

September 3, 2002

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Educational Policy Committee:

T. Keister Greer, Chair
Elsie Goodwyn Holland
H. Timothy Lovelace, Jr.
Don R. Pippin
Gordon F. Rainey, Jr.
Elizabeth A. Twohy
E. Darracott Vaughan, Jr., M.D.
John P. Ackerly, III, Ex Officio

and

The Remaining Members of the Board:

Thomas J. Bliley, Jr.	William H. Goodwin, Jr.
William G. Crutchfield, Jr.	Mark J. Kington
Thomas F. Farrell, II	Terence P. Ross
Charles L. Glazer	Thomas A. Saunders, III
Warren M. Thompson	

FROM: Alexander G. Gilliam, Jr.

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Meeting of the Educational Policy
Committee

The Educational Policy Committee of the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia met, in Open Session, in the Lower West Oval Room of the Rotunda at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 3, 2002; T. Keister Greer, Chair, presided. Mrs. Elsie Goodwyn Holland, H. Timothy Lovelace, Jr., Don R. Pippin, Gordon F. Rainey, Jr., Ms. Elizabeth A. Twohy, and John P. Ackerly, III, Rector, were present.

Charles L. Glazer and Terence P. Ross also were present.

Present as well were Leonard W. Sandridge, Alexander G. Gilliam, Jr., Paul J. Forch, Gene D. Block, R. Ariel Gomez, M.D., Edward L. Ayers, William B. Quandt, Michael J. Smith, Ms. Laura Hawthorne, and Ms. Jeanne Flippo Bailes.

The Chair opened the meeting by referring to a letter he had received from Mr. Ross, raising a number of questions he thought should be considered by the Educational Policy Committee. The letter arrived too late to be made part of the Agenda, the Chair said, but he has asked that it be sent to the Members of the Committee. Mr. Ross, he said, had suggested a re- invigoration of the Committee, a suggestion the Chair said he supported strongly. He asked that Mr. Block consider Mr. Ross's points and incorporate them in the Agendas of future meetings of the Committee (a copy of Mr. Ross's memorandum is appended to these Minutes as an Attachment).

The Chair then asked Mr. Block, Vice President and Provost, to present the Agenda.

Mr. Block outlined some of the topics he planned to present at future meetings of the Committee. After commenting on the current budgetary restrictions, he introduced Mr. Ayers, Dean of Arts & Sciences, who gave the Committee a description of the effects of the budget crisis on Arts & Sciences.

By way of illustrating the gravity of the budget situation, Mr. Ayers said he had that day submitted a plan for \$4.7million worth of cuts in Arts & Sciences, the equivalent, he noted, of abolishing the English Department. Nonetheless, Mr. Ayers said he is determined that teaching at the University will not be affected and that students will not have to bear the brunt of the budgetary crisis. The greatest threat is the possible loss of faculty to other institutions. Most public universities in the country face similar problems, but many of the private universities are not under the same constraints.

Arts & Sciences has been able to cope in several ways: by private gifts, by allocations from various Endowment funds, by subventions from University organizations and by innovative and creative methods of dealing with the crisis.

Mr. Ayers listed several goals in the present situation: no layoffs of faculty and staff, protection of the quality of teaching, spreading cuts broadly and fairly, and no macromanaging of departments. Permanent damage to departments must be avoided.

The situation on the one hand is harrowing, but on the other, faculty, staff and students are pitching in and dealing with it in ways that are both admirable and innovative.

There ensued a general discussion of the budget situation and its effects on faculty, students and teaching. In addition to Members, and Messrs. Block and Ayers, Mr. Michael Smith, Chair of the Faculty Senate, participated.

There was discussion, too, of topics related to curriculum questions - such things as the adequacy of the teaching of writing to undergraduates, whether or not classes in American History should be required, the availability of computer courses, and so forth. There were questions, as well, about grade inflation, to which Mr. Ayers replied that there has been none at the University in the last decade. Mr. Ayers also stressed the desirability of having more classes meet as seminars. In general, the discussion - which was fruitful for all - in this part of the meeting ranged over a spectrum of subjects with comments and questions from Members on the one hand and by Mr. Ayers, chiefly, on the other.

Continuing to the next item on the Agenda, Mr. Block discussed his priorities and goals for the upcoming academic year. These include:

- Faculty recruitment and retention
- Graduate education
- Academic planning
- International programs
- Science and technology
- Fine and performing arts
- Public service

Mr. Block introduced Dr. Gomez, Interim Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, who reported on research funding.

Sponsored research awards for the last fiscal year came to \$257million, Dr. Gomez said. Research has grown 82% over the past seven years and over 14% from last year; grants awarded by the National Institutes of Health account for nearly 50% of this.

Nonetheless, there are serious limitations to the University's research efforts mostly because of inadequate state support. There is a critical shortage of adequate research space, which in turn affects the number of research grants awarded the University. Several Members suggested that the obvious connection between a strong research University and the economic health of the Commonwealth should be a point raised in Richmond and with the General Assembly.

Mr. Block then introduced Ms. Laura Hawthorne, Executive Assistant to the Provost and Coordinator of Public Service, who reported on a matter that will be brought to the Board of Visitors for action at the October Board meeting. The University has been notified by the Carnegie Corporation that it is one of four institutions in the country selected to apply for a grant from the Teachers for a New Era Initiative. The New Era Initiative is a program that "seeks to transform teacher

education by strengthening the relationships among colleges of arts and sciences, schools of education, and K-12 school systems."

A proposal was submitted to Carnegie by the University on July 15th.

Finally, the Chair proposed a meeting of the Committee, outside the context of a regular meeting of the Board of Visitors, either in December or early January. The Rector raised the possibility of a special meeting of the Board, sometime during the same time period, to discuss legislative matters. It was decided that if such a meeting is called, the Committee would meet at 9:00 a.m., before the meeting of the full Board. If a full Board meeting is not called, the Committee will meet January 10th at 1:00 p.m.

On motion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

AGG:lah

Attachment

These minutes have been posted to the University of Virginia's Board of Visitors website.

<http://www.virginia.edu/bov/educationalminutes.html>

August 19, 2002

94485-00001

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Rector
The Provost
Chair, Educational Policy Committee

FROM: Terence P. Ross

RE: Educational Policy Committee

As part of an initiative to reinvigorate the Educational Policy Committee, the Rector asked for my thoughts on issues that should be considered and (perhaps) addressed by the Committee. I have divided the issues I believe should be considered by the Committee into three categories -- Programmatic Issues, Quality Issues and Facilities Issues. Each is addressed separately below.

Programmatic Issues

1. What general academic requirements should be met by every undergraduate student to receive a degree from the University?
 - Is the writing requirement sufficient? Is the exemption too liberal?
 - Should there be a language requirement? If so, should Latin qualify? Is the exemption too liberal?
 - Why is there a multi-cultural requirement, but no U.S. history requirement?
 - Should there be a separate mathematics requirement? Should only "hard sciences" be allowed to fulfill the "natural science" requirement? Should there be a computer science requirement or, at least, a certification of proficiency in computer usage required?
 - Should there be a social science requirement?
 - Should the humanities requirement be more focused on Western Civilization and/or a "Great Books" program?
 - Is the "historical studies" requirement too liberally interpreted? Should this be replaced with a U.S. history requirement?
2. What specific academic requirements should be required of a student to receive a degree

in a specific "major" area of study?

3. Should "minors" be permitted and, if so, what academic requirements should be required of a student to receive a "minor" in a particular field of study?
4. What areas of study, not currently offered at the University, should be offered? Conversely, what areas of study currently offered at the University should be discontinued?
5. What specific courses, not currently offered, should be offered? Conversely, what specific courses currently offered should not be offered? Equally important, what regular review of specific courses are or should be conducted to determine continuing need and high quality of the courses?
6. Should a significant research project, culminating in a written paper or other presentation (referred to at other schools as a "senior thesis") be required?

Quality Issues

1. Is the teaching aspect of courses reviewed on a regular basis? Does this include student input?
2. How are tenure decisions made? Are uniform procedures used across all schools and departments?
3. Are graduate students being appropriately used as teaching assistants? Are they being given sufficient training? Would the quality of the undergraduate learning experience be enhanced by greater use of lecturers or adjunct professors rather than graduate students?
4. Are there sufficient numbers of professors teaching (as opposed to researching) to assure that students receive a quality education? Given the increase in numbers of undergraduate students during the last decade, is the faculty-student ratio sufficient to maintain a quality education? Is this true for each school and department?
5. How many courses enroll more than 100 students? How can this number be minimized?
6. Does grade inflation exist at the University? Is the grading system sufficient to reflect accurately the achievement of students?
7. Is there adequate academic advising for students?

Facilities Issues

1. How many classrooms/laboratories (by category) are needed for the number of courses offered by each school? What percentage of these are adequate for current purposes (*e.g.*, renovated to incorporate use of new technology)?
2. Is there sufficient computer access for students?
3. Are the University's library facilities sufficient for current and future needs?