

**University Council Minutes**  
**October 30, 2023**  
**3:30 PM**  
**Creativity and Innovation District Building Multipurpose Library (Room 104)**  
**and Zoom**

**Present:** Joe Merola (presiding), Ron Fricker for Cyril Clarke, April Myers, Kim O'Rourke, Laurel Miner for Daniel Sui, Bryan Garey, James Bridgeforth for Frances Keene, Aimée Surprenant, Rachel Holloway, Mike Gutter for Alan Grant, Tsai Lu Liu, Kevin Pitts, Paul Winistorfer, Julia Ross, Saonee Sarker, Lee Learman, Tyler Walters, Dwayne Edwards, Natalia Guerrero, Robert Weiss, Evan Lavender-Smith, Janice Austin, Stephanie Trout, Jennifer Jones, LaTawnya Burleson, Callan Bartel, Kari Evans, Kiera Schneiderman, William Storey, Alex Efrid, Rachel Maizel, Yohan Sequeira, Riley DeHority, Emily Tirrell, Gary Long, Nicole Pitterson, Stuart Feigenbaum, Rodney Gaines, Daniel Hindman, Charles Lowery, Serena Young, Melissa Faircloth, & John Gray Williams

**Absent with notice:** Tim Sands, Amy Sebring, Virginia Buechner-Maxwell, & Sally Shupe

**Absent:** Menah Pratt, Daniel Givens, Laura Belmonte, Paul Knox, Shahed Sanuri, Renee LeClair, Lujean Baab, Amber Robinson, Kelly Oaks, Shania Clinedinst, & Dave Close

**Guests:** Madeline Boudville, Lori Buchanan, Carla Finkielstein, M L Logan, Xiaoyan Ma, Brandy Morse, Kat Nelson, Demetria Somervell, & Holli Drewry

Dr. Merola called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

**1. Adoption of Agenda**

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried.

**2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of September 18, 2023**

Dr. Merola noted that these minutes have been voted on electronically and can be publicly accessed on the Governance Information System on the Web (<http://www.governance.vt.edu>). (Note: the October 2 and October 16, 2023, meetings were cancelled.)

**3. Update from the University Council Cabinet**

Kim O'Rourke gave a brief update regarding items being considered by the University Council Cabinet. Items being considered include:

University Council Bylaws changes proposed (require University Council approval).

- Proposed "housekeeping" changes include:
  1. Minor changes to some commission membership.
  2. Simplification and clarification of language such as defining a quorum as a simple majority rather than 50% plus one.
  3. Scheduling University Council Cabinet meetings one week prior to the next University Council meeting.
  4. Allowing the cabinet to conduct electronic votes in lieu of a meeting.
  5. Clarifying that resolutions will continue to be presented to the University Council by the respective commission chairs or the chair's designee.

- Changes proposed to simplify process:
  1. Using a resolution proposal form (in lieu of a draft resolution) for commissions to submit to the cabinet for review. A draft resolution for commission first reading would not be required until the resolution proposal was approved by the UC Cabinet.
  2. Sending notifications to senates at various stages of the resolution approval process: when a resolution is uploaded to the resolution tracker, after a commission votes on the resolution, and after a senate votes on the resolution.

University Council Constitution changes proposed (require University Council and BOV approval):

1. Small tweaks to the University Council membership.
2. Updates to some commission charges.
3. Clarification that the handling of certain non-policy-making matters that some commissions deal with do not advance further to a senate or University Council.
4. For informational purposes (no action or discussion), the inclusion on the University Council agenda of degrees approved or discontinued through the new curriculum approval process. Otherwise, there is no formal mechanism for notifying the university community of these actions.
5. The inclusion of a definition of what matters are appropriate for shared governance.
6. The Cabinet has expressed the need for additional guidance on how to handle University Mission Initiative proposals and recommended the formation of a subcommittee to review the process.

#### **4. Announcement of Approval and Posting of UC Cabinet, Commission, and Committee Minutes**

These minutes have been voted on electronically and will be posted on the University web (<http://www.governance.vt.edu>). Note that the purpose of voting on minutes of the University Council Cabinet, Commissions, and Committees reporting to University Council Cabinet is to accept them for filing. University Council Bylaws require that policy items be brought forward in resolution form for University Council action.

- University Council Cabinet  
September 11, 2023  
September 25, 2023
- Commission on Faculty Affairs  
March 17, 2023  
September 8, 2023
- Commission on Graduate and Professional Student Affairs  
September 13, 2023  
October 11, 2023
- Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies  
September 6, 2023  
September 20, 2023  
October 4, 2023
- Commission on Outreach and International Affairs  
September 21, 2023
- Commission on Research  
May 4, 2023
- Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs  
August 22, 2023  
September 26, 2023

- Commission on Undergraduate Student Affairs  
September 14, 2023  
October 12, 2023
- Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies  
September 11, 2023  
September 25, 2023
- Budgeting and Planning Committee  
September 20, 2023
- Climate Action, Sustainability, and Energy Committee  
September 25, 2023
- Transportation and Parking Committee  
April 11, 2023  
May 9, 2023  
June 13, 2023  
September 12, 2023

## **5. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:52 p.m.