

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: Sophie Zdatny, Interim Chancellor



RE: Long Range Planning Committee Meeting on June 1, 2020

DATE: May 27, 2020

The Long Range Planning Committee of the Board of Trustees is scheduled to meet from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. via Zoom, for which personalized instructions will be provided separately by e-mail.

The meeting agenda and materials are attached.

cc: VSC Board of Trustees
Council of Presidents

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

June 1, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. October 21, 2019
3. *Secure the Future*
 - a. Overview by Chair on the background to the *Secure the Future* project
 - b. Presentation by Presidents with updates on actions that have been undertaken in response to *Secure the Future* and how each institution is continuing to plan and prepare for the future
4. Committee Discussion: System-wide Task Force
5. Other business
6. Comments from the public

MATERIALS:

1. October 21, 2019 Minutes
2. Overview of System-wide Task Force
3. *Secure the Future* Input Survey Results

Attachment #1

Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Long Range Planning Committee meeting held Monday, October 21, 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 Monday, October 21, 2019, at the Office of the Chancellor, Montpelier, Vermont

Committee members: Michael Pieciak (Chair), Megan Cluver (12:43 p.m.), Lynn Dickinson, Dylan Giambatista, Adam Grinold, Karen Luneau

Absent: Janette Bombardier, Bill Lippert

Other Trustees Present: Churchill Hindes, Jim Masland, Peg Flory, Linda Milne, David Silverman (1:18 p.m.)

Presidents: Elaine Collins, Joyce Judy, Pat Moulton, Karen Scolforo

Chancellor's Office Staff: Tricia Coates, Dir. of External Affairs and Governmental Affairs
Todd Daloz, Associate General Counsel
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director
Jeb Spaulding, Chancellor
Meg Walz, Project Manager
Sophie Zdatny, General Counsel
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the Colleges: Nate Ball, VP VSC-UP, Vermont Technical College
Amy Bremel, VSC-UP, Castleton University
Bailey C., Student, Northern Vermont University
Elijah Clarke, Student, Northern Vermont University
Jonathan Davis, Dean of Students, Northern Vermont University
Kathleen Hunter, Student, Northern Vermont University
Adrienne Hutchin, Student, Northern Vermont University
Laura Jakubowski, Chief Budget & Finance Ofc., Castleton University
Tom Mauhs-Pugh, Provost, Castleton University
Linda Olson, Interim President VSCFF, Castleton University

Andy Pallito, Dean of Administration, Community College of Vermont

Brandon Stroup, Faculty, Northern Vermont University

Littleton Tyler, Dean of Administration, Vermont Technical College

Victoria Zolnoski, Faculty, Northern Vermont University

From the public:

Shawn Brennan, VP, Freeman, French, Freeman

Scott Campbell, State Representative, St. Johnsbury

Kim Creedy-Smith, Business Owner, Lyndonville

Cyndi Miller, American Federation of Teachers, Vermont

Jonathan Wolff, Government Relations Specialist, Primmer, Piper, Montpelier

1. Chair Pieciak called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m.
2. Approval of the minutes
 - a. October 11, 2019

Trustee Dickinson moved and Trustee Giambatista seconded the motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 11, 2019. The motion was approved unanimously.

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 challenges identified in the Chancellor's white paper.
 - 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 committees with review of systemwide initiatives to confront identified challenges.

Chancellor Spaulding gave a review of the steps taken by the LRPC to date: identifying the challenges facing the VSCS and higher education, generally; gathering input throughout the state, including multiple meetings at each VSCS Institution; generating over 200 ideas and suggestions for facing the challenges; and, most recently, evaluating and prioritizing these ideas and suggestions. The Committee then began determining what level (System or Institutional) would benefit most from the implementation of the ideas. The Chancellor then shared the memo of October 18, 2019 (included in meeting materials) that delineates three approaches to move the Secure the Future initiative forward:

- 1) Charge the presidents with reporting to the Board of Trustees what specific action steps they are taking and will take at their respective Institutions, with respect to the six challenges identified in the whitepaper.

- 2) Charge the Board's Executive Committee with working with the Chancellor to conduct a review of services, staffing, expenses and location options for the Office of the Chancellor.
- 3) Charge the Education, Personnel and Student Life Committee and the Finance and Facilities committees with reviewing the status of systemwide initiatives currently underway or planned, that address the six identified challenges. The Committees should then review successes, and barriers to success and recommend Board actions to elevate and accelerate identified priorities.

The Committee then discussed the importance of increased system collaborations, and the importance of developing additional alternative revenue streams at the Institution and System level. Initial reports, including metrics and benchmarks to measure progress, will be delivered to the Board of Trustees by the Chancellor and the Presidents at the December 2, 2019 Board meeting. The Chancellor will work with the Council of Presidents to provide a common template for these reports. A second check-in will be due at the March 28, 2020 Board meeting and the final reports for these items will be due at the June 17, 2020 Board meeting. The Chancellor noted that this timeline was more realistic than the one set forth in the Board's September 18, 2019 resolution.

Trustee Flory moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion to approve the plan as outlined in the Chancellor's October 18, 2019 memo with the additions as discussed.

Chair Pieciak then opened the floor to public comment on the plan and the Committee's work.

4. Comments from the public

Linda Olson, Interim President of the Faculty Federation and Vice-President of Higher Education for AFT-VT, read a statement from the faculty. Full statement included with these minutes as attachment A.

NVU Student Elijah Clarke shared his frustration with class scheduling difficulties.

NVU Student Adrienne Hutchin expressed frustration regarding numerous cancelled classes.

Adjunct Professor Victoria Patrick Zolnoski expressed frustration with lack of communication from the Chancellor's office regarding implementation of the new payroll and benefits system.

State Representative Scott Campbell stressed the importance of finding a way to keep the system together for the future of Vermont and believes that NVU-Lyndon is critical to the local area.

Kim Creedy-Smith, business owner in Lyndonville and Chair of Downtown Revitalization Team, shared that they supported NVU-Lyndon in establishing and opening the coworking space, Do North Coworking and are now working on a grant to open an art gallery in the downtown area. Ms. Creedy-Smith voiced her concern that finances are being funneled into NVU Online to the detriment of the physical campuses.

Chair Pieciak and the Chancellor responded to the public comments, appreciating the input from various members of the broader VSCS community.

The motion to approve the plan as outlined in the Chancellor's October 18, 2019 memo with the additions as discussed was approved unanimously.

5. Other Business

There was no other business.

Chair Pieciak adjourned the meeting at 1:49 p.m.

UNAPPROVED

ATTACHMENT A:

Statement from Linda Olson, Interim President VSCFF on behalf of faculty

The faculty, staff, and students of the Vermont State Colleges, are committed to helping our institutions survive and thrive. They believe in providing affordable, high-quality education to all Vermonters and work hard every day to fulfill that mission. There is no doubt this is a challenging time for the VSCS, and strategic change is necessary for the system's long-term health and survival. Staff and faculty are doing everything possible to help the VSCS weather these difficult times. They are working more hours and taking on more tasks as positions go unfilled due to budget constraints. They are developing new programs to inspire students and train them for 21st century jobs. They have agreed to significant cuts in our benefits to save money for the system. In response to the white paper, campus administrators, faculty, staff, students and community members have offered more than two-hundred suggestions to address the challenges facing the system. Rather than advocate for these, the Chancellor continues to focus on the worst possible outcomes, often blaming his own employees for the problems facing our system. The employees are not the problem; they should be enlisted as allies in building a strong Vermont State College System. Staff, faculty, students and campus administrators deserve a real voice in the decision-making process. It is time to work together to find solutions that will not devastate our rural Vermont communities and deprive Vermont students of opportunity. We must all work together to strengthen the VSCS and create a path to the future. Our students, our communities, and Vermont's economic future depend on it.

Attachment #2

Overview of VSC System Task Force (5/27/20)

1. Membership representing expertise, leadership, and innovation with:
 - Academic programs and curriculum design
 - Instructional delivery
 - Student development and support
 - Community and workforce development partnerships
 - Organizational development
 - Financial operations
2. Balanced representation across institutions and employee groups, but members are not “wearing the hats of” their respective institutions and employee groups in serving on this task force. Members all be considered equal participants, “invited for their thinking, not for their titles.”
3. Members will be nominated by Colleges/Union Leadership and approved by the Interim Chancellor.
4. Task Force is empowered in its work to receive questions and suggestions from individual institutional task forces and to invite input and draw upon additional expertise from within and beyond the system.
5. Task Force to use external facilitator to guide its work, and expectation is that Task Force will engage regularly in communications with the entire VSCS community.
6. Charge to the task force is to review ideas and develop recommendations to
 - address program duplication to ensure quality, financial viability, and access;
 - clarify distinguishing characteristics of member institutions;
 - strengthen VSCS’s focus on core, high-demand programs that meet Vermont workforce and today’s students’ needs;
 - identify sustainable strategies to deliver programs and provide student support in rural areas; and
 - reconfigure the system in organization, finance, governance, and accreditation.
7. Preliminary report of ideas reviewed and potential recommendation areas to be presented to BOT by [TBD, e.g. end of July].

8. BOT to review recommendation areas and as needed provide additional direction/charge to the task force or other entity for continued/follow-up work in August and early September in advance of the September BOT meeting.

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