

Minutes of the VSC Board of Trustees Education, Personnel, and Student Life Committee meeting Friday, March 24, 2017 – APPROVED August 23, 2017

Note: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent meeting.

The VSC Board of Trustees Education, Personnel, and Student Life Committee met on Friday, March 24, 2017 in the Stearns Performance Space at Johnson State College.

Committee Members present: Kraig Hannum (Chair), Lynn Dickinson, Morgan Easton, Karen Luneau, Martha O'Connor, Mike Pieciak (by phone)

Absent: Jim Masland

Other Trustees: Jerry Diamond, Tim Jerman, Linda Milne, Aly Richards

From the Chancellor's Office: Kevin Conroy, Chief Information Officer
Todd Daloz, Associate General Counsel
Elaine Sopchak, Administrative Director
Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor
Sophie Zdatny, General Counsel
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the colleges:

Jonathan Davis, Dean of Students, Lyndon State College
Barb Flathers, Vice President, VSCUP
Barbara Martin, Dean of Administration, CCV
Sharron Scott, Dean of Administration, Johnson State College
Dotty Spoerl, IT Director, Johnson State College
Danielle Spring, Conferences & Events Director, Johnson State
Jay Paterson, Dean of Student Affairs, Vermont Technical College
Dennis Proulx, Dean of Students, Castleton University
Lit Tyler, Dean of Administration, Vermont Technical College
Beth Walsh, President, VSCUP
Heather Weinstein, Dean of Students, CCV
Michele Whitmore, Dean of Students, Johnson State College

Guests: Jennifer St Jean, State of Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs

1. Call to Order

The meeting start was delayed due to bad weather. The attending Committee members chose to skip the approval of the minutes temporarily and begin discussion of revisions to Policy 301, but would not take action because there was no quorum. General Counsel Sophie Zdatny introduced Jennifer St. Jean from the Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs. Ms. Zdatny explained that the revisions to Policy 301 cover expanded benefits and do not take any benefits away. The Committee did not take action on the revisions to Policy 301 at this time.

The Committee then moved on to discussing the recommendations for emeritus faculty. Chief Academic Officer Yasmine Ziesler reviewed the nominations from Castleton University. Trustee O'Connor asked for a list of faculty granted emeritus status to date. At this time Trustee Dickinson arrived, establishing quorum. Chair Hannum called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the November 16, 2016 Meeting

Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Dickinson seconded the approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Revisions to Policy 301

There were no further questions on this topic. Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Easton seconded the revisions. The Committee approved the revisions to Policy 301 unanimously.

4. Recommendations for Emeritus Faculty

Lyndon State College Interim President Nolan Atkins discussed their nominee, Professor Ron Rossi.

Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Dickinson seconded the approval of emeritus status for Castleton University Professor Robert Gershon. The Committee approved the resolution unanimously.

Trustee Easton moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the approval of emeritus status for Castleton University Professor John Gillen. The Committee approved the resolution unanimously.

Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Dickinson seconded the approval of emeritus status for Castleton University Professor Robert Johnson. The Committee approved the resolution unanimously.

Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Dickinson seconded the approval of emeritus status for Lyndon State College Professor Ronald Rossi. The Committee approved the resolution unanimously.

5. Recommendations for VSC Faculty Fellows

Dr. Ziesler introduced the Faculty Fellow process and presented the nominees.

Trustee Easton moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the Faculty Fellow nomination for Castleton University Professor Adam Chill. The Committee approved the resolution unanimously.

Trustee Dickinson moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the Faculty Fellow nomination for Lyndon State College Professor Barclay Tucker. The Committee approved the resolution unanimously.

6. Northern Vermont University Mission Statement

Johnson State College President Elaine Collins shared that they are working on their NEASC proposal for substantive change. To comply with NEASC Standard 1, they have drafted a new mission statement for the institution. The communities of both campuses had opportunities to contribute to the discussion. The Committee would be approving the mission statement only; the vision statement does not have to be approved. Trustee Diamond inquired why the vision statement is included in the resolution if it does not need to be approved. President Collins answered that it is acceptable for the Committee to approve both. General Counsel Sophie Zdatny stated the resolution is appropriate as is. Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Dickinson seconded the resolution. The Committee approved the resolution unanimously.

7. Student Trustee Report on the VSCSA

Trustee Easton reported that the VSCSA has appointed two students to serve as public relations interns; Tyler McInniss (LSC) and Brendan Walsh (JSC) will share a \$1000 stipend. They are compiling a multi-campus event calendar at www.vscsa.wordpress.com.

The application for student trustee is available on this website and the VSC portal. They are establishing a newsletter, Twitter feed, and Facebook page. Trustee Easton inquired about a social media policy for the VSC—VSCSA wants to follow a system policy rather than attempt to comply with individual policies from the colleges. She is working with Associate General Counsel Todd Daloz on this question.

Regarding the tobacco free policy, Johnson State College has nine zones for smoking, and are applying for two grants applying for. Vermont Tech is telling students on tours about the 2018 policy change. Castleton University has sent out a thorough update to students.

Chair O'Connor inquired and the Committee discussed whether the VSCSA and student government meetings are required to follow open meeting law.

8. Review and Discussion of Policy 109 Summary Data and Reports

Dr. Ziesler reminded the Committee about the recent changes to Policy 109. She reviewed the Board guide enclosed in the materials, and enrollment trends across all programs. Trustee Pieciak asked for more data regarding the percent increase in program enrollment from year to year.

9. Discussion of Student Mental Health with VSC Student Affairs Council

The deans of students presented on what each college is doing for mental health services. There are overall high levels of anxiety, depression, and need for stress management. There is no mandate for mental health services from the federal level. Beyond one-on-one relationship counseling, the colleges provide addiction support, life coaching, and academic support.

Johnson State College Dean of Students Michele Whitmore described their wellness center, which includes 8-10 staff members, two master clinicians, three to four graduate students, and two undergraduate interns. Services offered include counseling, group counseling, guidance on collaboration, and a well-utilized relaxation room. Collaborations exist with residence life, peer mentors, the first year experience office and academic support services. Statistics reflect 722 sessions held for students, with topics including anxiety, abuse history, depression, and suicide ideation. More education is desired by staff and faculty. Future hopes are for additional resources to be proactive: health educators and experts on the ground, especially in evening hours.

Lyndon State College Dean of Students Jonathan Davis reported that the college wellness program has one full-time employee, two part-time counselors, a supervising physician three hours per week, and a part time registered nurse and physician's assistant. They want to increase outreach and education. Counseling demands are up even with lower enrollment. There are fewer staff in residence life and academic support. They have an online early alert system with weekly follow-up meetings. The location of services at Brown House can be an issue. There is nine-month service but counselors also show up in the summer. Dean Davis stated that they sometimes know what the students need before they arrive on campus, but also often don't know until the students get there. Usage increases even though enrollment is declining because students are consumers, and faculty and staff are highly knowledgeable.

Vermont Technical College Dean of Student Affairs Jay Paterson shared that the college has defined for students the scope of their eligibility and what the college can and cannot do. They have a counselor from the veterans center, two other counselors, and a consulting psychologist. They have applied for a grant to assist with suicide prevention efforts. All at Vermont Tech understand it is everybody's job to help with these issues.

Community College of Vermont Dean of Students Heather Weinstein reported that because CCV is non-residential the needs are very different. Only a third of students are traditional age; the average age is 27. There is a broad variety of needs: housing, childcare, food scarcity, mental health. They have contracted with United Way's Working Bridges program and brought 211 to CCV to make connections and referrals. The program assists students in getting services on a sliding fee scale, and helps faculty and staff too. They are rebranding and re-promoting the service. Academic advisors are an important resource too. They have deeply established relationships with students and are identifying barriers. CCV has established a college intervention team that reviews cases of students of concern. They have contracted with a psychiatrist for counsel as needed. Next year they hope to implement a web form for faculty to flag concerns about students. The mental health needs of their students reflect similar needs of Vermonters.

Castleton University Dean of Students Dennis Proulx shared that they utilize a licensed psychologist, two interns, and two private practitioners, as well as RNs, health educators, and a sexual assault prevention specialist. There were 132 crisis events in 2010, and 260 in 2015-2016. 75% of users say counseling has helped them remain in college, so it's important for retention. These services are not covered by insurance; they come out of the operations budget. Students would not use services if they took insurance due to privacy concerns.

Trustee Dickinson inquired whether peer involvement helps. Dean Proulx answered that students are more aware and comfortable with mental health services. The need for services is not specific to certain years but is spread evenly throughout the classes.

Trustee Richards inquired whether Castleton is the only college in the system that does not use insurance. Dean Proulx responded that Castleton refers students to other practitioners who do accept insurance. Dean Davis shared that Lyndon State bills for medical services and is starting to bill for mental health services. Dean Paterson said Vermont Tech does not have licensed practitioners on staff. They will pay for the first three visits and the goal is that the student shifts to his or her own practitioner and insurance. Generalized intake leads to more specific referrals. Lyndon State's services are for residential students only; there are no services for commuters or off-campus students.

Trustee Easton mentioned food insecurity and that the Vermont Higher Education Council is hosting a panel on the topic on March 31st. Each of the colleges maintains various relationships with local food shelves and Sodexo to address this issue.

10. Other Business

Dr. Ziesler informed the Board about the upcoming Governor's Summit on Substance Use Disorder Workforce being held at Vermont Tech in Randolph in April.

11. Public Comment

Trustee Diamond inquired about credentials of the providers supplying mental health services and wondered about the VSC's liability. Dean Proulx assured him that all the services are being provided by correctly licensed practitioners. Counseling in a clinical sense without a license is not being practiced. General Counsel Zdatny stated that support services are different from counseling. Short term support services are being provided and more long term needs are being referred out. Chancellor Spaulding reminded the Committee that if the VSC is using accepted best practices then insurance would protect the system from claims. Ms. Zdatny stated the colleges have various types of intervention teams in place to keep communication about students of concern happening.

12. The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.