

**University Council Minutes**  
**March 2, 2009**  
**3:00 – 5:00 PM**  
**1045 Pamplin Hall**

**Present:** Charles Steger (Presiding), Donald Leo for Richard Benson, Jeb Stewart for Earving Blythe, Lay Nam Chang, Jack Davis, Karen DePauw, John Dooley, Elizabeth Flanagan, Susan Sumner for Loke Kok, Maggie Sloane for Kevin McDonald, Mark McNamee, Kim O'Rourke, Roger Avery for Gerhardt Schurig, Dwight Shelton, Kay Hunnings for Richard Sorensen, Ed Spencer, Tom Tillar, Tom Inzana for Robert Walters, Sherwood Wilson, Daniel Wubah, Paul Deck, William Huckle, Frances Keene, Gary Long, Leslie O'Brien for Bradley Scott, Bob Denton, Sam Easterling, Danny Axsom, Michael Taaffe for Bob Sturges, David Vaughan, Travis Hundley, Shelly Key, Lori Anne Kirk, Annette Bailey, Tamim Younos, Joe McFadden, Lindsay Moss, Rachel Goodwin, Kolt Risser, Tom Tucker, Hardus Odendaal

**Absent:** Eileen Hitchingham, J. Michael Kelly, Sue Ott Rowlands, Maxine Lyons (with notice), Ingrid Ngai, Daphne Rainey-Wittich, Jane Wemhoener (with notice), Diane Zahm, Ken Eriksson, Sam Riley, Susanna Rinehart, Lewis Wasserman, Sheila Carter-Tod, Bill Galloway, Karen Inzana, Gene Seago, Shep Zedaker, Judy Alford (with notice), Teresa Lyons, Wyatt Sasser (with notice), Mary Alice Schaeffer, Kim Beisecker, Carson Byrd (with notice), Lauren Davis, Mike Parrish, Wayne Scales, Ali Yeilaghi-Tamijani, Lauren Creasy, Thomas Hogdahl, Kelsie Lieberman, Rianka Urbina, Linsey Barker, Arlane Gordon-Bray

**Guests:** April Myers, 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. The motion carried.

**2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of February 16, 2009**

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>).

**3. Report on the State Budget**

Dr. Steger asked Mr. Dwight Shelton to report on state budget and the federal stimulus package. The General Assembly reached a compromise on the budget. In FY 2009 the state assigned a 5.00 percent reduction in Agency 208 and Agency 229. For Agency 208, an additional 10.00 percent was assigned for FY 2010 to make a total of 15.00 percent over the biennium. This totals approximately \$18 million. There are not any additional reductions for Agency 229 for FY 2010. The General Assembly has brought in, as an offset, federal stimulus money of approximately \$17.3 million. Some of the wording suggests that the stimulus money is to be used to reduce tuition increases. This stimulus money will only last for two years. If tuition does not increase for two years, when the stimulus money is no longer available, the university will be faced with a large tuition increase. The General Assembly proposed approximately \$500,000 in student undergraduate financial aid for in-state students. There will be a reduction of approximately \$200,000 in the state match for eminent scholars. On the capital side, the state allowed the advancement of the Engineering Signature Building from preliminary plans to full planning. A Senate proposal was kept to allow planning on general

projects with the state reimbursing the university at the end of the project once a project is fully authorized and completed. As part of the revenue process, the General Assembly adopted a Senate proposal to create an additional capital fee for out-of-state students. This fee will be an increase from \$2.00 per credit hour to \$10.00 per credit hour. Virginia Tech's assignment will be \$1.8 million dollars, which will be retained by the state.

There will be a special session of the General Assembly in April to discuss budget issues. There will not be any final decisions about tuition increases until the conclusion of the special session.

#### **4. New Business**

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

Resolution 2008-09A

Defending Student Status for Qualified Graduate Students

Dr. Paul Deck presented the resolution for first reading. Defending Student Status (DSS) is a useful way for students who have completed plans of study and have completed their thesis or dissertation to meet the registration requirements for their defense without having to incur an entire semester of tuition and/or an entire semester of residency. The students will sign up for DSS and pay a fee that is the equivalent to the cost of one credit. The current policy requires students to schedule their exams before the beginning of the semester and defend within the first three weeks of the semester. This current policy creates a host of scheduling problems. The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies decided to amend the policy indicating that students will be allowed to sign up for DSS within the first three weeks of the semester and can defend according to the regular deadlines set throughout the semester.

#### **5. Old Business**

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

Resolution 2008-09A

Removal of a Principal, Co-Principal or Lead Investigator

Dr. Gary Long presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion for approval. The motion was seconded and the resolution was passed unanimously.

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

Resolution 2008-09B

Professors of Practice

Dr. Sam Easterling presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion for approval. The motion was seconded.

There was discussion of the statement on page two, the third full paragraph of the resolution, where it states "Where appropriate to their assignment, they may serve on graduate committees and interact with graduate students and interns; however, they may not chair graduate committees." It was suggested that the current Graduate School process that is in place should be used in order to be consistent. Dr. Steger publicly registered his concern that a committee chair should be a full-time faculty member who understands and can relate to the needs of the students. Dr. Easterling accepted a friendly amendment to change the language to read "Where appropriate to their assignment, they may serve on graduate committees and interact

with graduate students and interns, in accordance with policies of the Graduate School. The motion passed.

## **7. Announcement of Approval and Posting of Commission Minutes**

These minutes have been voted on electronically and will be posted on the University web (<http://www.governance.vt.edu>). 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 Equal Opportunity and Diversity  
February 2, 2009
- Commission on Faculty Affairs  
January 30, 2009
- Commission on Research  
January 28, 2009
- Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies  
January 28, 2009
- Commission on University Support  
January 15, 2009

## **8. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:28 p.m.