

## Committee Minutes

### ACADEMIC, RESEARCH, AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE Inn at Virginia Tech, Latham Ballroom CDEF 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. August 31, 2021

**Committee Members Present:** Melissa Nelson (chair), Carrie Chenery

**Board Members Present:** Tish Long, Shelley Butler Barlow, Greta Harris, C.T. Hill, Sharon Brickhouse Martin, Horacio Valeiras, Preston White; Paolo Fermin (undergraduate student representative), Phil Miskovic (graduate and professional student representative), Robert Weiss (faculty representative), Serena Young (staff representative).

**Guests:** Callan Bartel, Laura Belmonte, Lynsay Belshe, Rosemary Blieszner, Gregory Carter, Charlene Casamento, Cyril Clarke, Jon Deskins, Karen DePauw, Corey Earles, Jeff Earley, Jack Finney, Ron Fricker, Amy Friedenberger, Mike Friedlander, Rachel Gabriele, Martha Glass, Cathy Grimes, Dave Guerin, Rebekah Gunn, Kristina Hartman, Luisa Havens-Gerardo, Kay Heidbreder, Rachel Holloway, Byron Hughes, Chris Kiwus, Kaylah Inge, Eric Kaufman, Frances Keene, Sharon Kurek, Lee Learman, Nancy Meacham, Ken Miller, Benito Nieves, Justin Noble, Kelly Oaks, Kim O'Rourke, Mark Owczarski, Catherine Piche, Ellen Plummer, Menah Pratt-Clarke, Robin Queen, Julie Ross, Tim Sands, Frank Shushok, Kimberly Smith, Rick Sparks, Daniel Sui, Susan Sumner, Judy Taylor, Tracy Vosburgh, Chris Wise.

#### **OPEN SESSION**

**1. Welcome.** M. Nelson, chair of the committee welcomed board and committee members.

**2. Review and Approve Open Session Agenda.**

**The committee voted unanimously to accept the agenda as presented including all items on the Consent Agenda.**

**3. Consent Agenda.** Approval of June 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes; Report of Reappointments to Endowed Chairs, Professorships, and Fellowships; Ratification of 2021 - 2022 Faculty Handbook; Resolution to Approve New Appointments and Reappointments to The Virginia Coal and Energy Research and Development Advisory Board; Resolution to Amend University Non-Discrimination Statement and University Policy 1025: Policy on Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Assault.

**4. Update: College of Engineering.** J. Ross, dean of the College of Engineering, provided the committee with an update. The college includes 246 staff members and 371 tenured and tenure-track faculty members. The college enrolls 9,358 undergraduate and

2,172 graduate students. The college has \$258.2M in research expenditures placing ninth nationally in the National Science Foundation's Higher Education Research and Development Survey. Strategic directions include research, teaching excellence, work-life balance, and initiatives in experiential education, inclusive excellence, and graduate education. Several projects are dedicated to creating and improving infrastructure to support the missions of the university and college. In collaboration with five institutions in the commonwealth, The Tech Talent Pipeline Partnership Program undergraduate students can be prepared for early admission to Virginia Tech's MEng degree in computer science and applications or computer engineering.

**5. Council of College Deans Update.** L. Learman, dean of the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and representative to the committee from the Council of College Deans, offered remarks. The Council of College Deans welcome Rosemary Blieszner in her interim role in the College of Architecture and Urban Studies and Aimée Surprenant, newly appointed dean of the Graduate School. The deans are engaged in supporting the continued work of the governance committee and the continued evolution of the Partnership for and Incentive Based Budget (PIBB). The deans recognize and support the emphasis on experiential learning as a hallmark of a Virginia Tech education and look forward to the recommendations of the task force working on enrollment growth. Evolving workforce expectations have been heightened by work arrangements during the pandemic, and to outperform other universities and retain talent, the university will need to show flexibility. The deans rely on the continued success of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts at multiple levels of the university. Deans are excited for the 18-month observance of the Virginia Tech sesquicentennial and the special events that occur at university and college levels for our alumni.

**6. Provost's Update.** C. Clarke, executive vice president and provost, updated the committee on the start of the fall semester. Delivery of classes is 81% fully in-person, compared to 6% for fall of 2020, 5% of classes are being delivered in a hybrid fashion, and the rest are synchronous and asynchronous. The university's ability to launch the fall semester successfully is due to an effective COVID management system led by President Sands, built on quality emergency management systems with input from constituent groups. A highlight has been high-volume, accurate testing services, commitment to face coverings, and the willingness of the university community to make it work. Student well-being continues to be a university-wide priority. The Division of Student Affairs is leading organizational changes that will result in supporting approximately 10,000 on-campus students in residential well-being units. Each unit will be supported by live-in professionals that will provide support for counseling, well-being, experiential learning, and case management. Provost Clarke acknowledged the service of several university leaders. Karen DePauw has served as dean of graduate education and her successor, Aimée Surprenant, will join the university on September 1st. The search for a dean of the College of Science is progressing. Rosemary Blieszner is serving as interim dean of the College of Architecture and Urban Studies and a search for a permanent dean will be launched in early 2022. Robert Sumichrast has announced his retirement at the end of the current academic year and a search will be launched this fall. Jack Finney is retiring in December and a search for his successor as vice provost for faculty affairs is underway. A full report

covering enrollment management will occur during the committee's meeting in November.

**7. Discussion: Academic and Extracurricular Undergraduate Student Wellness and Success.** R. Holloway, vice provost for undergraduate academic affairs, and F. Shushok, vice president for student affairs, introduced and led a discussion that included panelists S. Sumner, associate dean for academic affairs in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; K. Smith, Associate Vice Provost, Student Success Initiatives; B. Hughes, dean of students; and Kylah Inge, undergraduate student. The framework for student success is a student-centered culture that provides a relationship-rich environment. Transfer students receive specially designed support and advising that includes integrated communication from contact through matriculation, a targeted orientation, a living learning community, transfer courses, and a transfer community. Administrative and academic areas that support students include Career and Professional Development, Undergraduate Student Financial Aid, academic advising, faculty, Dean of Students, and student success coaches.

**8. Agenda Items for November ARSA committee meeting.** Committee members will submit agenda topics for consideration at future meetings. The agenda will include an update on the College of Science and a discussion about enrollment management.

**9. Adjournment.**