

**University Council Cabinet
Meeting Summary
September 25, 2023
3:30 – 4:30 p.m.
130 Burruss Hall & Zoom Videoconference**

Present: Joe Merola (co-chair), April Myers, Kim O'Rourke, Dwayne Edwards, Evan Lavender-Smith, Robert Weiss, Janice Austin, LaTawnya Burleson, Kiera Schneiderman, & Rachel Maizel

Absent with notice: Cyril Clarke & Amy Sebring

Absent: Menah Pratt & Julie Ross

Guests: Dee Dee Somervell

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

1. **Adoption of Agenda** - A motion was made, seconded, and approved to adopt the agenda.

2. **Actions/Decisions**

1. The cabinet approved the consent agenda that included:
 - a. The October 2, 2023, University Council
 - b. COR Resolution 2023-24B – Resolution to Revise Policies 13005 and 3020 on Center and Institute Establishment, Oversight, and Governance and Financial Administrative Procedures falls within the commission's charge
 - c. CSPA Resolution 2023-24A – Resolution to Add a Statement of Support for Participation in Governance and Professional Development to Staff Job Descriptions falls within the commission's charge
2. COR Resolution 2023-24A – Resolution to Revise Policy 13040 was pulled from the consent agenda to discuss whether this resolution should be sent through the governance process or could be considered instead as an administrative policy due to its compliance nature. The cabinet determined that human subjects is within the commission's charge, and although the policy mainly deals with compliance, until what is appropriate for the governance system is better defined, changes to this policy should go through the Commission on Research. It was determined that this resolution does fall within the commission's charge and was approved by the cabinet.
3. The cabinet voted to cancel the October 2, 2023, University Council meeting for lack of action items (resolutions).
4. The cabinet approved the use of the attached Resolution Proposal form to be submitted along with the resolution draft notice. This is merely a procedural matter that does not conflict with or change anything in the University Council Constitution or Bylaws.
5. The cabinet approved the attached shared governance survey to be distributed to the university community (faculty, staff, students, & administrators). This is to fulfill the BOV requirement that the new governance system be assessed following the first and second years of implementation.
6. The cabinet approved the attached list of questions to be sent to senates, commissions, Department Heads' Council, and Council of College Deans for feedback on the current shared governance system/process. This is to fulfill the BOV requirement that the new governance system be assessed following the first and second years of implementation.

3. **Adjournment** - There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Attachments (3): Resolution Proposal form, survey, discussion questions

Resolution Proposal (to accompany draft Resolution)

The first official step in the process to have a resolution considered by University Council is for the chair of a university commission or senate commission to submit a draft resolution to the University Council Cabinet for consideration. **This resolution proposal form should accompany the draft resolution when it is uploaded for consideration by the UC Cabinet.** The form will assist the UC Cabinet in its determination of whether the resolution falls within the scope of the respective commission. Typically, the UC Cabinet will respond within two weeks.

Commission Name: _____

Resolution Proposal: (Concept/Purpose)

Explain the concept for the resolution, the need for the resolution, any issues the resolution is attempting to address, etc. Could this resolution potentially impact the work of other commissions?

Existing Policy, Procedure, Standard, Guideline, Handbook/Catalog, etc.

What existing policies (University Policy, Presidential Policy Memorandum), procedures, standards, guidelines, handbooks, catalogs, etc. would be impacted potentially by this proposal?

List impacted document(s) _____

Explain whether impacted document(s) will be replaced or revised _____

Potential Legal or Resource Implications of Proposal (check all that apply)

List potential legal implications, if any _____

List potential HR/personnel implications, if any _____

List potential revenue/financial impacts, if any _____

Reminder: Sponsors of resolutions that have budgetary impact(s) must work with the appropriate administrators to make an estimate of cost and add that information to the resolution before the final commission vote, including the source of the estimate. The estimate of cost does not need to be finalized but should represent a good-faith effort to "ballpark" the budgetary impact(s). (University Council Bylaws, Article III, Section 1.)

Submitted by:

Name of Commission Chair: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Commission Chair: _____

At the time that the draft resolution is uploaded in Resolution Tracker, this completed form should be submitted to the University Council Cabinet c/o the Office of Policy and Governance either by campus mail or email to the address above.

Do you know how to make your voice heard?

General survey about VT's new shared governance system

1. What is your role at the University?
Check all that apply
 - Teaching and Research Faculty
 - AP Faculty
 - Classified or University Staff
 - Graduate and Professional Student
 - Undergraduate Student
 - Non-student Wage Employee
 - Other

2. What is your length of time at the university?
 - 0-2 years
 - Longer than 2 years

3. Have you ever served on a governance body at Virginia Tech (University Council, Senate, Commission, or Committee)?
 - Yes
 - No

4. How do you obtain information about what is happening (e.g., resolutions or policies under consideration) in the governance system? (check all that apply)
 - Through the governance website (www.governance.vt.edu)
 - Through the Virginia Tech News (daily email)
 - From my senate representative
 - From peers/colleagues
 - From communications through department head (e.g., Provost's weekly email)
 - N/A

5. Do you know how to communicate your views/ideas/concerns about issues at the university or resolutions/policies under consideration?
 - Yes
 - No

6. Do you know how to become a representative in one of the shared governance bodies (senates, committees, commissions, University Council) at Virginia Tech?
 - Yes
 - No

7. How confident are you that any concerns you express to one of the governance representatives or bodies will be handled with fair consideration?
 - Very confident
 - Somewhat confident
 - Fairly confident
 - Not confident
 - No opinion

8. Please provide any feedback about the governance system.

Discussion Questions for Senates, Commissions, Department Heads Council, and Council of College Deans

1. How well are the roles of commissions, senates, University Council Cabinet, University Council, and the President understood?
2. How well are the approval path of a resolution and timeline understood? How might this be streamlined?
3. Are any important constituencies missing from membership on your commission/senate? If so, which one(s)?
4. One of the goals of the new governance structure was to reduce the size of University Council and balance representation on University Council more appropriately. Would you recommend any changes?
5. Has it been difficult to fill the positions on your commission/senate? If so, what do you think is the reason(s)?
6. How effective are (two-way) communications:
 - Between elected members of your commission or senate and their respective constituencies?
 - Between senate commissions and their respective senates?
 - Between the bodies of shared governance?
7. Are you satisfied with the transparency of the shared governance system?

Suggestions for improvements:

Additional comments about the governance system not captured by the questions above: