September 23, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Educational Policy Committee:

Glynn D. Key, Chair
Alan A. Diamonstein
Susan Y. Dorsey
Vincent J. Mastracco, Jr.
Catherine S. Neale
Lewis F. Payne
E. Darracott Vaughan, Jr., M.D.
John O. Wynne
Thomas F. Farrell, II, Ex Officio

and

The Remaining Members of the Board:

A. Macdonald Caputo Don R. Pippin
G. Slaughter Fitz-Hugh, Jr. Gordon F. Rainey, Jr.
W. Heywood Fralin Warren M. Thompson
Mark J. Kington Georgia M. Willis

FROM: Alexander G. Gilliam, Jr.

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Meeting of the Educational Policy Committee on September 23, 2005

The Educational Policy Committee of the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia met, in Open Session, at 11:50 a.m., Friday, September 23, 2005, in the Byrd Seminar Room of the Harrison Institute, adjacent to the Alderman Library; Ms. Glynn D. Key, Chair, presided. Ms. Susan Y. Dorsey, Lewis F. Payne, and Ms. Catherine S. Neale were present.

A. Macdonald Caputo, Alan A. Diamonstein, Vincent J. Mastracco, and John O. Wynne participated by telephone.

Present as well were Leonard W. Sandridge, Alexander G. Gilliam, Jr., Paul J. Forch, Gene D. Block, Arthur Garson, Jr., M.D., R. Ariel Gomez, M.D., Ms. Patricia M. Lampkin, Edward L. Ayers, James Aylor, Ms. Jeanette Lancaster, Ms. Karen van

The Chair opened the meeting and reminded the Committee and its guests that the Committee, with this meeting, is beginning a year long discussion of the undergraduate mission of the University. Her goal, she said, is to have the Committee make tangible proposals to the Board in the spring of 2006.

With that, she asked Mr. Block, Vice President and Provost, to present the Agenda.

RESEARCH

Mr. Block gave a brief report on research at the University, pointing out that the University received $314 million in research support over the last year, a six percent increase over the previous year.

THE UNDERGRADUATE MISSION

He then initiated a discussion on the Committee’s first strategic goal for 2005-2006: the protection and enhancement of the undergraduate mission.

Mr. Block asked Mr. Blackburn, Dean of Undergraduate Admission, to give a background report and then lead a discussion of student demographics, trends and recruitment strategies.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS, TRENDS AND RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

In his presentation, Mr. Blackburn emphasized the effect of increased financial aid on student recruitment. The rise in the number of African-American students in the first year class, he speculated, could be attributed to AccessUVa.

He gave the Committee a summary of ten year trends in the first year class profile: the number of Virginians in that period has increased from 65% to 69%; the class that matriculated this year has 972 out of state students, of whom 15% are international students; the number of women in the first year class has remained relatively constant over the last ten years, varying from 54% to 56%; the number of legacies has grown from 11% in 1995 to 15% this year; 31% of the entering class this year were offered early admission, an increase of 6% from 1995; the number of minorities has risen from 26% to 28% this year, with Hispanics moving from 2% to 5%; the percentage of students with financial need dropped from 29% to 24%.
Continuing with his summary, Mr. Blackburn said the proportion of low income students showed a slight downward trend until this year – the rise for 2005 being attributed to AccessUVa. The mean combined SAT score increased from 1298 in 1995 to 1330 last year, but dropped this year to 1320. The percentage of the first year class who ranked in the top decile of their high school class has increased from 79% in 1995 to 86% in 2005.

Mr. Blackburn concluded his presentation with a discussion of recruitment methods, a discussion in which a number of Members participated.

THE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

Mr. Adams, the Vice Provost for Academic Programs, gave a presentation on the classroom experience, focusing on class size.

He reported figures on class size – most students are in classes of 50 or fewer of their peers. Full professors teach 25% of the classes, and associate and assistant professors 17% and 19%, respectively. Some 3622 students at the University were polled on “student engagement,” as part of the National Survey of Student Engagement: the response rate was 58%. First and fourth year students, the classes polled, gave high marks to their experience here in the categories of “level of academic challenge,” “enriching educational experiences,” and “supportive campus environment.” “Active and collaborative learning” did not score well, but “student interactions with faculty” did better, though not as well as the first two categories.

Mr. Adams spoke to the important and extensive involvements of students at the University outside the classroom, something he called “learning outside the classroom.”

The Chair had questions about faculty advising, and urged that its effectiveness be monitored and that attention be given to the training of faculty advisors.

STUDENT LIFE

Ms. Lampkin, Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer, talked about student life at the University. She cited figures on a variety of areas: 6,230 undergraduates live in University housing, which breaks down to 99% of the first year class, 53% of the second year class, 20% of the third year class, and 18% of the fourth year class. Of the 3116 first year students, 1613 live in the Alderman Road dormitories, 1257 in the McCormick Road dormitories, and 246 in residential colleges. More second year students live in the residential colleges than
third and fourth year students. The great majority of second year students in University housing live in apartments owned by the University. The number of students in the language houses in all three classes is small but steady.

The measured participation of students in "co-curricular activities" – e.g., organizations, publications, student government, fraternity or sorority and athletics, both intercollegiate and intramural – is high. Likewise community service and volunteer work: 45% of the first year students surveyed and 79% of the fourth year students surveyed are so involved. As for such things as practica, internships, field experiences, co-op experiences and clinical assignments, 8% of the surveyed first year students and 69% of the fourth year students are involved.

As of September 14th, there were 450 Contracted Independent Organizations (CIOs) at the University, down from 551 last year; 63 fraternal organizations have signed the agreements necessary for University recognition. Some 30% of undergraduates are members of fraternities or sororities.

Ms. Lampkin touched on figures on the consequences of drinking among undergraduates, a study comparing students in the last five classes. The number of students who reported having missed classes because of drinking (the highest category, numerically, of those measured, has declined markedly from 2001 to 2005. The number of DUIs rose slightly in 2005 compared to 2004, but is significantly lower than the figure for 2001. The number of students who reported being hurt as a result of drinking was about the same as 2004, but much lower than 2001. The figure for unprotected sex as a result of drinking has remained constant, as has – relatively – the figure for "taken advantage of sexually," and those for "fight," involvements with the police and visits to the emergency room.

FACULTY SENATE

Mr. Houston Wood, Chair of the Faculty Senate and Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, reported on the Senate’s plans for this Session and gave a general assessment of the Senate’s role at the University.

The Senate plans a retreat later this year – tentatively in January – to consider topical issues. One of these will address the question, “Is there a role the Faculty Senate can play in recruiting and retaining minority students?”
Commenting generally on the Senate, Mr. Wood said the Faculty Senate is rare among faculty senates for the role it plays at the University and the constructive relationship it has with the administration. He cited some of the Senate’s achievements – its sponsorship of the Harrison Awards and the Center for Undergraduate Excellence, and its involvement in the writing of the Mission Statement for the Capital Campaign and in the drafting of the University’s Statement on Intolerance.

In concluding the meeting, the Chair said the session was the first of several planned this year. She said she thought it was successful and that it – and subsequent meetings of the Committee – would lead to the identification of follow-up issues.

On motion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

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