



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

2:15 P.M.

FEBRUARY 11, 2021

**JOSEPH P. SCARTELLI ATRIUM
COVINGTON CENTER, RADFORD, VA**

DRAFT
MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Thomas Brewster, Chair
Ms. Nancy Angland Rice, Vice Chair
Dr. Rachel D. Fowlkes
Dr. Susan Whealler Johnston
Dr. Katie Hilden, Non-voting Advisory Member

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Ms. Krisha Chachra
Ms. Georgia Anne Snyder-Falkinham

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Robert Archer, Rector, joined at 2:44 p.m.
Mr. Gregory A. Burton

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Brian O. Hemphill, President
Dr. Lyn Lepre, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Ms. Karen Castele, Secretary to the Board of Visitors and Special Assistant to the President
Mr. Allen T. Wilson, Senior Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Thomas Brewster, Chair, formally called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m. in the Joseph P. Scartelli Atrium in the Covington Center, Radford, VA.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Dr. Brewster asked for a motion to approve the February 11, 2021 agenda, as published. Ms. Nancy Angland Rice so moved, Dr. Rachel D. Fowlkes seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Brewster asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2020 meeting of the Academic Excellence and Research Committee, as published. Dr. Susan Whealler Johnston so moved, Ms. Rice seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REPORT

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Lyn Lepre, Ph.D. reported that the spring semester is off to a strong start, and she acknowledged the incredible faculty for all their hard work, resiliency, and tenacity during this tumultuous time. Provost Lepre stated students are benefitting greatly from faculty dedication, and she is very thankful to be working with such an amazing group. Provost Lepre also recognized President Hemphill, the vice presidents, and academic leadership team members for their help and support at work to make the academic experience at Radford an extraordinary one.

A written Academic Affairs report is included in the Board materials. Additionally, Provost Lepre elaborated on Spring 2021 academics. Provost Lepre shared that classrooms have been upgraded, including improved audio/visual systems, and put in place other “in-person” classroom supports, such as work-study students and a proctored test center, designed to assist students impacted by COVID-19. Additionally, a wide range of support services for faculty and students to assist with instruction and learning were added. One standout activity was the “Our Turn” training week, held from January 5 through January 8. Five to 10 sessions were held each day, some taught by faculty, others by administrators and Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning staff. Topics included:

- Best practices for recording lectures and presentations in PowerPoint;
- Maintaining academic integrity in a digital age;
- Online engagement; and
- Creating inclusive communities in online courses.

In addition to the “Our Turn” week, webinars and support group sessions are being held throughout the semester, on topics such as:

- Innovative teaching;
- Recognizing and responding to students in distress; and
- Promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in the classroom.

Provost Lepre offered thanks to Executive Director of Faculty Development Heather Keith, Ph.D. and Associate Provost of Academic Programs Jeanne Mekolichick, Ph.D. for their tireless work to provide these programs for our university community.

International Initiatives Presentation

Provost Lepre introduced Assistant Provost for Global Education and Engagement Ismael Betancourt who updated the Committee on the McGlothlin Center for Global Education and Engagement. Mr. Betancourt shared that though global efforts have been hindered because of COVID-19, work has continued on initiatives and programs designed to both increase the number of international students studying on campus and opportunities for our students to have a study abroad experience. Mr. Betancourt added that all of the work ties back to the strategic plan and that initiatives include new academic partnerships and collaborations with international

universities and improved international admissions and recruitment. A copy of the presentation is attached hereto as *Attachment A* and is made a part hereof.

FACULTY SENATE REPORT

Faculty Senate President Katie Hilden, Ph.D. began her report by sharing that, since the last Board meeting, Faculty Senate has had two meetings. Dr. Hilden stated that she shared with Faculty Senate the Board Resolution passed in December recognizing faculty for their incredible efforts during the pandemic. The response from faculty was positive and appreciative. Dr. Hilden said it was a great way to start the new year and thanked the Board again for acknowledging faculty's work.

Dr. Hilden continued by sharing that the work of Faculty Senate continues to be dominated by motions related to the new REAL curriculum, which embeds general education within majors and minors. This focus on credentialing through depth of study is unique. No other university in the Commonwealth has such an innovative approach. Dr. Hilden added that departments and faculty from across main campus and RUC have been working to complete proposals ahead of the March 1 catalog deadline. Currently, Faculty Senate has passed 67 curriculum-related motions. This includes ten new minors and 51 motions aligning programs with the REAL Curriculum.

Dr. Hilden provided a snapshot scope of work that the REAL Council has accomplished. The governing body has approved over 700 individual course proposals and 174 program proposals. Even more impressive is considering that all of these proposals have gone through multiple rounds of vetting prior to arriving at REAL Council, and that many proposals have been revised and resubmitted. All of this has been accomplished through Zoom meetings. Dr. Hilden added that this avalanche of proposals demonstrates the faculty's commitment to making REAL a reality for the students.

Dr. Hilden continued by saying that this work goes far beyond the numbers. Faculty have worked collaboratively to redesign the curriculum in order to build new personalized pathways for the students. A few examples of the innovative ways include departments creating new minors such as Theatre and Design took an existing minor and separated it into two minors, that highlight different skillsets. Students will now be able to take a Theater Performance minor for expression "E" or a Theater Production minor for applied learning "L."

Dr. Hilden shared that over 90 courses have been approved to receive the Writing Intensive designation. These courses will build students' abilities to write professionally in their disciplines. History has designated nearly all of their 300 level courses as Writing Intensive, thereby making them attractive to students across the campuses.

For the first time, applied programs, like education and nursing will participate and own a piece of General Education. A new education minor allows students to earn a minor credential that will contribute to General Education (A and L), while also satisfying licensure requirements in secondary education programs.

Dr. Hilden continued by saying that, when REAL was designed, the hope was that it would inspire the creation of interdisciplinary programs between departments and colleges, and faculty are beginning to see the fruits of these interdisciplinary seeds. All of this innovative and creative curriculum will only work if we have a strong foundation and infrastructure to support it. To this end, we are seeing REAL ripple effects across the University. For example, the massive curriculum changes related to REAL have triggered a complete overhaul of the academic catalog and student audit in the Registrar's Office that involves standardizing program descriptions in ways that make it frankly easier for students to strategically navigate their way through their degrees. In practical terms, we are building clearer, more visible guideposts and maps for our students.

Dr. Hilden closed by sharing that all of the amazing work accomplished in the past two years is a testament to how faculty will create and own such an innovative curriculum when given the chance to dream and build it with the administration's support. Dr. Hilden shared that she believes that the boldness and creativity of faculty can positively reshape Radford's future, but it cannot be done alone. Dr. Hilden shared that REAL builds on our strengths and reinforces the relationships with students. REAL is an opportunity to re-envision what Radford University could contribute to higher education, the futures of our students and the Commonwealth. Together, we are redesigning Radford University's collective future and impacting the lives of upcoming Highlanders. A copy of the presentation is attached hereto as ***Attachment B*** and is made a part hereof.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Committee, Dr. Brewster adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Stewart Taylor
Executive Assistant to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

International Initiatives

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Strategic Plan

Strategic Enrollment Growth - Goal 6

Radford University will grow international student headcount enrollment by 50 students annually through the 2023-24 academic year.

- Strategy 6A: Establish dual/double degree programs with international universities.
- Strategy 6B: Launch worldwide commission-based network of agents.
- Strategy 6C: Implement an English language and culture program that will prepare students for Radford University degree programs.

Academic Partnerships and Initiatives

Potential collaborations:

- Graduate program in Music Therapy with Heidelberg University (Germany)
- Undergraduate program in Ballet with Busan Women's College (South Korea), Osaka City University (Japan) and Ashiya University (Japan)
- DBA program with Paris School of Business
- Potential Cybersecurity training in Burkina Faso and Benin (Sponsored by U.S. Department of State)
- Opportunities with Stella Maris College (India) and Eton College (Canada)
- Exchange program with the Universität Flensburg (Germany)

International Admissions

- International admissions and recruitment now under McGlothlin Center for Global Education and Engagement
- Recruitment approaches
 - Current and new academic partnerships
 - College fairs and other recruitment events
 - Building a network of recruitment agents
- Expansion of English proficiency tests
- New comprehensive admissions website

Intensive English Program

- Wholly-owned and operated by Radford University
- Three levels of instruction for expanded recruitment
 - Beginner
 - Intermediate
 - Advanced
- Conditional admission to certain academic programs at Radford University upon completion
- Goal: Self-sustaining within two years

Education Aboard

- Focus on accessibility and affordability
- New services
 - Passport acceptance facility (in progress)
 - Passport photos
 - Notary services
- Restructure of the McGlothlin International Education Fund
- Faculty-led programs

Discussion

Faculty Senate Report

Katie Hilden, Ph.D.

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REAL Update

- Faculty Senate has considered and passed 67 motions related to curriculum this year. This includes:
 - 10 minors; and
 - 51 recommendations for REAL program alignment.
- To date, REAL Council has approved:
 - 736 REAL course proposals; and
 - 174 program proposals.



Student-Centered Curriculum Redesign

- Creative new minors
- Writing intensive courses
- Applied programs participating in General Education
- Deeper interdisciplinary connections



Building Support and Structure

- Academic catalog
- Academic Success Center
- Marketing of programs in REAL
- Faculty development

REAL
Exploratorium



***Building on our strengths
to redesign our future***

End of Board of Visitors Materials

