Office of Policy and Governance

VirginiaTech

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Governance Task Force Final Report

Date: November 3, 2017

To: University Council

From: Governance Task Force

Subject: Final Report

Task Force Charge:

- To collect data on the impacts of the CFA 2015-16B Resolution on Shared Governance, the key provision of which requires the following commissions to refer their resolutions to the Faculty Senate: The Commission on Faculty Affairs, The Commission on Research, the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, and the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies. The Faculty Senate, at its discretion, may issue a formal recommendation regarding the resolution that would accompany the resolution when it is presented to University Council for consideration. (Resolution passed 2/1/16).

- To recommend based on data analyzed any changes to the system of shared governance intended to enhance the consultative role of the constituent groups.

- To analyze the consultative role of the respective constituent groups.

List of the Task Force Members:

Dr. Sam Easterling (chair)
Kim O'Rourke (Secretary of University Council)
Rami Dalloul (Faculty Senate)
Sue Teel (Staff Senate)
Matthew Chan (GSA)
Alexa Parsley (SGA)
Ellen Plummer (Provost Office)
Gary Long (CUSP)
Joe Merola (CFA)
Andrew Neilson (COR)
Scott Salom (CGSP)

Overview of Task Force Work Plan: The Governance Task Force met seven times (September 21, 2016, October 19, 2016, December 13, 2016, February 8, 2017, February 23, 2017, April 12, 2017, & November 3, 2017) to discuss and make recommendations on the improvement of the current shared governance structure at Virginia Tech. The Task Force also discussed areas of shared governance that present challenges (specifically for the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Graduate Student Assembly, and Student Government Association).

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Task Force Outcomes:

1. The Task Force determined that there were no negative impacts associated with CFA 2015-16B Resolution on Shared Governance. The requirement for resolutions from specific commissions to be sent to Faculty Senate for review and comment did not delay the progress of a resolution through the governance system. As a result, the Task Force recommends expansion of this process to include review by all four constituents groups of resolutions emanating from all commissions. (Refer to outcome No. 2.)

2. UC Resolution 2017-18A – Resolution to Amend the University Council By-Laws as Recommended by the Governance Task Force (attached) has been approved by the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Graduate Student Assembly, and Student Government Association and will be presented to University Council for first reading on December 4, 2017. This resolution will be sent to all commissions prior to the December 4 University Council meeting as a courtesy.

3. A calendar has been added to the publicly accessible governance website (www.governance.vt.edu) where committees, commissions, and councils can add meeting times and locations.

4. Suggestions were made for a central office or person to work with commissions on governance training. The new Office of the Vice President for Policy and Governance will assume this responsibility.

5. The Office of the Vice President for Policy and Governance is implementing formal Governance 101 training session. Requests for training can be sent to abmyers@vt.edu.

Other Findings:

1. There is a need to develop a more effective transition process of leadership of commissions, SGA, and GSA to ensure transfer of knowledge and best practices.

2. The Governance Task Force discussed a potential change the University Council Constitution to require approval by the GSA and SGA (along with Faculty and Staff Senates) before any proposed change to the constitution goes to University Council. The Task Force determined that this matter was beyond the scope of its charge.

This report concludes the work of the Governance Task Force

Submitted by:
Dr. Sam Easterling
Chair of the Task Force