October 18, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Committee on The University of Virginia’s College at Wise

William G. Crutchfield, Jr., Chair
Thomas J. Bliley, Jr.
Joseph E. Wolfe
John P. Ackerly, III, Ex Officio

and

The Remaining Members of the Board:

Charles M. Caravati, Jr., M.D. Gordon F. Rainey, Jr.
Thomas F. Farrell, II Timothy B. Robertson
Charles L. Glazer Terence P. Ross
William H. Goodwin, Jr. Thomas A. Saunders, III
T. Keister Greer Elizabeth A. Twohy
Elsie Goodwyn Holland Benjamin P.A. Warthen
Sasha L. Wilson

FROM: Alexander G. Gilliam, Jr.

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee on The University of Virginia’s College at Wise on October 18, 2001

The Committee on The University of Virginia’s College at Wise met, in Open Session, at 3:25 p.m., Thursday, October 18, 2001, in the Board Room of the Rotunda; William G. Crutchfield, Jr., Chair, presided. Thomas J. Bliley, Jr. and John P. Ackerly, III, Rector, were present. Also present were Charles L. Glazer, William H. Goodwin, Jr., T. Keister Greer, Mrs. Elsie Goodwyn Holland, Gordon F. Rainey, Jr., Timothy B. Robertson, Thomas A. Saunders, III, Ms. Elizabeth A. Twohy, and Ms. Sasha E. Wilson.

Present as well were John T. Casteen, III, Leonard W. Sandridge, Alexander G. Gilliam, Jr., Paul J. Forch, Steven H. Kaplan, Ms. Colette Sheehy, Robert D. Sweeney, Ms. Patricia M. Lampkin, R. Ariel Gomez, M.D., and Ms. Jeanne Flippo Bailes.
The Chair asked Mr. Kaplan, Chancellor of The University of Virginia's College at Wise, to present the Agenda.

The first two items on the Agenda, Mr. Kaplan explained, were Action items: approval of a revision of the Bylaws of the Board of The University of Virginia's College at Wise and approval of endowment levels for the College.

The Board's Bylaws were last revised on May 12, 2000, and this revision was approved by the Board of Visitors on June 17th of that year. The proposed revision would increase the membership on the Board from 17 to 20 persons; Mr. Kaplan said the intent was to increase representation along the I-81 Corridor, an area not well represented on the Board.

The Committee adopted the necessary resolution and recommended it to the full Board for approval at its meeting on October 19th (see Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Visitors of that date).

Endowment levels is a development officers' term meaning the minimum level of giving required for a named benefaction - e.g., a named professorship. Mr. Kaplan explained that heretofore, the endowment levels at the College have been informal and not consistent; the proposed levels would set a standard.

The Committee adopted the necessary resolution and recommended it to the full Board for approval at its meeting on October 19th (see Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Visitors of that date).

The Chair then invited the Chancellor to give his customary report.

Mr. Kaplan told the Committee that the freshman retention rate - which is to say the percentage of freshmen who return to the College for their second year - jumped to 73.8% this year from 65.2% last year, which he called a phenomenal rise. The first year class this year increased 19% in size. The average SAT score has remained the same - 1000. A problem in the area is that students are poorly prepared for the SAT. At Mr. Kaplan's instigation, the College is exploring the possibility of working with rising high school seniors during the summer before their last year, to help them improve their performance on the SAT. He also suggested that the College might rely more heavily on the grade point average than on the SAT as a prime criterion for admission.
Mr. Ross encouraged him to pursue the idea of SAT prep work and referred him to studies on this that have been done at the University.

Continuing his discussion of admissions questions, Mr. Kaplan said the College needs to pay more attention to transfer students – too many good graduates of community colleges in the area are going to places like Radford and Virginia Tech to complete their educations. It is important for the College and Southwest Virginia that the best and brightest students stay in the region. Another admissions tactic being explored at the College is the encouraging of a commitment to accept an offer of admission earlier in the year. He suggested, for example, that applicants be able to commit in December and to know by February that scholarship money will be available to them.

Mr. Kaplan said there is a shortage of student housing at the College. Occupancy now stands at 106%; he would like to increase the amount of student housing by 20% and he emphasized the importance of the College becoming more of a residential institution. He has talked to local political leaders about this and to businessmen about the possibility of some sort of arrangement between the private sector and the College.

Mr. Kaplan has asked the faculty to look into a revision of the College’s core curriculum. He ended his report by saying that he would like to develop a "college town" feel to Wise. He pointed out that there is not a single business in the town of Wise that students regard as their own – no restaurants and no stores that are oriented toward the College. He plans to take a group of local businessmen, who are enthusiastic about the idea, to Berea in Kentucky and to Davidson to see how this is done in other small towns adjacent to small colleges.

On motion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

AGG:jb
These minutes have been posted to the University of Virginia’s Board of Visitors website.
http://www.virginia.edu/bov/uvawiseminutes.html