



THE RECTOR AND VISITORS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

February 18, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Committee on The University of Virginia's College at
Wise:

John G. Macfarlane III, Chair
Whittington W. Clement
Frank M. Conner III
Helen E. Dragas
Barbara J. Fried
William H. Goodwin Jr., Ex-officio
Joe Garofalo, Faculty Consulting Member
Daniel T. Judge, Student Member
Mark W. Clark, Faculty Consulting Member

and

The Remaining Members of the Board:

Frank B. Atkinson	Victoria D. Harker
Mark T. Bowles	Bobbie G. Kilberg
L.D. Britt, M.D.	Tammy S. Murphy
Kevin J. Fay	James V. Reyes
Frank E. Genovese	Jeffrey C. Walker
John A. Griffin	

FROM: Susan G. Harris

RE: Minutes of the Committee on The University of Virginia's
College at Wise on February 18, 2016

The Committee on The University of Virginia's College at Wise of the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia met, in Open Session, at 1:30 p.m., on Thursday, February 18, 2016, in the Auditorium of the Albert & Shirley Small Special Collections Library of the Harrison Institute. John G. Macfarlane III, Chair, presided.

Present were William H. Goodwin Jr., Whittington W. Clement, Frank M. Conner III, Barbara J. Fried, Joe Garofalo, and Daniel T. Judge.

Frank B. Atkinson, L.D. Britt, M.D., Kevin J. Fay, Frank E. Genovese, and Victoria D. Harker also attended.

Present as well were Teresa A. Sullivan, Patrick D. Hogan, Melody S. Bianchetto, Susan G. Harris, Donna P. Henry, W. Thomas Leback, David W. Martel, Debra D. Rinker, Nancy A. Rivers, Colette Sheehy, and Farnaz F. Thompson.

Mr. Macfarlane opened the meeting. After brief remarks and a review of the meeting agenda, Mr. Macfarlane gave the floor to Chancellor Henry.

Report of the Chancellor

Ms. Henry's report began with a review of the Committee's three major goals for FY 2016.

1. Student Recruitment and Retention: The College's strategy for recruiting and marketing has been expanded to include multiple media channels and social media platforms. The website will be enhanced by a search engine optimization and retargeting exercise. One hundred thousand high school seniors have received outreach materials consisting of mailings, personalized website landing pages, personalized electronic messages, and a mobile-friendly admission application. The College has adopted a year-round outreach model for prospective students and has launched a new Facebook campaign targeting Northern Virginia, Tidewater, Richmond, and Southwest Virginia. Two advertisements have been installed at the Tri-Cities Regional Airport. The College is considering billboard advertisements on I-81.

The College is working with the University to extend the reach of the Virginia College Advising Corps. It is pursuing funding for two College graduates to serve as college advisors in two local high schools beginning with the 2016-2017 academic year.

The College has explored five options for busing students to and from other regions of the state. The service would be offered at the beginning and end of each semester and during major breaks. The five options were reviewed. The College will survey its students to assess need and will reinstate on a trial basis the limited van service that had previously been provided to the Tri-Cities Airport and to Abingdon and Bristol where students picked up buses. This service was abandoned because of low ridership. The College is concerned that students will not be able to afford the cost of a regional service. Board members suggested that the service might encourage applications from prospective students who are shying away from applying because of the College's remote location and that the College should consider subsidizing the service as part of its recruitment strategy.

2. Intra-disciplinary Coordination: Efforts to strengthen ties with the University are continuing. Focus areas include admission, finance, communications, advancement, and economic development. The College is working with the School of Continuing and Professional Studies to assess the benefit of online courses and graduate certificates to its students. The deferred admission agreement, where

applicants who waitlisted at the University are offered admission to the College, is being strengthened.

3. Regional Economic Development: The College is continuing to work closely with local businesses on a variety of initiatives.

Ms. Henry reported that the Oxbow Center of St. Paul, Virginia has offered to donate its facility to the College. The College is exploring the feasibility of using the 14,000 square foot building as a technology accelerator where companies could co-locate their research and development activities with College faculty and students. The accelerator would be the first of its kind in Southwest Virginia, and \$500,000 would be needed for renovation costs. Annual maintenance expenses would be \$60,000. Due diligence on the property is underway.

The Reaffirmation of Accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) is going well. The report from the onsite visit included no recommendations on the Certificate of Compliance. The Quality Enhancement Plan received one recommendation; the College's response is due in March. The SACSCOC board will make its reaffirmation decision in June.

The Board of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) will visit the College on April 20th. SCHEV has asked the College to report on its efforts to support SCHEV's strategic goals focusing particularly on affordable access and student success.

In response to a question about student retention, Ms. Henry reported that the College's retention rate for the freshman to sophomore years is in the low 70% range. The College's peers with similar student populations typically have a 60% rate. The College's goal is 80%. They are also working on its six-year graduation rate which is in the 50th percentile. She observed that some students who leave before graduating in four years return to the College after seven or eight years to complete their degrees. Most likely financial circumstances are the reason for this phenomenon and the College is working to create an endowment for paid summer internships with regional businesses after a student's junior year. These internships could help with retention and would improve employment opportunities for graduates. A pilot program will be launched this summer for computer science and software engineering students.

Ms. Henry ended her report with a few observations on the College's proposed budget for 2016-2017. The College at Wise is heavily dependent on state funding with 60% of its Educational and General budget coming from the State. Given the demographics of its students, the College is committed to keeping its tuition low; its tuition is currently the third lowest in the State. Ms. Henry's primary concerns regarding the State budget are mandatory salary increases and the provision of operating and maintenance funds for the new library, which were not included in the Governor's budget. Ms. Henry ended by emphasizing that they continue to pursue budget efficiencies. The Chair reported that an unrestricted endowment for a

chancellor's reserve fund is one of the College's fundraising goals
and that it could help with budget shortfalls.

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On motion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

SGH:wtl

These minutes have been posted to the University of Virginia's Board of Visitors
website: <http://www.virginia.edu/bov/educationalminutes.html>