


TO: Long Range Planning Committee
Michael Pieciak, Chair
Janette Bombardier, Vice-Chair
Megan Cluver
Lynn Dickinson
Dylan Giambatista
Adam Grinold
Bill Lippert
Karen Luneau

FROM: Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor 

RE: Long Range Planning Committee Meeting on October 21, 2019

DATE: October 18, 2019

Next Steps in response to the Serving Vermont Students by Securing the Future of the Vermont State Colleges Whitepaper:

To assist in prioritizing the hundreds of suggestions received to address the challenges facing the Vermont State Colleges System and continue our conversation on appropriate next steps for the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC), my office circulated a concept paper suggesting a focused look at each VSCS institution in light of the six challenges identified in the whitepaper, as well as several system level initiatives to improve student affordability and success, which, in turn, will provide financial benefits to our colleges.

As a result of your committee's October 11 meeting and a subsequent meeting with the Council of Presidents this week, I suggest the following approach to move the Secure the Future initiative forward:

- 1) Recognizing that the challenges affect each institution differently, the LRPC should charge the presidents with reporting to the BOT what specific action steps they are taking and will take in light of the six challenges identified in the whitepaper, to ensure:
 - Consistent positive operating results.
 - Sustainable campus configurations consistent with realistic enrollment and revenue projections.
 - Increased opportunities for non-traditional students.
 - Improved affordability for students.
 - Improved retention and graduation rates

Status reports would be delivered in December and March, with a final report in June.

- 2) Concurrently, the Executive Committee should work with the Chancellor to conduct a review of services, staffing, expenses, and location options for the Office of the Chancellor.
- 3) Long Range Planning Committee should task EPSL and F&F with reviewing the status of system wide initiatives currently underway or planned that address the six identified challenges. Over the next year, Committees should review successes to date, barriers to success, and recommend any potential board actions needed to elevate and accelerate the following priorities garnered from suggestions received as part of the Securing the Future process:
 - Friction free credit transfer (possibly updating policies 108 and 111) – EPSL
 - Direct admissions – EPSL
 - Accelerated usage of open educational resources – EPSL
 - Flexible and quicker degree completion options for students – EPSL
 - More industry recognized credentials – EPSL
 - Improved retention and graduation rates – EPSL
 - Shared services and consolidated business functions (review of recent actions and where to go from here) – F&F

It is my hope that the LRPC will approve on Monday the suggested next steps outlined above. Prior to approval, the Committee might discuss:

- *Are the areas of focus for the institution level (#1) reviews the right ones? Are there some areas that should be added or deleted? How would the LRPC like this information to be presented?*
- *Recognizing there were a great many more suggestions received worthy of consideration, but also recognizing that we need to focus on a limited number of priorities (#2), are the solutions listed above the right ones? Are there others that should be added or some that should be deleted?*

Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to the Committee meeting on Monday.

Cc: VSC Board of Trustees
Council of Presidents

**Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees
Long Range Planning Committee Meeting**

October 21, 2019

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. October 11, 2019
3. Committee discussion: Next steps identified in Chancellor's 10/18/19 memo.
 - a. Future reporting by Presidents on actions taken by institutions to confront identified challenges.
 - b. Executive Committee review of services, staffing, expenses, and location options for Chancellor's Office
 - c. Tasking Education, Personnel and Student Life and Finance and Facilities with review of systemwide initiatives to confront identified challenges.
4. Other business
5. Comments from the public

MATERIALS:

1. October 11, 2019 Minutes
2. Secure the Future Input Survey Results

Item 1:
Minutes of the October 11,
2019 Meeting

**Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Long Range Planning Committee meeting held
Friday, October 11, 2019, at the Office of the Chancellor, Montpelier, VT –
UNAPPROVED**

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

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees Long Range Planning Committee conducted a meeting Friday, October 11, 2019, at the Office of the Chancellor, Montpelier, Vermont

Committee members: Michael Pieciak (Chair), Janette Bombardier (Vice Chair, via phone), Megan Cluver, Lynn Dickinson, Dylan Giambatista (via phone), Adam Grinold (via phone), Bill Lippert (via phone), Karen Luneau

Other Trustees Present: Izzy Gogarty, Churchill Hindes

Presidents: Elaine Collins, Joyce Judy (via phone), Pat Moulton, Karen Scolforo (via phone)

Chancellor's Office Staff: Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director
Meg Walz, Project Manager, Library Coordinator
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the Colleges: Kate Gold, Director of Advising Resources, VSCUP President, Northern Vermont University
Linda Olson, President, VSCFF, Castleton University
Sharron Scott, Dean of Administration, Northern Vermont University

From the public: Calvin Cutler, Reporter, WCAX
Lola Duffort, Reporter, VT Digger
Adam Norton, VSEA

1. Chair Pieciak called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

Chair Pieciak shared that this extra meeting was scheduled in order for the Committee to have more time to review submitted ideas for Secure the Future to ensure the Committee is keeping pace with the objective of having a recommendation to the Board by the December 2, 2019 Board meeting.

2. Approval of the minutes

- a. August 26, 2019

Trustee Dickinson moved and Trustee Cluver seconded the motion to approve the meeting minutes from August 26, 2019. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Committee Discussion: Next steps in the *Secure the Future* project

- a. Chancellor Spaulding to present Concept 1.1

Chancellor Jeb Spaulding stated that the Concept 1.1 paper is meant as a starting point for conversation. It lays out two possible areas of focus; one at the institutional level and one at the system level. With near unanimous agreement on the forces that are bearing down on higher education institutions like the VSCS, it is now time to recognize that those forces may have different effects on each institution in our system. Therefore, one suggestion is to address the forces institution by institution in partnership with the leadership at each campus. Through limited duration committees for each institution, led by the President, along with a designated Trustee and representation from the colleges and other relevant parties, discussion of the challenges identified in the white paper can occur with specific areas of focus and metrics specified by the LRPC/BOT. The report from the sub-committees would be delivered at the June Board meeting with status reports at the December 2, 2019 and March 28, 2019 meetings. When focusing on the system level challenges, Concept 1.1 targets three specific areas: affordability, flexibility to better meet student needs, and student success. The affordability section addresses new options for quicker degree completion, systemwide initiatives for free textbooks, and tuition reduction at CCV (a pipeline for the other institutions). Flexibility to meet students needs might focus on stackable credentials and friction free transfer of credits. Student success would focus on boosting retention and graduation rates. All four presidents voiced commitment to working with the Board and Committee on these initiatives, while also stressing that each has individual bandwidth concerns due to heavy workloads. Trustee Cluver voiced concern at setting up four silos of ideas for the four separate institutions and stressed that the more collaborative the work is, the better. Trustee Bombardier suggests four categories for enacting the ideas: 1. Campus level, 2. System level, 3. Reduction of administrative overhead, 4. Real estate issues. Trustee Cluver suggested making a list of where third-party expertise can best be leveraged for our investments.

- b. Presentation: *Secure the Future* Input, survey review

Chief Academic Officer Yasmine Ziesler gave a brief overview of the survey and its results. She described the scoring system and how the ranking of the ideas occurred. The highest-ranking ideas were identified as good for students and/or would produce meaningful results. Flexible

pathways for students, year-round instruction and downsizing with grace are at the top of the results.

c. Discussion: What items should be added to or deleted from Concept 1.1?

Discussion centered around system wide strategic partnerships with regards to real estate and the appropriate role and scope of the Chancellor's office as two items that should be added to the Concept paper.

d. Discussion: Institutional Task Forces – purpose, membership, scope of work, timeframe, metrics?

The structure of the individual institution task forces would be on a non-operational, high level, with one Trustee per task force. Chancellor Spaulding will engage in further discussion with the Presidents on this at the next Council of Presidents meeting.

4. Other Business

No other business

5. Comments from the public

There were no comments from the public.

Chair Pieciak adjourned the meeting at 5:46 p.m.

Item 2:
Secure the Future Input Survey Results

Items with Total Score of 28+ and score of 8+ on good for students or meaningful benefits	IS IT GOOD FOR STUDENTS AND GOOD FOR VERMONT	IS IT PRACTICAL ?	IS IT POLITICALLY FEASIBLE?	DOES IS PROVIDE MEANINGFUL AND DURABLE FINANCIAL BENEFITS?	Total Score
Offer more flexible pathways to degree completion for working Vermonters.	12	12	10	12	46
Going to year-round instruction to help students complete their programs in 3 years. Four year degrees are too long for some.	14	11	9	10	44
Having a plan to downsize with grace might be beneficial, such as reducing low enrollment programs.	10	13	9	12	44
It is easier for a student to go from CCV to another college than it is to go to another institution within the VSCS; that should be addressed.	12	11	9	10	42
Expand the number of courses that use OER (Open Educational Resources) to reduce costs for students, and potentially for Z-degrees, or zero-cost textbook degrees.	14	9	10	8	41
Our campuses have underutilized resources and facilities. Could the colleges be sharing campus spaces more? For example, the VSCS at Castleton or Bennington? Break down the walls to eliminate transfer problems. Can students float among the colleges?	12	10	8	11	41
Commit to the “Bachelors in 3” concept. Have each college propose “BN3” alternatives within at least 3 majors each year until they are present for all majors where doing so makes sense. This could tie in to the “year-round studies” suggestions.	13	9	8	10	40
Consider adding weekend and evening courses to appeal to working families or students who may not be comfortable taking an online class.	12	10	8	9	39
Share additional services across the system. Look at SUNY. Efficiencies sometimes mean job losses. We should use our funding better. We talk a lot about not being all things to all people. Small programs and small services aren’t possible anymore.	9	10	9	8	36
We need to reduce students’ concerns about whether their credits will transfer between our colleges.	11	9	8	8	36
Can we spread the OC out again, or could the OC use an empty space on a campus, instead of a lease payment?	6	9	10	10	35
Continue to support faculty and staff in the adoption of tech tools, i.e. Canvas.	10	10	9	5	34
VSCS should offer complete online programs, starting at CCV, and ending at whatever college is appropriately suited to the program. We would offer a seamless program, ie. University of Florida system, with the same online training for all faculty.	10	8	8	8	34
We need to address infrastructure and vacancy rate. It is tough to market this campus to students.	10	7	7	10	34
Associates degrees should be embedded in all bachelor’s degree programs.	10	8	8	7	33
One needs to be registered at one VSC institution in order to find out what classes are offered in any semester. We have to let the public know what all of the colleges in the VSC have to offer each semester.	10	9	8	6	33

Items with Total Score of 28+ and score of 8+ on good for students or meaningful benefits	IS IT GOOD FOR STUDENTS AND GOOD FOR VERMONT	IS IT PRACTICAL ?	IS IT POLITICALLY FEASIBLE?	DOES IS PROVIDE MEANINGFUL AND DURABLE FINANCIAL BENEFITS?	Total Score
We need to think about people dipping in and out of college — how are we set up to encourage that? Colleges put up a lot of barriers for adult students.	10	8	7	8	33
Have conversations with AOE, Superintendents and School Boards Association about how we might better meet the needs of public school students.	11	8	8	5	32
How can we support an expansion of Early College?	10	8	6	8	32
Improve diversity, equity and inclusion efforts on campuses to make students feel welcome.	12	9	9	2	32
Analyze and standardize procurement across the system through centralized purchasing to avoid duplication, increase compliance and manage risk.	6	8	5	12	31
Maximize the potential of APL credit by assuring it can transfer and apply to degree programs at other colleges. This is low-hanging fruit for the VSCS. SNHU and Champlain are more effective at this. That's what progressive institutions are doing.	9	8	7	7	31
Offer academic programs that take advantage of the natural resources surrounding each campus, like skiing and mountain biking.	11	8	8	4	31
The system needs a more effective process for modeling universal cost tracking and budgeting.	5	7	7	12	31
Commission a separate 12-month planning process for nursing across VSCS—how to reduce duplication, consumer confusion and strengthen the overall program resulting in a new, integrated VSCS-branded program offered through some alternative pathways.	9	7	7	7	30
Reduce competitiveness between colleges in online programs.	10	8	5	7	30
Streamline central administration: either delegate processes to the colleges or strengthen the central office.	6	9	6	9	30
Three semester master's degrees — we should offer them.	10	7	7	6	30
Commit to “Be accepted at VTC or NVU or CU and attend CU or VTC or NVU” or “Be accepted by one and attend any.” Accept courses for student’s plans of study without regard to where they took them within the VSCS.	10	6	6	7	29
Look at underutilized housing across the system and see if there is a way that VSC provide affordable housing alternatives or to support tourism.	6	6	7	9	28