

**Minutes of the Board of Trustees regular meeting Wednesday, December 2, 2015,
APPROVED by the Board February 13, 2016**

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees conducted a regular meeting Wednesday, December 2, 2015 at the Langevin House, Vermont Technical College, Randolph, Vermont.

The following were present:

Trustees: Jerry Diamond, Lynn Dickinson, Kraig Hannum, Church Hindes, Tim Jerman (Vice Chair), Bill Lippert, Karen Luneau, Chris Macfarlane, Jim Masland, Linda Milne, Martha O'Connor (Chair), Mike Pieciak, Ben Simone

Presidents: Elaine Collins, Joyce Judy, Dan Smith

Office of the Chancellor:

Tricia Coates, Director of External and Governmental Affairs
Tom Robbins, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Bill Reedy, Vice President and General Counsel
Elaine Sopchak, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor
Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic and Academic Technology Officer

From the Colleges:

Pam Ankuda, VT Tech Director of Human Resources
Amanda Chaulk, VT Tech Director of Marketing and Communications
Chris Dutton, Director, VT Tech Institute for Applied Agriculture & Food Systems
Michelle Graham, Executive Assistant to President Smith
Maureen Hebert, Director, VT Tech Continuing Education & Workforce Development
Jeff Higgins, Professor & Chair, VT Tech English Department
Cindy Martindill, VT Tech Associate Dean of Nursing
Georgia Mealey, VT Tech senior, Architectural Engineering Program
Carter Mealey, VT Tech graduate, Electromechanical Engineering
Andy Myrick, Full Time Faculty Federation President, VT Tech
Jay Paterson, VT Tech Dean of Students
Phil Petty, VT Tech Academic Dean
Jim Smith, VT Tech Director of IT
Lit Tyler, VT Tech Dean of Administration

From the Public:

Steve Wisloski, Deputy State Treasurer
Steve Zind, Vermont Public Radio
Steven Whitaker

Chair O'Connor called the meeting to order at 3:21 p.m. She announced that at 4:45 p.m. there would be time for brief comments from the public. After the meeting, the Board would recess briefly and reconvene at President Smith's house for a meeting with students, followed by dinner, with no business being conducted. The Board would adjourn at 7:30 p.m. and reconvene the next morning at 8:45 a.m. when the regular meeting will begin.

Professor Jeff Higgins gave a presentation to the Board regarding retention and attrition at VT Tech. His presentation is attached to these minutes.

Associate Dean of Nursing Professor Cindy Martindill presented an overview of the VT Tech Nursing program. Her presentation is attached to these minutes.

President Smith gave an overview of Norwich Farm. The college closed on the open space with the Upper Valley Land Trust and retained 10 acres and the farm infrastructure along Turnpike Road. They have recruited a local farmer as a tenant with 30 head of Holsteins. They have also recruited a cheese entrepreneur partner who is advising on the development of a cheese and dairy lab. In March a short course in cheesemaking will be held on site. Equipment on the farm is funded in part by the TAACCCT grant as well as a Working Lands Enterprise Board grant. Upgrades to the house are planned in the spring to prepare it for student residency by fall 2016. An advisory board for the farm has been meeting for the last year—including former Board chair Mike Audet, Alison Hooper of Vermont Creamery, Diane Bothfeld of the Department of Agriculture, and Sam Lincoln of Lincoln Farm. VT Tech's cheese entrepreneur partner is an industry expert. They are also partnering with local social service agencies. They are also working with Senator Leahy's office to secure a National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant to support beginning farmers. VT Tech held a recent open house with dairy and diversified agriculture students and is working on providing their support needs. The transition from a dairy herd at the Water Street Farm is being explored; there is now a small herd of beef cattle and they are looking at diversifying further.

President Smith also provided an update on the biodigester. Crop land productivity has increased, a result of high nutrient effluent. The productivity of the digester and fields provides learning opportunities on climate change, nutrient management, and carbon reduction in the environment.

The college is aggressively marketing the Norwich Farm experience and a certificate program in dairy management; they hope to see results in fall 2016 enrollment. Unbundling applied dairy has made it accessible to many more students.

The digester is providing a valuable instructional public purpose. VT Tech has received approval for a solid waste management certificate, at they are looking for more grant support. The college fares better running the digester than shutting it down.

President Smith introduced students Georgia Mealey and Carter Mealey, winners of the college's business plan competition. Georgia Mealey is a senior in the Architectural Engineering program, and Carter Mealey is a graduate of the Electromechanical Engineering bachelor's program and is currently taking a course at VT Tech part time. Both students are preparing to compete in the LaunchVT Collegiate Business Pitch Competition. They presented to the Board their plan for a standalone, high capacity storage unit that would allow consumers to store entire digital collections of movies and media for low cost.

Chair O'Connor opened the floor to public comment. Audience member Steven Whitaker shared his opinions regarding the end of Vermont Interactive Technologies. He stated that the state colleges and administration are acting in a way that will damage the 25-year investment in VIT. He said the State feels pressure to vacate VIT studios located on VSC property by the end of the year. He referred to the capital bill, which he claimed prohibits this and stipulates that the legislature will determine the ownership of VIT property. He expressed concern that there is no documentation of VIT systems assembled over the years. He stated that the replacement systems being implemented by the VSC do not accommodate the public hearing function of VIT. He requested that the Board learn more about the situation and prohibit the colleges from evicting the five studios. He asked that the Board require the VSC to come back to the table and work with the statewide planning initiative to discuss how to move forward with the state. He stated that he had requested records that show how much the new VSC systems would cost and determined there is no real savings, and there are still unaccounted for costs. He stated that the VSC had three months to provide this information and waited until the last day to do so. Mr. Whitaker stated he is willing to settle pending litigation over this issue if the VSC would to come to the table and develop a new plan to save money and enhance distance learning programs. He shared that he has provided background information on the situation to Trustee Masland. He asked the Board to take action at the next day's meeting to preclude the dismantling of VIT. Chair O'Connor stated that the topic will not be on the warned agenda for December 3rd, but that she will talk to the Chancellor and the presidents and update herself on the topic.

Chair O'Connor declared the Board meeting to be in recess at 4:55 p.m., to reconvene after 5 p.m. at President Smith's house for a meeting with students. The Board will adjourn after dinner and return at 8:45 a.m. on December 3rd.

Retention/Attrition Study Fall 2015

Philip Petty, Dean of Academic Affairs
Rosemary Distel, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
Jeffrey Higgins, Professor, EHSS Department

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Charge from Senior Leadership Team Retreat, Summer 2015

Why students do not return to
Vermont Tech

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Agenda-SLT Retention/Attrition Study

“Why students do not return to Vermont Tech”

- Statistical Sample
- Phone Survey Results
- Department Chairs Queried
- Faculty Quotes
- Next Steps
- Q & A

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Inside the Numbers

(a “snapshot” Fall 2014 to Fall 2015)

- Fall 14: 1,329 matriculated
- Spring 15: 103 did not return (7.75%)
- Spring 15: 1,288 matriculated
- Fall 15: 109 did not return (8.4%)
- AY14-15: 1391 – 212 = 15%

*In terms of student retention among first-time, full-time students who enrolled at 4-year degree-granting institutions in 2012, about 80 percent returned the following fall (in 2013). At public 4-year institutions, the overall retention rate was 80 percent.

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Why did the students not return?

- Fall 2015: 109 did not return from Spring 2015
- 13 Academically Dismissed
- 26 VAST undeclared majors
- 70 "unknown"
- Financial Aid Office surveys non-returners with little response
- 70 phone calls/40 respondents for this mini-study

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40 non-returners responded

1. "Too intense" (19)
2. Taking a break/will return (9)
3. Changed mind about vocation (6)
4. No financial aid (6)

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Do faculty (department chairs) know why their students don't return?

- Queried Department Chairs via email
- Provided list of students in their major
- All departments responded within 48 hours
 - Some knew immediately
 - Others held department meetings to review names (99% response rate per student)

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Quotes from Faculty

- A.A....struggled with Physics
- L.H....struggled with ELT-1031 but did very well at times, struggles to learn
- J. L....did well on hw in ELT-1031 but failed to turn in lab reports
- J. P...very busy at work, quality of work for presentation graphics was excellent...suspect no time
- J.S....struggled with ELT-1051
- A.S....didn't he graduate? (left with associate's degree)

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Quotes from Faculty

B.H. This one upsets me...was one of our best and original students, had a great background of some college in Canada & other locations, and was doing very well in the program. Fall of Junior year he found a girlfriend, moved in with her, then broke up, and stopped coming to classes. NOTHING I did, nor the other professors could convince him that this was not a good idea. He then dropped all his courses for the SPRING 2015 semester. He refused to answer phone calls, e-mails, return calls, and just stopped attending altogether.

D.M. In one sentence, simply a student who was not ready for college...did poorly in most subjects, despite assigning him tutors and asking him to step up to the plate, he never did. Apparently he had a girlfriend at UVM, and spent almost 100% (rarely in the dorm ever), of his time over there at "Party School Central" having fun.

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Quotes from Faculty

N.G. Bright, good student, but did not have the ambition, passion, or interest to actually continue in program. Peers said he spent every waking moment in his room playing with graphic games on his phone and iPad and Computer, and when I approached him several times, as his advisor, he said that he was going to change majors and go to a school that offered graphic design, game design, and so forth.

O.E. He is a disabled Veteran that already had a degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University...since he was not actually one of my BS degree students, I didn't work with him at all, and I'm not sure what he is even doing now, but he appears to have somehow gotten a job, and I think just walked away from it all. I have to find out more about that. He started sometime in SPRING 2015, but has not been around since early summer. I will find out more, but again, he already had a degree and was just using the convenience of our program, so it doesn't really count for attrition per se

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Quotes from Faculty

- J.H. was not interested
- M.S. failed a major course
- L.T. had financial issues
- B.S. forgot to complete the graduation application- but should have graduated from our BS program
- L.N. completed all of the requirements for her BS degree except for 2 electives so to save money she is taking them at a community college near her home and will graduate this spring
- K.T. was rejoining the military

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Quotes from Faculty

C.W. hasn't quite completed her degree--but we should probably award tenure to her. She is a remarkably capable young woman who struggles with issues that are entirely non-academic. She has started and dropped out several times. She only has a few classes left. They are all spring semester classes. I hope she will return in the spring and give it another shot. I will be in touch with her soon to ask her about enrolling for the spring.

K.S. started at the Williston campus last fall. She is a phenomenal student. Her brother got his BS.BUS from us. She really liked us, but she liked her boyfriend better. He decided to move to Florida and wanted her to go with him. You know how that goes. We are no match for a true love. She said she was going to continue school in Florida. I hope she does because she is incredibly capable.

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Why did the students not return?

Phone Survey

1. Too intense
2. Taking a break/will return
3. Changed mind about vocation
4. No financial aid

Faculty Experience

1. Academics
2. Life Circumstances
3. Incorrect major

Next Steps

- Make Annual Qualitative Data Collection on Non-Returners Standard Operating Procedure
- Use That Data to Drive Allocation of Resources
- Provide Professional Development for Faculty Advisors
- Wrap Around to Admissions for Students Intending to Reactivate

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Vermont Tech Nursing Program

Board of Trustees Meeting
December 2, 2015

Dr. Cindy Martindill
Associate Dean of Nursing

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Vermont Tech Mission

- Nursing Program Commitment
 - Life Long Learning
 - Accessibility
 - Affordability


- Quality Programs

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Life Long Learning

- Career Ladder Approach to Nursing
 - PN
 - RN/ADN
 - RN to BSN
- Two ways to progress up the ladder
 - Direct Progression
 - Opt out and Opt back in at various points along the ladder



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Life Long Learning

- Practical Nurse Certificate Program (PN)
 - Accredited by ACEN/Approved by the VBON
 - 10 months-3 semesters
 - Practical Nurse licensure (LPN)


- 2015 graduates-138
- 2016 Enrollment-148

- Direct Progression to ADN/RN
 - 76%



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Life Long Learning



- Associate Degree Program (ADN/RN)
 - Accredited by ACEN/Approved by VBON
 - LPN entry requirement
 - Additional 2 semesters
 - Associate Degree
 - Registered Nurse licensure (RN)


- 2015 Grads -147
- 2016 enrollment-147

- Direct Progression to BSN
 - 20%



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Life Long Learning



- Bachelors of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN)
 - Accredited by ACEN/Approved by VBON
 - Post licensure program
 - RN to BSN
 - RN entry requirement
 - Flexible completion
 - 2 years full time-6 years part time
 - May take time off during program
 - Bachelors Degree


- 2015 Grads - 3 (first class)
- Current enrollment-62 (active)

- “BSN in Ten” Movement




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Accessibility



10 Locations throughout Vermont (PN and ADN/RN programs)


- Northwest Region
 - Williston (campus)
 - St. Albans (distance)
- Northeast Kingdom
 - Newport (distance)
 - Lyndonville (distance)
 - White River Junction (distance)
- Southeast Region
 - Brattleboro (campus)
 - Springfield (distance)
- Southwest Region
 - Bennington (campus)
 - Middlebury (distance)
- Central Region
 - Randolph (campus)



Vermont Tech Nursing Sites

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Accessibility




- Program Delivery
 - PN and ADN/RN programs (pre-licensure)
 - Traditional classroom (4 sites)
 - ITV/Telepresence (6 sites)
 - Interactive modality
 - Faculty rotate sites regularly for face-to-face time with students
 - BSN program (post-licensure)
 - 100% Online

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Accessibility




- Program Delivery
 - Provide classes and clinical experiences within the students home community/region
 - Allows student to maintain family and community commitments
- Student Profile
 - PN
 - Age (avg)-31
 - Married/Sig Other-74%
 - Children-82%
 - Single Parent-17%
 - ADN/RN
 - Age (avg)-33
 - Married/Sig Other-79%
 - Children-82%
 - Single Parent-17%
 - RN to BSN
 - Age (avg)-35
 - Married/Sig Other-70%
 - Children-65%
 - Single Parent-19%



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Affordability




- Career ladder approach
 - Allows student to increase their earning power with each year of education
 - Provides workforce for the local communities
- (LNAs: \$12.00/hr – \$26,000 /year)
- LPNs: \$18.00-21.00/hr – \$42,000 to 44,000/year
- RNs: \$27-30/hr – \$57,000 to 68,000/year

*Brattleboro area

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Affordability




- Huge impact on the economics of a family

“I just got my offer letter for my first Nursing job [at the Springfield Prison]! Mind you I’m used to seeing the salary for a convenience store clerk [7.50/hr], my jaw dropped! \$24.50 an hour! OMG, I’m giddy!! I’m sooo excited for my family right now! It is my salary and my husband’s all in one! I almost feel like my life is getting good . . . “


(Springfield, 2015 PN graduate)

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Affordability



- Delivery model allows students to remain in own community with minimum travel and live at home
- Allows students to continue to work during school
- Student Profile
 - PN
 - Travel time to class-27 min one way
 - Primary family support-31.7%
 - ADN/RN
 - Travel time to class-34 min one way
 - Primary family support-32%
 - RN to BSN
 - Travel time to class-0
 - Primary family support-68%



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Positive Program Outcomes

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- Completion Rates
 - PN 84%
 - ADN 96%
 - Student/Faculty Relationships
 - Small teacher/student ratios
 - Clinical 9:1
 - Begin the relationship early-at date of acceptance
 - Develop a sense of community
 - Support
 - Tutoring (available at all sites)
- Licensure Pass Rates
 - LPN 94%
 - RN 85%
- Employment Rates
 - PN-95%
 - RN/ADN-97%
 - BSN-100%

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On-going Collaborations

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- Commended by our accreditation site visit team
- Ongoing
 - VSC
 - CCV
 - LSC
 - Community
 - North Country Hospital
 - Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital
 - SVC and Southwest Vermont Medical Center
- New
 - Designated Cohorts (Fall, 2016)
 - Dartmouth Hitchcock Hospital (ADN/RN)
 - Kindred Healthcare (PN)
 - Articulation Agreement (Fall, 2016)
 - Southern Maine Community College-Central

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Vermont Tech Nursing

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- Committed to continuing to offer *quality* nursing education that is
 - Affordable
 - Accessible
 - Contributes to life long learning and the career advancement of Vermonters and beyond

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Questions

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