

**UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA  
BOARD OF VISITORS  
MEETING OF THE  
EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE  
November 21, 2003**

EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE

Friday, November 21, 2003

1:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Lower East Oval Room, The Rotunda

Committee Members:

Don R. Pippin, Chair	Terence P. Ross
Susan Y. Dorsey	E. Darracott Vaughan, Jr., M.D.
Lewis F. Payne	John O. Wynne
John R.M. Rodney	Gordon F. Rainey, Jr., Ex Officio

AGENDA

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BOARD OF VISITORS AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

BOARD MEETING: November 21, 2003

COMMITTEE: Educational Policy

AGENDA ITEM: A. Vice President's Remarks

ACTION REQUIRED: None

DISCUSSION: The Vice President and Provost will use this portion of the Educational Policy Committee meeting to inform the Committee of recent events of which the Board should be made aware.

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AGENDA ITEM: B. Discussion on the Transition Program  
Committee Report: Increasing Academic  
Support for Entering Students

ACTION REQUIRED: None

BACKGROUND: At the August 29, 2003 meeting of the Educational Policy Committee, the Provost reported on efforts to expand the Transition Program to better serve students at-risk. He told the Committee that the summer pilot program was successful; twenty-two students were enrolled in the summer pilot program: Each student was required to take two courses (one a required study skills class and the other an elective chosen from an approved list of regular summer session classes). Two students withdrew, but all others finished both classes, and the average overall GPA was 2.73. The Provost noted that the University hopes to expand the summer program into an all-year program.

DISCUSSION: The Provost will discuss with the Committee a report entitled "Increasing Academic Support for Entering Students," submitted by the Transition Program Committee on October 14, 2003. The report outlines recommendations for an expanded program.

The Transition Program Committee reviewed programs at other universities, looked at the current program in the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering, and discussed different approaches to best support entering students. They also discussed ways to better support non-native speakers of English and students who transfer to the University of Virginia. Based on this work, the Transition Program Committee offers a strong endorsement of the programs outlined in the report and recommends that they be implemented beginning summer 2004. They also recommend that a comprehensive evaluation plan be developed for the program.

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AGENDA ITEM: C. Continuation of Discussion on  
Enhancement of Research Programs at the  
University: Review of Draft Strategy to  
Become an Internationally Pre-Eminent  
Research Institution in Select Science  
and Technology Fields

ACTION REQUIRED: None

BACKGROUND: At the August 29th Educational Policy Committee meeting, the Provost led a discussion on the enhancement of research programs at the University, highlighting the importance of advancing our standing in sponsored research, and how we can achieve this outcome. His presentation emphasized that investing now in science and technology programs enhance opportunities for our students and faculty, improve national visibility of our research effort, advance economic development in the Commonwealth, and help lead the scientific revolution occurring in the biological sciences, nanosciences and information technology.

The Provost outlined an aggressive strategy for accomplishing this goal. He discussed what we must do in the next five to ten years: recruit twenty National Academy-level faculty teams (10 teams in the first 5 years and an additional 10 within ten years), continue to recruit and retain exceptional junior faculty, insure competitive compensation for outstanding faculty, attract the best graduate students, and move forward with the construction of additional research facilities. The Provost also presented the financial investment (2004-2009) it will take to be successful.

At its October meeting the Board approved in concept a \$60 million commitment for new faculty recruiting and research space construction (\$35 million endowment for recruiting; \$20 million MR-6; \$5 million for a new Advanced Research and Technology building, as well as funding for salaries, pending an acceptable five-year implementation plan from the Provost and the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. With matching funds from other sources, the total amount for this five-year project is \$126 million.

DISCUSSION: The Vice President and Provost will share with the Committee a draft of the strategic plan to accomplish the University of Virginia's goal of becoming an internationally pre-eminent research institution in select science and technology fields. To achieve this vision, the University will significantly increase its funding for initiatives to promote outstanding scientific research. The goals for this watershed endeavor are three-fold:

1. Increase the stature of the University as a premier center for science and technology
2. Improve the educational experience of undergraduate and graduate students
3. Provide tangible economic benefits and opportunities to the region and the Commonwealth

For some time, the University has enjoyed high national rankings, in large part for its undergraduate programs and its distinguished graduate programs in the humanities. The sciences, however, have not kept pace with the humanities. The very best research universities, often those considered among the University's peer group, typically have highly-ranked graduate programs in the sciences, engineering, and medicine. These other schools benefit from a strong institutional emphasis on research that has been cultivated over many decades through sizable funding from federal agencies, private industry, and philanthropic support.

Research funding for the sciences, engineering, and medicine at the University has increased by 96% (from \$141.2M in FY96 to \$277.3M in FY03) over the past eight years.

Despite this achievement, in 2003, the University ranked 49<sup>th</sup> in total federal research and development expenditures among research universities (National Science Foundation survey, using 2001 data) and, with the exception of our highly ranked Physiology Program, our best science departments ranked in the second quartile in National Research Council (1995) ratings. Because our basic science departments, such as biology, chemistry, and physics, are smaller than top ranked research university departments, it is unlikely that the University can grow its departments to achieve excellence across the board. For example, the Stanford University biology department has 49 tenure-track faculty members, Princeton, 48, and Cornell, over 100; the University has only 26 (plus seven additional faculty members performing biological research in the Department of Environmental Sciences). Such discrepancies in the size of science faculties are not easily overcome; therefore the University must target future investments in areas of research that will capitalize on existing strengths and capabilities.

At the Board's request, the Vice President and Provost and the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies have prepared briefings for the Educational Policy Committee and full Board discussions regarding the importance of a University commitment to strengthening research. These briefings have outlined the relationship between strong research programs in the sciences, engineering, and medicine and (a) the overall quality of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff and (b) public service and economic development. They also have described the essential objectives for leveraging current research strengths and capitalizing on very near-term opportunities through a special Board-supported project. The project objectives for the first five years are:

1. Attracting ten new "star" faculty teams to spearhead research in selected fields;
2. Providing adequate research facilities by dramatically increasing laboratory space and enhancing infrastructure;
3. Hiring and retaining the very best faculty members in the sciences, engineering, and medicine through more competitive compensation packages and other incentives.

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AGENDA ITEM: D. Discussion on the Report of the  
University-Wide Recruitment Initiative  
for Under-Represented Graduate and  
Professional Students

ACTION REQUIRED: None

DISCUSSION: The Vice President and Provost will share with the Committee a report from the University-Wide Recruitment Initiative Task Force chaired by William W. Harmon, Senior Vice President. The Task Force was charged with developing initiatives designed to attract and increase the number of under-represented minorities who apply for admission, matriculate, and then graduate from the University of Virginia's advanced programs of study. The report includes some thoughtful recommendations on how the University can move forward in its recruitment and retention of under-represented graduate and professional school minorities.

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AGENDA ITEM: E. Faculty Senate

ACTION REQUIRED: None

DISCUSSION: The Vice President and Provost will introduce the Chair of the Faculty Senate, Mr. Robert E. Davis, Associate Professor of Environmental Sciences, who will give a report to the Committee on the need for long-term support for science at the University.