

University Council Minutes
February 18, 2019
3:00 PM
1045 Pamplin Hall

Present: Present: Tim Sands (presiding), Rosemary Blieszner, Cyril Clarke, Karen DePauw, Bryan Garey, Susan Short for Guru Ghosh, Alan Grant, Theresa Mayer, Scott Midkiff, Sally Morton, April Myers, Mike Kutnak for Kelly Oaks, Kim O'Rourke, Patty Perillo, Angela Hayes for Charles Phlegar, Dwayne Pinkney, Menah Pratt-Clarke, Julia Ross, Dwight Shelton, Tyler Walters, Sherwood Wilson, Paul Winistorfer, Rajesh Bagchi, Jonathan Bradley, Urs Buehlmann, Bob Hicok, Kimberley Homer, Mary Kasarda, Monika Lawless, John Livingston, Virginia Pannabecker, Tammie Smith, Monty Abbas, Susan Anderson, Eric Kaufman, Jim Kuypers for Cayce Myers, David Tegarden, Lynn Abbott, David Bieri, Susanna Rinehart for Matthew Gabriele, Jia-Qiang He, Yan Jiao, Mary Marchant, Christopher, Zobel, LaTawnya Burleson, Pat Donovan for Velva Groover, Lori Buchanan for Sue Teel, Annette Bailey, Kayla Winbush for Jaylen Foskey, John Massey, Glenda Scales, Christine Tysor, Davon Woodard, Anurag Mantha, Veronica Scott, Sam Felber, Zo Amani, John Ferris, Rachel Iwicki, & Robert Sebek

Absent: Richard Blythe (with notice), Greg Daniel (with notice), Michael Friedlander, Dan Harrington, Steve McKnight, Robert Sumichrast, Lisa Wilkes (with notice), Bettina Koch (with notice), Chris Lawrence, Brian Huddleston, Katrina Loan, Teresa Lyons, Erin Poff, Jeannie Layton-Dudding, Samantha Fried, Conrad Briles, Caed Cunningham, Jacob Davis, Adil Sageer, & Madilynne Tanner

Guests: Matthew Barrow, Kevin Edgar, Jack Finney, Ron Fricker, Hikmet Gursoy, Rachel Holloway, Bill Huckle, Mike Mirabella, Scott Nachlis, Mark Nichols, Gabriele Singh, Rick Sparks,

Guests from Native at Virginia Tech: Skylar Adkins, Doris Brown, Lucia Chambi, Jason Chavez, Nathalie Groot, Alex Mazarr, Miranda Medrano, & Catherine Setaro

Guests from the community: Phyllis Albritton & Michael James-Deramo,

President Sands called the meeting to order at 3:00 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 February 4, 2019

Dr. Sands 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>).

3. Old Business

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Resolution CEOD 2018-19A

Resolution to Observe Indigenous People's Day at Virginia Tech

Ms. Kimberley Homer presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded. After several voiced their full support for this resolution, the motion passed.

4. New Business

Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies

Resolution CGSP 2018-19D

Resolution to Create a New Full-Time Candidate Status for Doctoral Students

Dr. Rajesh Bagchi presented the resolution for first reading. Doctoral students who have passed their preliminary examinations may need to remain enrolled full time. In particular, international graduate students must remain enrolled full time (defined as 9 credit hours per semester for graduate students) in order to satisfy visa requirements; this is not a concern for U.S. students. This resolution would allow doctoral students who have candidate status to be considered full time at Virginia Tech but be charged a special tuition rate equivalent to only three credit hours. Candidate status would be renewable annually for no more than three years as long as the student remains enrolled at Virginia Tech in good standing. This resolution is fully supported by the Graduate Student Assembly. The Faculty Senate and Student Government Association waived their right to comment, and the Staff Senate has not yet commented.

Provost Cyril Clarke expressed his appreciation to the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies for addressing the challenge of the declining graduate student enrollment. Dr. Clarke then addressed reservations he has regarding the resolution for reasons that pertain to Virginia Tech's system of governance as well as the strategies that the university will need to employ to address declining enrollment.

Dr. Clarke stated that the only strong justification for the resolution is financial, as there will be no programmatic changes to the student experience. Traditionally, financial matters such as tuition and fee increases have not generally been in the governance domain of University Council. Dr. Clarke also noted that the Faculty Senate has not provided a report of its analysis of the resolution and has waived their right to conduct a comprehensive review.

Dr. Clarke indicated that the strategy proposed in this resolution is one of several that will need to be considered to address declining enrollment. A working group will be charged in the near future to address this matter. The issue of declining graduate student enrollment is complicated and addressing it in a piece-meal fashion by considering only one of several potential and interconnected actions is poor strategy. Dr. Clarke also pointed out that the approximate net cost of several million dollars to implement this resolution would need to be reallocated from another use, and such decisions must be prioritized relative to other or alternative actions.

Dr. Clarke made one last point by suggesting that if this resolution is ever implemented, the goal should be to complete the PhD program in 4 years. While the change in policy may accelerate attainment of candidate status, it is unlikely to shorten the time to graduation, and may very well prolong it.

Dean Karen DePauw specified that international graduate students and students in the humanities and social sciences who do not have the same duration of support as students in other disciplines, the faculty hiring GRAs on grants, and the departments supporting graduate students would benefit. Virginia Tech would be more competitive with some peers that have reduced tuition post-candidacy, thus potentially increasing our graduate enrollment. Many fellowships, such as NSF, do not provide enough funding to cover stipend and health insurance as well as tuition. If tuition were reduced, more students could be encouraged to apply for fellowships. The number of GRAs we have on extramurally funded grants has decreased due to the cost of supporting graduate students on assistantships. She has heard from faculty and department heads that they are not supporting as many GRAs, opting instead for postdocs, master's students, undergraduate students, and wage workers to make their resources stretch further. Dr. Theresa Mayer indicated that this resolution is similar to the Penn State model and would improve Virginia Tech's competitiveness.

The vice president of the Graduate Student Assembly expressed the graduate students' strong support for the resolution, which would reduce the financial burden on students while in school and for years afterwards. She noted that about 30 percent of graduate students at Virginia Tech are international and would benefit. Dr. Monty Abbas indicated that the resolution would relieve stress on doctoral students and faculty who worry about having insufficient grant funds to support international students. He believes it would be a brilliant investment by the university in that it would allow external grants to support more students in a research group, which in turn would allow faculty to explore more research areas, publish more, and therefore be more competitive in obtaining additional research funding. The resulting momentum ultimately could lead to a much greater payoff in the long run.

President Sands indicated that he shares Dr. Clarke's concerns on the issue of affordability. The resolution would have a significant fiscal impact, which must be weighed against other university priorities. Further, an unintended consequence could be potentially encouraging a five-year window and lengthening the time to completing a degree. Another consideration raised by President Sands is that a student's tuition would be reduced at the point in their degree program when their faculty's effort is ramping up. President Sands asked the Faculty Senate to review and comment on the resolution. He also indicated that he would like to hear from the Graduate School what the university can do to improve graduate education/experience. In conclusion, Dr. Sands stated that this resolution ultimately is a tuition decision, which is the purview of the Board of Visitors.

Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies

Resolution CGSP 2018-19E

Resolution on Policy Management of Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Remission

Dr. Rajesh Bagchi presented the resolution for first reading. Currently policies and procedures related to assistantships and tuition remission are documented in several different places such as the Faculty Handbook, the Graduate Catalog, and the Code of Virginia. This resolution will consolidate all of the policies and procedures related to assistantships and tuition remission in to one document. At the next meeting, University Council will vote on the resolution to consolidate the various policies. The resulting policy is being refined and will be submitted to the Board of Visitors for approval.

5. Announcement of acceptance and posting of Commission Minutes

Dr. Sands noted that 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 including Commission minutes on the agenda is to accept them for filing. University Council By-laws require that policy items be brought forward in resolution form for University Council action.

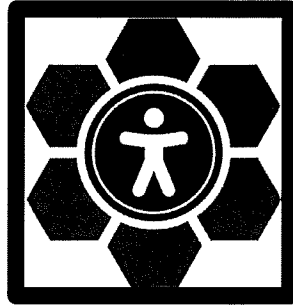
- Commission on Faculty Affairs
January 25, 2019
- Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies
December 5, 2018

7. Presentation

Dr Scott Midkiff, Vice President for Information Technology, introduced Mr. Mark Nicholas, who gave a brief presentation on universal design and accessible technologies (presentation attached).

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:53 p.m.



Content Accessibility

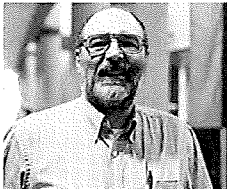
Mark Nichols: Sr. Dir. Universal Design & Accessible Technologies

February 2019



TLOS / Accessible Technologies

The "A-Team"



Hal Brackett
Director of Accessible
Technologies



Christa Miller
Director of Inclusive
Media Design



Rob Fentress
Web Accessibility
Solutions Designer



Martina Svyantek
Graduate Assistant
Extraordinaire



Keep it on!

TLOS / Accessible Technologies



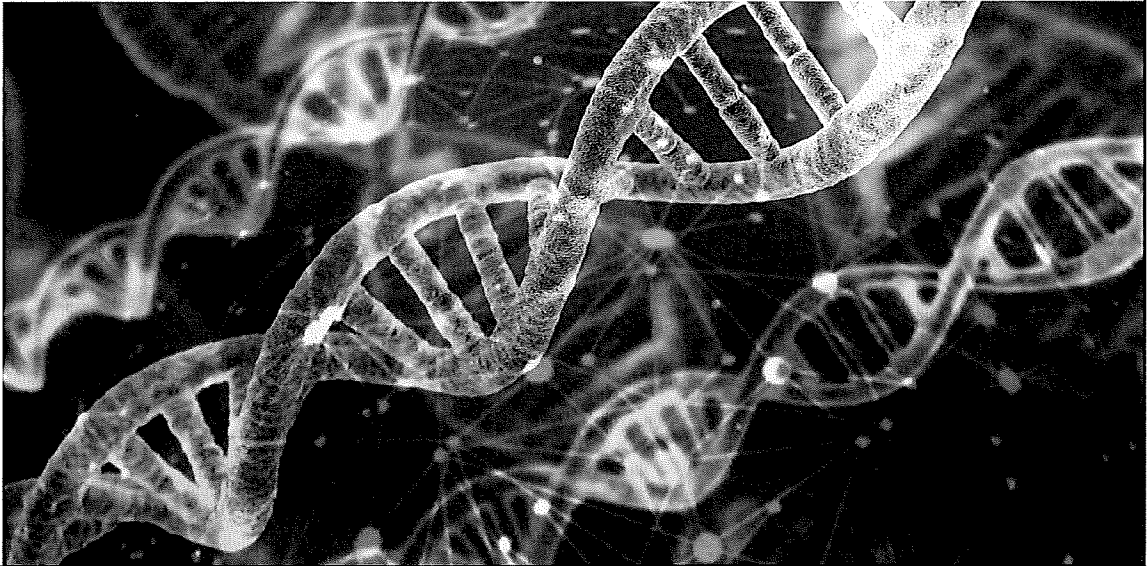
3% = Virginia Tech

19% = United States

15% = World (+1 billion)

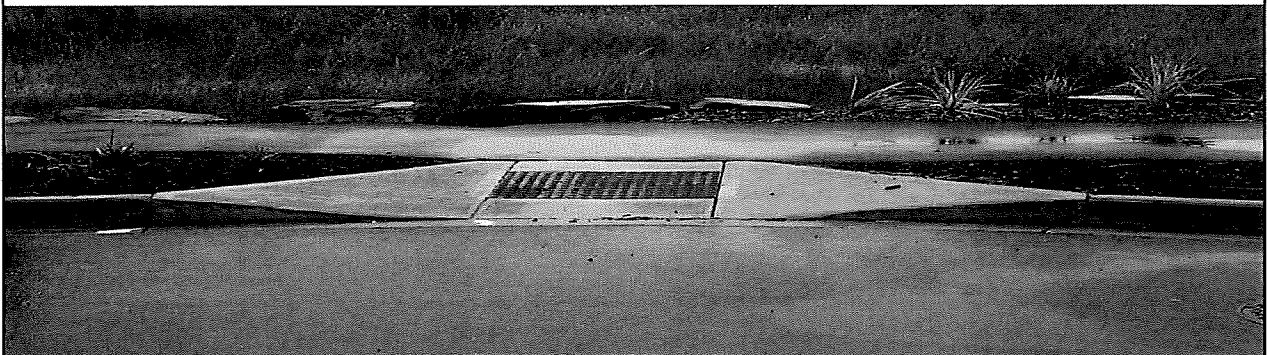
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Reports & World Health Organization

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**“Everything we create,
should be accessible”**



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INSTITUTIONAL RISK: Inaccessible Content



Accessible Technologies

Campaigns for 2018-2019

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C.A.L.M.
AND
CAPTION
ON**

assist.vt.edu/calm/caption-on/

VT DIVISION OF IT
TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED
LEARNING & ONLINE STRATEGIES
VIRGINIA TECH

**KEEP
C.A.L.M.
AND
CHECK
CONTRAST**

assist.vt.edu/calm/check-contrast/

VT DIVISION OF IT
TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED
LEARNING & ONLINE STRATEGIES
VIRGINIA TECH

Accessible Technologies

The Accessibility Network at VT

WEB CONTENT CREATION

INSTRUCTIONAL

MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS

WEB DEVELOPMENT

Accessible Technologies

Accessibility Professional Certification Grant

IAAP

**International Association
of Accessibility Professionals**

- University Relations
- University Libraries
- Business & Management Systems
- Division of IT
- Human Resources
- College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- VT Carilion Research Institute

TLOS / Accessible Technologies

The Future?

Accessible Technologies

Torgersen Hall Room 2020

www.assist.vt.edu



Mark E. Nichols

Sr. Dir. Universal Design &
Accessible Technologies

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