need to miss class or go home or if the situation has caused excessive stress. President Steger will send out a letter in the next 24 hours to the university community referencing this website. In regard to student international travel, the International Students Office has the travel policy that outlines procedures in regard to

canceling programs. If there is information not on the web, let the Office of Student Affairs know and they will work to get it included. Dan O'Brien in the Office of International Research, Education and Development at 231-5888 is also working to get information on the [international@vt.edu](mailto:international@vt.edu) website and will field any questions. It was suggested this website be linked to website that the Office of Student Affairs is preparing. In response to a question regarding faculty travel, President Steger said that we rely on the State Department for advice on travel to countries around the world. Some airlines are changing their policies on non-refundable tickets and allowing a change in schedule. President Steger complimented Dr. Cross and others and stated that we have taken a number of steps to be prepared and we are ready to go on full alert at a moment's notice. We will do everything we can to protect all of our students. There will be protests for and against the war — everyone has the right to free speech. We will manage the situations as best we can.

### **3. New Business**

#### **Commission on Faculty Affairs**

Resolution CFA2002-03B

Return-Service Obligation for Study-Research Leave

Pat Hyer presented the resolution for first reading. Dr. Hyer noted that in the past there has been a differential payback obligation depending on the half-pay, full-year version (study-research leave) or one-semester, full-pay version (research assignment leave). This resolution will make the return obligation one academic year no matter which leave type is chosen. In response to a question about half-pay, one-semester version (a variation of the study-research leave), Dr. Hyer said the return obligation would still be one academic year. Questions should be directed to Dr. Hyer.

#### **Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies**

Resolution CGSP2002-03C

Resolution for Establishment of a Master of Natural Resources (MNR)

Degree Program in the Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources

#### **Don Orth presented the resolution for first reading.**

The College of Natural Resources has been working on this proposal for several years. There has been a half-time person in the program in Northern Virginia for six years and a full-time person for one-and-one-half years. Courses are over-enrolled at this time. Dean Brown added that there is no duplicative program in Virginia or any adjoining state.

#### **Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies**

Resolution CUSP2002-03B

Resolution to Establish a Temporary Freeze on Course Proposals to

The University Core Curriculum Committee

Donald Hatfield presented the resolution for first reading. There has been a lot of restructuring in the College of Arts and Sciences. The College of Arts and Sciences is the greatest provider of core curriculum. A group is reassessing the university core. This proposal will freeze the university core until July 1, 2004 and it is anticipated that realignments will occur. In response to a question, Dr. Hatfield said the intensive writing courses are exempt. There was concern expressed regarding the immediate

implementation to which Dr. Hatfield responded that he understands the goal is to avoid having departments adding to or pulling out of the core at this time. The resolution does provide for certain exceptions.

#### **4. Ongoing Business**

##### **Second Reading**

###### **Commission on Faculty Affairs**

Resolution CFA2002-03A

Resolution for Faculty Commitment to the University

Pat Hyer presented the resolution for second reading. A motion to approve was made, seconded and passed, with one vote in opposition to this resolution.

###### **Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies**

Resolution CGSP2002-03B

Resolution for Procedures for Evaluation of the Progress of Graduate Students  
(Update of Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 1)

No one was in attendance to present this resolution; therefore, action was deferred until the March 24 meeting.

###### **Commission on Outreach**

Resolution COO2002-03A

Resolution for Administrative Responsibilities for Education Abroad Programming

Eric Pappas presented the resolution for second reading. A motion to approve was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

#### **5. Council accepted the following Commission minutes:**

The following Commission minutes have been voted on electronically and can be publicly accessed on the Governance Information System on the WEB (<http://intra.vt.edu/govern/>).

- Commission on Faculty Affairs  
January 24, 2003  
February 14, 2003
- Commission Classified Staff Affairs  
December 18, 2002
- Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies  
November 6, 2002  
January 15, 2003  
February 5, 2003
- Commission on Outreach  
February 13, 2003

- Commission on Research  
January 22, 2003  
February 12, 2003
- Commission on Student Affairs  
January 30, 2003  
February 13, 2003
- Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies  
January 27, 2003

## 6. **For Information Only**

Minutes of University Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning:  
January 30, 2003

President Steger commented that the colleges and departments have undergone an extensive process in attempting to deal with the loss of \$72 million. He complimented everyone involved in the process. It has not been easy but has been done very skillfully. Your support is appreciated.

## 7. **Discussion**

President Steger discussed with Council three resolutions passed by the Board of Visitors. 1) Resolution for Approval to Establish the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity. 2) The resolution regarding meetings on campus was passed with the implementation conditional upon getting a ruling on its constitutionality from the Attorney General. 3) The resolution articulating the university's policy against discrimination was also passed. Resolutions two and three prompted considerable discussion about the University Council issuing a statement expressing its objection to the manner in which they were passed by the Board of Visitors and requesting rescission of these resolutions. President Steger is in the process of preparing a statement to the University community that will clarify the administration's position on these matters and provide some guidance on implementation. President Steger noted that there is a lot of discussion taking place and we want to manage it in a constructive and productive way.

Eric Pappas stated that the faculty, staff and students agree the latter two resolutions are an embarrassment to the University and should have been handled differently by the Board. They violate the values the university embraces. Everyone needs to work together, and there was no opportunity for university input. Eric Pappas asked that the minutes reflect the feeling of the University Council that the Board of Visitors should rescind these resolutions and start the process over, with policies originating in the commissions, being brought to University Council, and then being sent to the BOV. There was a concern raised that if University Council were to pass a resolution on the spot and violate its own procedures by not placing the resolution on the agenda in advance of the meeting, then University Council's action would be equivalent to what the Board of Visitors had done. After much discussion, it was determined that Eric Pappas would draft a formal resolution to be brought to University Council for first reading on March 24. University Council members were encouraged to share input for this resolution with Dr. Pappas. Representatives of the Faculty and Staff Senates indicated that they may draft their own resolutions or join in the University Council resolution. Several members of University Council expressed a sense of

urgency about communicating their feelings to the Board of Visitors. It was noted that University Council Bylaws do provide for a second reading to be waived and a vote to occur at the first reading if three-fourths of the members present approve the waiver.

**8. Adjournment**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Kim T. O'Rourke  
Executive Assistant to the President

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