



THE RECTOR AND VISITORS OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

September 13, 2023

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** The Academic and Student Life Committee:

Elizabeth M. Cranwell, Chair  
Carlos M. Brown, Vice Chair  
The Honorable Paul C. Harris  
Stephen P. Long, M.D.  
The Honorable L.F. Payne

Amanda L. Pillion  
Rachel W. Sheridan  
Robert D. Hardie, Ex-officio  
Patricia A. Jennings, Faculty Rep  
Lillian A. Rojas, Student Rep

and

The Remaining Members of the Board:

Robert M. Blue  
Mark T. Bowles  
Thomas A. DePasquale  
U. Bertram Ellis  
Babur B. Lateef, M.D.

Paul B. Manning  
James B. Murray Jr.  
John L. Nau III  
Douglas D. Wetmore

**FROM:** Susan G. Harris

**SUBJECT:** Minutes of the Academic and Student Life Committee Meeting on September 13, 2023

The Academic and Student Life Committee of the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia met, in open session, at 3:03 p.m., on Wednesday, September 13, 2023. Elizabeth M. Cranwell, Chair, presided.

Committee members present: Robert D. Hardie, Carlos M. Brown (via Zoom), The Honorable Paul C. Harris, The Honorable L.F. Payne, Amanda L. Pillion, Rachel W. Sheridan, Patricia A. Jennings, and Lillian A. Rojas

Committee members absent: Stephen P. Long, M.D.

Thomas A. DePasquale, U. Bertram Ellis Jr., Babur B. Lateef, M.D., Paul B. Manning, and Douglas D. Wetmore also were present.

Present as well were James E. Ryan, Ian B. Baucom, Jennifer W. Davis, K. Craig Kent, M.D., Susan G. Harris, Donna P. Henry, Clifton M. Iler, Kennedy Kipps, Megan K. Lowe, Mark M. Luellen, David W. Martel, Clark L. "Chip" Murray, Margaret Grundy Noland, Debra D. Rinker, Clark L. Murray, and Margot M. Rogers.

The presenters were Brie Gertler, Nicole R. Hall, Christopher P. Holstege, M.D., Kathryn Densberger, Cedric B. Rucker, Christa D. Acampora, and Jennifer L. West.

Prior to beginning the Academic and Student Life Committee meeting, members of the Board attended a tour of the Student Health & Wellness Building. Dr. Holstege, Mr. Rucker, and Ms. Hall conducted the tour.

Ms. Cranwell called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda. She began by thanking the Student Affairs and Student Health and Wellness teams for an excellent tour of the Student Health and Wellness Building. She said they enjoyed spending time with the Student Affairs leaders and learning more about the resources offered to students. Ms. Cranwell then turned the meeting over to executive vice president and provost Ian Baucom.

Provost Baucom reviewed the action items. There are six endowed professorships: two in the McIntire School of Commerce, two in the School of Medicine, one in the College, and one to establish a dean's chair in the School of Nursing. Each of these professorships is supported by generous donors and ties to the University's strategic plan goal of strengthening our foundation.

On motion, duly seconded, the committee approved the following resolutions and recommended them for full Board approval:

#### **JAMES W. TODD BICENTENNIAL PROFESSORSHIP**

WHEREAS, Mr. James W. Todd (Commerce '60, Darden '64) was a lifelong active and involved volunteer for the University. He supported several initiatives at the McIntire School of Commerce as well as at the Darden School, the Virginia Athletics Foundation, the UVA School of Nursing, the Jefferson Scholars Foundation, the Jeffersonian Grounds Initiative, and the Alumni Association; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Todd was president & CEO of the company known as Hazel/Peterson in Fairfax where his 25-year tenure helped transform H/P into The Peterson Companies, a nationally acclaimed development company. He passed away in 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Todd Family funded the professorship to memorialize and recognize Mr. Todd's lasting legacy to the University, and more specifically the pan-University Real Estate initiative that he supported and championed for decades;

RESOLVED, the Board of Visitors establishes the James W. Todd Bicentennial Professorship in the McIntire School of Commerce; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, the Board thanks Sharon Todd and the Todd Family for their generous support of the McIntire School of Commerce and the University.

#### **COHEN FAMILY BUSINESS MINOR BICENTENNIAL PROFESSORSHIP**

WHEREAS, donors and alumni Mitchell R. Cohen and Susan M. (Oberhelman) Cohen highly value the life-changing education that the University of Virginia provides, and are particularly interested in supporting students outside of the McIntire School of Commerce in both their acquisition of business education and through their career exploration; and

WHEREAS, designed to complement any major area of study, the 15-credit General Business Minor offered by the McIntire School, beginning in Academic Year 2023-2024, will prepare a wide

range of non-Commerce students for early career success, supplying them with tools and skills to make immediate and viable professional contributions across industries; and

WHEREAS, the income from the Cohens' significant gift shall be used to establish and support a professorship at the McIntire School of Commerce for a faculty member teaching in its General Business Minor program;

RESOLVED, the Board of Visitors establishes the Cohen Family Business Minor Bicentennial Professorship in the McIntire School of Commerce; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, the Board thanks Mitchell R. Cohen and Susan M. Cohen and their children Alexander, Joshua, and Rebecca, for their generous contributions to the University and the McIntire School of Commerce.

### **SYDNEY BLAIR MEMORIAL PROFESSORSHIP IN CREATIVE WRITING**

WHEREAS, donors Scott and Kathleen Kapnick and their daughter Katherine (College 2013) pledged to fund two professorships in Creative Writing through their family foundation, the Kapnick Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the Kapnick Foundation gift will be matched through the Bicentennial Professorships Matching Fund; and

WHEREAS, the donors specified that the first professorship be named in memory of Associate Professor Sydney Blair, who directed the University's Creative Writing Program from 1991 to 1995 and from 2006 to 2009;

RESOLVED, the Board of Visitors establishes the Sydney Blair Memorial Professorship in Creative Writing in the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, the Board of Visitors thanks Scott and Kathleen Kapnick and Katherine Kapnick for their generous support of the University and the Creative Writing Program in the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences.

### **GEORGE F. RICH PROFESSORSHIP IN ANESTHESIOLOGY**

WHEREAS, George F. Rich, M.D., Ph.D., is Harrison Medical Teaching Professor of Anesthesiology and Professor of Biomedical Engineering and served as chair of the Department of Anesthesiology for 15 years, until 2020. Dr. Rich has a long history of clinical excellence including special training and skill in safely delivering acute and chronic pain relief through numbing and sedation in addition to conducting basic science research. He has led various committees within the department and mentored countless faculty, residents, and medical students; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Anesthesiology is honoring the distinguished career of Dr. Rich by providing funding for a professorship in Anesthesiology. The preference is for the future chairholder to also hold the position of vice chair for faculty affairs and faculty development or serve as a departmental leader tasked with ensuring the advancement of the Department of Anesthesiology's faculty through professional development opportunities;

RESOLVED, the Board of Visitors establishes the George F. Rich Professorship in Anesthesiology; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, the Board congratulates Dr. Rich on his distinguished career at the University and this substantial honor of recognition by the Department of Anesthesiology and the School of Medicine.

**STACEY E. MILLS, M.D. PROFESSORSHIP IN PATHOLOGY**

WHEREAS, Dr. Stacey E. Mills (Medicine '77) is an internationally recognized expert in anatomic pathology and general surgical pathology who retired from the University after a long and distinguished career; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Pathology is honoring the career of Dr. Mills by funding the establishment of a professorship in his name. This endowed professorship will support a faculty member providing leadership in academic activities in the Department of Pathology;

RESOLVED, the Board of Visitors establishes the Stacey E. Mills, M.D. Professorship in Pathology in the School of Medicine's Department of Pathology; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, the Board congratulates Dr. Mills on his distinguished career at the University and this substantial honor of recognition by the Department of Pathology and the School of Medicine.

**REBECCA W. RIMEL DEAN'S CHAIR IN THE SCHOOL OF NURSING**

WHEREAS, in 2020, the School of Nursing received a \$5 million gift from The Pew Charitable Trusts to create the Rebecca W. Rimel Dean's Chair in the School of Nursing; and

WHEREAS, the Pew Charitable Trusts gift will be matched through the Bicentennial Professorships Matching Fund; and

WHEREAS, the endowed chair honors Rebecca W. Rimel, a 1973 graduate of the School of Nursing, who had recently stepped down as president and CEO of The Pew Charitable Trusts after a 36-year career; and

WHEREAS, the funds from The Pew Charitable Trusts will combine with matching funds from the University to create an endowed deanship that will attract and support exceptional leaders to the School of Nursing for years to come;

RESOLVED, the Board of Visitors establishes the Rebecca W. Rimel Dean's Chair in the School of Nursing; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, the Board thanks The Pew Charitable Trusts for their generosity to the School of Nursing and the University; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, the Board congratulates alumna and former faculty member Rebecca W. Rimel on an illustrious career, and thanks her for her work to further health care and health care education at the University and across the nation.

**Action Item: White Ruffin Byron Center for Real Estate**

Robert White Jr., the Ruffin Foundation, and Robert and Cheryl Byron are generous donors to the University. The donors' respective gifts are to be used to support the creation of a Real Estate Center (the "Center") at the University that will amplify and enhance existing commercial real estate-oriented academic programming, research, and engagement efforts across the institution, which may include, but are not limited to, scholarships, travel grants, funded research, and community-based projects. Additionally, the Center will engage on an annual basis in high impact activities in support of historically underserved people and communities.

On motion, duly seconded, the committee approved the following resolution and recommended it for full Board approval:

**WHITE RUFFIN BYRON CENTER FOR REAL ESTATE**

WHEREAS, Robert White Jr., the Ruffin Foundation, and Robert and Cheryl Byron have been generous donors to the University. The donors' respective gifts establish that they are to be used to support the establishment of a Real Estate Center (the "Center") at the University that will amplify and enhance existing commercial real estate-oriented academic programming, research, and engagement efforts across the institution which may include but are not limited to scholarships, travel grants, funded research, community-based projects, and the like. Additionally, the Center will engage on an annual basis in high impact activities in support of historically underserved people and communities; and

WHEREAS, the Provost and President of the University approved the creation of the Center in November 2021 with the understanding that the minimum amount required to support the establishment of the Center shall be \$20 million. Following this approval, the Center has been operating as the UVA Center for Real Estate and the Built Environment; and

WHEREAS, with his lead gift of \$10 million, Mr. White agreed to share naming rights for the Center and encouraged additional principal-level gifts to meet the initial \$20 million goal. Along with Mr. White's gift, a gift of \$5 million from the Ruffin Foundation and one of \$2.5 million from Mr. Byron and Ms. Byron, as well as other commitments, have now combined to meet the goal of support for the Center's establishment; and

WHEREAS, the donors have requested that the Center be named the White Ruffin Byron Center for Real Estate;

RESOLVED, the Board of Visitors establishes the White Ruffin Byron Center for Real Estate; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, the Board thanks Robert M. White Jr., the Ruffin Foundation, and Robert and Cheryl Byron for their generous support of the McIntire School of Commerce and the University.

**Action Item: New Degree Program: Doctor of Philosophy in Computational Biology in the School of Medicine**

In early June 2021, the Board approved the establishment of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Computational Biology, to be offered by the School of Medicine. Following approval of the

degree, the School of Medicine submitted a degree proposal to the State Council of Education for Virginia (SCHEV) in March 2022, followed by a revised SCHEV submission in late June 2023. SCHEV requires that proposals for new degree programs be submitted within two years of Board of Visitors approval. Because this two-year window has elapsed, the School of Medicine is requesting reapproval of the Ph.D. program in Computational Biology so that it may proceed under SCHEV review.

On motion, duly seconded, the committee approved the following resolution and recommended it for full Board approval:

**NEW DEGREE PROGRAM: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN COMPUTATIONAL BIOLOGY IN THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

RESOLVED, subject to approval by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the Doctor of Philosophy in Computational Biology is established in the School of Medicine.

**Executive Vice President and Provost's Remarks**

Provost Baucom spoke about the University's commitment to freedom of expression and inquiry. Last week, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) ranked UVA 6th in the nation in its 2024 College Free Speech Rankings – the University's highest ranking ever. Provost Baucom pointed out some new initiatives: the law school recently launched a website focused on the free exchange of ideas at UVA Law, and content will be expanded on the University's free speech website. He promised to send the links to the Board as a follow-up.

He also spoke about McIntire School of Commerce's move to a three-year undergraduate curriculum. Students who enter the University as first-years in fall 2024 will be the first group eligible to apply to the McIntire School in the spring of 2025. Those who are accepted will begin the three-year program in fall 2025. The curriculum will be spread over three years rather than two. Students will continue to take the same blend of courses in McIntire and other schools (primarily in the College). This change will allow students to have access to McIntire faculty and advisors earlier in their time at UVA, which will help prepare them for increasingly competitive and career-shaping internships after their second year. It will also allow students who aren't accepted in McIntire more time to choose and pursue a major in the college, or one of our other schools. There will be no financial impact for students, as the McIntire tuition differential will continue to apply only for third and fourth years. Provost Baucom plans to invite Dean Jenkins to a future board meeting to discuss the shift in more detail.

**The 2030 Plan: Report on Strategic Goals**

Provost Baucom said over the course of the year he plans to report on the University's academic progress on the strategic plan that was approved by the Board in August 2019. There are four overarching strategic goals in the 2030 plan: 1) strengthen our foundation; 2) cultivate the most vibrant community in higher education; 3) enable discoveries that enrich and improve lives; and 4) make UVA synonymous with service, which flows from our founding mission to educate citizen leaders.

At this meeting, he focused on goals one and three. In June, Vice Provost for Enrollment Steve Farmer updated the Board on work related to the first item when he talked about the All-Virginia Plan - to recruit talented students from across the Commonwealth. Provost Baucom

focused on recruitment and retention of faculty and graduate students. He said they have developed the "Third Century Faculty Initiative." The University has taken several key steps to improve support for graduate students and to enable the University to recruit the best graduate students in the nation. He said they have also expanded the PhD Plus program to help train graduate students and postdocs for careers.

Provost Baucom said the final parts of the "Third Century Faculty Initiative" relate to faculty recruitment and hiring. The University has launched a "cluster hiring" program to recruit cohorts of faculty. The University is providing support to the deans for "target of opportunity" hires to enable them to make multiple offers on a search that yields more than one extraordinary candidate or pursue targeted recruitment of remarkable individuals to build an excellent faculty.

The third goal is related to research. Provost Baucom said they have made substantial progress on all of the initiatives. There were nine key initiatives: 1) Launch the Precision Medicine Challenge; 2) Launch the Digital Technology & Society Challenge; 3) Launch the Environmental Resilience Challenge; 4) Launch the Brain/Neuroscience Challenge; 5) Launch the Biotechnology Institute; 6) Create Seed Funding for Interdisciplinary Research; 7) Launch the Democracy Institute; 8) Substantially Upgrade Alderman Library; and 9) Make strategic investments in research infrastructure. Initiative one through eight are completed. Provost Baucom focused on the last one – research infrastructure. He said as the returning Board members know much of last year was spent examining the investments UVA needs to make to lift the research enterprise. A pan-university committee submitted a report late in the spring and the University is now preparing to act on it, including bolstering support for the Vice President for Research and his office, and establishing or considering a series of new research cores in these areas.

The University also needs to invest in human infrastructure— faculty, postdocs, and graduate students. To that end, the University has been providing bridging support to the deans to recruit and seed the research of faculty and postdocs in grand challenges areas. A program has been established (the Shannon Fellows) to recognize and reward leading mid-career faculty and a program has been launched to provide research mentors to all faculty in their years before tenure. Also under consideration is a competitive sabbatical program to enable faculty to conclude key research projects or pursue entrepreneurial or research commercialization opportunities.

### **Undergraduate Advising Report**

Vice provost for academic affairs Brie Gertler led the discussion on undergraduate advising. She said they want to help students prepare to thrive in their personal, professional, and civic lives after graduation. She gave a brief history behind advising at the University. She said UVA is a large and complex place, even at the undergraduate level. The residential undergraduate experience encompasses eight schools. Students take courses across schools, but they each have a home school of enrollment and their majors and minors are within schools. Because general education requirements, majors, and minors are within the schools, academic advising is managed by each school. Other advising resources are centralized and fall under Student Affairs. She said what it takes for a student to thrive crosses administrative boundaries, which is why good advising is holistic. Holistic advising recognizes the interconnections between the academic (selecting a major, research opportunities), the professional (exploring career options, internships), extra-curricular (from a capella groups to intramural athletics to public service), and the personal (health and well-being). A struggle in any one of these areas can affect the others. Ms. Gertler's office, Academic Affairs, is coordinating the advising initiative. They are working closely with the schools and with

Student Affairs to center the students in the advising infrastructure, coordinating across schools and units to connect students with resources.

Ms. Gertler introduced Ms. Katie Densberger, director of the Georges Student Center and director of Academic Student Support. Ms. Densberger was a first-generation college student, and as an undergraduate she developed a dual love of data and theory, which led her to pursue and earn a doctorate in Sociology. She has extensive experience with developing and implementing academic support and advising programs. She arrived at UVA in 2014 as a Lecturer and Assistant Director of Student Academic Support in the College. In 2017, she became the inaugural director of the Georges Student Center, which provides academic advising and support to students across Grounds. She shared with the Board ways that the University is using technology to support advising.

One of the recommendations of the Advising Task Force is to improve communications infrastructure. Doing so, and making information more accessible to students, is an important part of enhancing the advising ecosystem. She spoke about three projects to help students find the information they need. Some of the gaps identified have to do with the way a student or family member could seek out information on their own, from home, or from a dorm room.

A group from Student Affairs and the Provost's Office, including communications directors, worked to develop a site that met several criteria: 1) a site that is welcoming and nice to look at, so that a student visiting the site feels like they want to keep looking; 2) a site that is easy to use, mobile-friendly, is quick to flip through, and feels sort of like the digital version of a paper directory; 3) a site that balances having enough information and resources to be useful, without having so much that it's overwhelming; and 4) a site that is written so that you do not already have to know your way around UVA and all of the lingo in order to use it. The group sought to build a site that could be navigated by someone new to college and new to UVA, but had resources that would be important later on as students progress through their time in college.

Ms. Densberger provided a demonstration of the site they developed. She showed an academic advising chatbot that gives some general guidance about how to navigate academic advising at UVA. If a student doesn't find what they're looking for, they can use the bot, which is the same as is used by a few other offices at UVA including Student Financial Services, Housing, and Residence Life. For some questions, a user will just get a response, and for others, it will tell them how to connect with someone who can help.

She said while the student resources site and the chatbot are important parts of the advising ecosystem, they know they need to do more to help students plan their academic pathways by making it easier to find information, but also should give students tools to plan their semesters. Along those lines, they are moving forward with a new advising software platform that will be used by all undergraduates. Stellic is the platform they chose. There are some unique capabilities in the platform that will help students plan in the way they want to plan. Stellic prepared a short video introduction that was shared with the Board.

After selecting the platform, they had to figure out the best way to get it to the students. The platform has to be configured with information about course requirements, student information, rules, and policies. They have to develop training materials and think about how to help students use it well. Their plan is to make Stellic available to all undergraduates by fall of 2024.



Ms. Christa Acampora, Dean of the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences and Buckner W. Clay Professor of Philosophy, and Ms. Jennifer West, Dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science and Saunders Family Professor of Engineering, both shared their thoughts and ideas regarding the new advising software and how they envision it working in their respective schools.

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The chair adjourned the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

SGH:ddr

These minutes have been posted to the University of Virginia's Board of Visitors website:

<http://bov.virginia.edu/committees/179>