

University Council Minutes
September 20, 2004
3:00 – 5:00 PM
1045 Pamplin Hall

Present: Charles Steger (Presiding), Ed Henneke for Hassan Aref, Jeb Stewart for Erv Blythe, Lay Nam Chang, Landrum Cross, Karen DePauw, Alicia Cohen for Ben Dixon, John Dooley, Jim Blair for Brad Fenwick, Elizabeth Flanagan, David Ford, Eileen Hitchingham, James Hyatt, Michael Kelly, Paul Knox, Kurt Krause, Mark McNamee, Jerry Niles, Kim O'Rourke, Tim Mack for Sharron Quisenberry, Dwight Shelton, Hap Bonham for Richard Sorensen, Tom Tillar, David Travis, Dawn Barnes, Jean Brickey, Virginia Fowler, Scott Case for Klaus Elgert, Ray Plaza, Susanna Rinehart, Judith Shrum, Jim B. Weaver, Susan Anderson, Jack Cranford, JoAnn Emmel, Richard Goff, Mark Barrow, Mark Anderson, Marion Ehrich, Bernice Hausman, Hans Rott, Muzzo Uysal, John Jay Carter, Sue Ellen Crocker, Donna Hamm, Edward Lener, Widget Shannon for Scott McGee, Kimberly Philpott, Sumeet Bagai, Brandon Bull, Melinda Cep, Maya Newhagen, Matt Vepraskas, Devin Weller

Absent: Gerhardt Schurig, Grant Otto, Richard Ashley, Don Orth, Imad Al-Qadi, James Berkson, Peter Kennelly, Terry Kershaw, Maxine Lyons, Pankaj Gupta, Yvette Quintela, Antoinette Stroter

Guests: Pat Hyer, Minnis Ridenour, Stuart Mease, Teresa Wright, April Myers

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 3, 2004.

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://intra.vt.edu/govern/>).

3. New Business

Commission on Student Affairs

Resolution CSA 2004-05A

Resolution Requesting National Pan-Hellenic Council Membership
on the Commission on Student Affairs

Mr. Sumeet Bagai presented the resolution for first reading.

4. Announcement of approval and posting of Commission minutes

These minutes have been voted on electronically and will be posted on the University web.

Note that the purpose of voting on Commission minutes is to accept them for filing.

University Council By-laws require that policy items be brought forward in resolution form for University Council action.

- Commission on Classified Staff Affairs
April 21, 2004
May 10, 2004
- Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
April 26, 2004
May 10, 2004
- Commission Outreach and International Affairs
May 6, 2004
- Commission on Student Affairs
April 15, 2004
April 29, 2004

5. **For Information Only**

Minutes of University Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning
May 27, 2004
June 24, 2004

6. **Discussion**

Dr. Steger asked each Commission Chairperson to present briefly their goals for the upcoming year.

1. Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs – Dawn Barnes, Chair
 - a. There are no issues to report at this time. Their first meeting will be in October.
2. Commission on Classified Staff Affairs – Jean Brickey, Chair
 - a. Computer Privacy Policy
 - b. Continuing initiative of getting computer access to all classified staff
 - c. Working to inform employees about Chartered University
 - d. Working on bridging gap between the administration and classified staff
 - e. Determining how many classified staff can no longer afford to live in Blacksburg
3. Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity – Ray Plaza, Chair
 - a. Look at the International Strategic Plan
 - b. Diversity Practices in relation to Promotion and Tenure policy
 - c. Diversity Research Initiative
 - d. Harassment Policy
 - e. Affirmative Action Plan
 - f. Workplace Violence
 - g. Exploring Student Enrollment
 - h. Climate Issues Discussion
 - i. Exit survey task force
4. Commission on Faculty Affairs – Susanna Rinehart, Chair
 - a. Computer Privacy Policy.
 - b. Review of the ADVANCE survey for existing faculty on campus climate and work life issues for faculty.

- c. Review of the faculty exit survey results.
- d. Using document that was prepared for the BOV Academic Affairs Committee for the Aug meeting by the Provost's office and Academic Affairs (McNamee, Ford, Hyer, Easterling, and Rinehart), has met and prepared this comprehensive list of affairs on the minds of faculty. This will be used as an outline to prepare the agenda for CFA for the year including the obvious issue of salaries.

Relative to computer privacy, Dr. Steger noted that wireless connections are far less secure than other methods. He asked Ms. O'Rourke to schedule Mr. Erv Blythe, Vice President for Information Technologies, or someone from that department to educate the Council on security of wireless communications. [Note: This is tentatively scheduled for November 1.]

- 5. Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies – Scott Case, Vice Chair
 - a. Business plan for graduate education for increasing PhD enrollment and building a strong graduate community
 - b. Institutional plan for graduate education
 - c. Review and approval process for graduate degrees
 - d. Graduate Program Review Process and Implementation Plan
 - e. Recruitment and retention issues
 - f. Impact of *Chartered University Initiative* on graduate education
 - g. Health Insurance for graduate students
 - h. Nine vs. twelve month pay for teaching assistants
 - i. Policy and procedures review including:
 - Residency requirements for doctoral students
 - Pass/fail credits for research hours
 - Quality assessment for graduate courses delivered on-line
 - Withdraw and drop policies
 - Enrollment and assistantship appointments

- 6. Commission on Outreach and International Affairs –Judith Shrum, Chair
 - a. Submit resolutions to adjust membership resulting from reorganization of the Office of Outreach and International Affairs.
 - b. Continue discussion of the definition of Outreach and International Affairs at Virginia Tech as it relates to scholarship of engagement, in all arenas including international affairs with a hope to have some impact on Promotion and Tenure Guidelines.
 - c. Work with the International Strategic Directions Team in finalizing the Virginia Tech International Mission.

- 7. Commission on Research – Jim B. Weaver, Chair
 - a. Examining university policies, practices and procedures to ascertain how they foster or impede research.
 - b. "Housekeeping" matters regarding university centers.

- 8. Commission on Student Affairs – Sumeet Bagai, Vice Chair
 - a. Work to educate student groups about the Chartered University Initiative so that they in turn can educate their constituent groups.
 - b. Mid-semester evaluations in classes so that students can see their suggestions take effect while they are still in those classes.

- c. Drillfield parking for undergraduates after 5:00 p.m.
 - d. Campus safety regulations specifically dealing with crosswalks.
 - e. Review of Dining hall hours on weekends and library hours during exams.
9. Virginia Fowler, Chair of Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies
- a. The impact of the Chartered University on undergraduate education
 - b. The impact of the international studies initiative on undergraduate education

Dr. Steger introduced David Travis as interim director of the Office for Equal Opportunity.

Dr. Steger introduced the next discussion topic: *Chartered University Initiative*. If successful, the university will have the flexibility to move faculty salaries up to the 60th percentile over the next several years and work to add 300 additional faculty back into the classroom, as well as fund other key initiatives that are important to the university. This initiative is complex and it is important that the university community understand the initiative and that everyone work together to move this through the General Assembly beginning in January.

Handout: *Commonwealth Chartered University Initiative – An Innovative New Funding and Management Model*

Mr. Minnis Ridenour presented an overview on the *Chartered University Initiative*. Mr. Ridenour explained that this initiative addresses the business, financial and administrative operations of the university. Academic policies will not be affected and the university's relationship with SCHEV will be unchanged. The purpose of this initiative is to create a different relationship with the Commonwealth. The university would function as a political subdivision and gain the flexibility to retain and utilize all the funds that the university generates to address the university's needs. What the university is asking for is to have our own cash management program, utilize those dollars without them being offset by indirect research dollars. What this initiative will accomplish is to give the flexibility to generate revenues to be invested in the university's missions and quality education. The University's Board of Visitors will gain the authority to set tuition under the Chartered University plan. This ensures that the university tuition and funding will be set by the group that is best able to monitor the finances and missions of the university and make decisions accordingly.

Mr. Larry Hincker, Associate Vice President for University Relations, will keep Chartered University information on the web updated <http://www.vt.edu/charter/>. These materials include:

- Current legislation
- Template for Charter Agreement
- Virginia Tech Agreement as it is being revised (to be posted in a few days)
- Proposed policies that will be going to the Board of Visitors in the November meeting.
- Other informational documents

In response to questions, Mr. Ridenour reported Virginia Tech would still continue to receive general fund appropriations for the operations of the university, and for salaries of faculty and staff, student financial aid, maintenance reserve, equipment trust fund, etc. in a substantially more efficient timetable. Dr. Steger and Mr. Ridenour have worked on this initiative for two years with legislative leadership (Governor's office and General Assembly). Senate Joint Resolution 90 was passed last winter. It authorizes the study of education, which includes the

Chartered University proposal. The first meeting of this commission is scheduled for October 12. Responses of key legislators and other public officials to briefings indicate they believe this plan deserves a fair hearing and agree this should be fully reviewed for its effectiveness for the commonwealth and higher education. The goal is to brief each legislator, key public officials, and constituency groups by the end of this fall.

Concern about reports of negative opinions by staff of other universities was expressed. Mr. Ridenour stated that at one of the three universities, a very outspoken group of staff has expressed opposition to many progressive ideas where staff is concerned. Mr. Ridenour's counterparts report that this negative view does not reflect the majority of staff. By educating faculty, staff, and student body alike, it is the goal of our university to encourage involvement from each individual for a positive outcome. The administration will work to address all concerns.

At present time, the State sets the salary adjustments for staff through the classification structure. While absolute assurance cannot be given, it is believed that if this model goes forward, staff will be under the authority of the Board of Visitors and the Board will be able to decide the salaries for staff as it does for faculty.

Changes in Virginia Cooperative Extension and Agriculture Experiment Station (Agency 229). We are asking these special relationships be fully incorporated into the charter. The proposal indicates that in the case of Agency 229 they would retain the same structure and the funding sources from federal, state and local government appropriations.

The impact on undergraduate education (i.e. tuition and fees that are currently paid). It is anticipated that tuition and fees under the Charter will not be significantly different than what tuition and fees will be if we stay under the current system. Why? Unless the state is either prepared to put a greater share of the general funds (state taxpayer dollars) into higher education or willing to restructure the tax for the Commonwealth, there will not be enough general fund monies to fund higher education. We are advocating the use of all funds available to us. Tuition and fees would be a part of that mix. This allows us to have a more precise and predictable source of revenues. The Board of Visitors will be in charge of all funds under the chartered proposal. Scenarios have been run for all funding scenarios from zero growth to 67% support by the state. For example, if there were a major recession, and the level of new general fund monies do not reach expected levels, we would still be making some progress – not at the same level as if we were receiving general fund monies, but we would still be moving the university forward. This is viewed as the only way to financially achieve the goals of the university. The demands on the general fund monies are so great from other programs of the Commonwealth that it is unlikely we will receive the percentage of monies needed from the state under our existing status.

Funding models in other states. There are a number of states that would have a greater amount of freedom than we have today. There will be some that would have more controls than we have today. There are even a couple of institutions that have moved to a chartered arrangement. One is a small college in Maryland. The University of Delaware is a better example of a chartered status university. Across the country, there are many models, and comparisons are difficult.

Reluctance by legislature to reduce control. We have made the case that under the chartered university proposal, we could fund the faculty salaries at the 60th percentile and base adequacy over a 5-year period. Further, because we believe we would realize substantial efficiencies in

the process, we are prepared to give up 10% of the new state taxpayer dollars. If the state would be committed to using those dollars for other higher education institutions that do not have the revenue capacity that we have, then the system of education as a whole can make progress. Under a strong system of accountability with management and institutional effectiveness standards and the provision for audits by external and internal auditors, the state will actually have better control than they do today.

Graduate Education will be better funded, and there is a possibility of additional graduate assistantships and better funding for stipend levels.

Appointment of the BOV members will still be made by the Governor. That process is not addressed in the proposal.

Financial Aid for students with need. Students under the chartered initiative should not have any significant change in their relative position. Financial Aid has been built into the model. The students need analysis, which is a standard process throughout the country, is what determines a student's financial need.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, Dr. Steger adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim T. O'Rourke
Chief of Staff, President's Office

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