Committee Reports

Academic, Research & Student Affairs Committee
Hon. Audrey L. Thomas

A. Faculty Policy Manual

The discussion on the Faculty Policy Manual was deferred until the next ARSA Committee meeting. Discussions on this topic would have been premature in light of the continued negotiations taking place between the administration and the faculty on the Faculty Policy Manual.

B. Provost’s Report

The Provost’s Report provided an update on activities completed as well as those in progress since the last ARSA Committee meeting on May 16, 2007. Highlights from the report included the following:

- **Update on the 1999-2005 Restructuring Assessment**
  The external consultant completed the data collection phase of his review on the University’s restructuring on September 26, 2007. A final report will be shared with the faculty and staff in late October followed by a series of town hall meetings on both campuses to discuss the report and provide a strategic response to the University. The meetings are expected to be held during the period of November 2007 through January 2008. Both the consultant’s report and the strategic response will be forwarded to the President by February 2008 for transmission to the Board of Trustees through the formal board submission process.

- **Fall 2007 Enrollment Update**
  In accordance with a fall 2005-2006 Board of Trustees Presidential Goal and VISION 2012 objective, a comprehensive evaluation of Access and Enrollment Services began in fall 2005. An ad hoc committee, established by the Provost, provided a list of recommendations that were shared with all stakeholders. One of these recommendations resulted in a new policy for determining enrollment in fall 2007. The “No Purge-NA-Census Date” allowed the University to cancel the registration for those
students that were “No Shows” or “Never Attended” class. As a result of the new method, the Planning Committee found it difficult to compare data from fall 2007 with previous semesters. The method by which data will be compared across different years must be resolved before the Provost can report on any growth or decline in enrollment.

- **2006-2009 and 2009-2012 Academic Master Plans**
  The AMP has been segmented into two documents as a result of the discussions from the Faculty Institute in May 2007. The 2006-2009 AMP is complete and was shared with the faculty on September 24, 2007. It will be formatted and edited before being presented to the Board for input and comments. The 2009-2012 AMP will undergo further refinements over the course of the next two years. The Provost anticipates that it will be ready by June 2009.

- **Grants and Contracts**
  The Provost Component reported on several significant grants and contracts that were awarded in the areas of Nursing, Science and Math, VIU CEDD and Sports and Fitness. The most significant was a $6 million grant that was awarded to the Nursing Division for a five-year period. The Division has been tasked with establishing a Caribbean Research Center of Excellence in Health Disparities as part of fulfilling the requirements of the award.

- **2007 Academic Affairs Advance**
  In an effort to engage stakeholders in strategic sessions, the Provost Component held a two-day Advance on August 7-8, 2007. The focus this year was on shared governance, evidence and accountability and engineering a future.

- **Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**
  In fall 2005, a number of programs for assessing student learning outcomes were initiated. These programs are a part of the Middle States accreditation standards and provide documented evidence of student learning. The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) and Major Field Test (MFT) were two of the assessments done during the 2006-2007 academic year. CLA measures the general education component while the MFT measures learning outcomes in a major field of study. UVI students performed exceptionally well on the CLA but poorly on the MFT. The MFT was administered to students in the Accounting program. The Business Division is currently evaluating the results of the MFT and will be addressing the curriculum and installing processes to gauge future progress.

- **Professional Accreditation Update**
  There are three areas within the Provost Component that are working towards accreditation: Education, Business and CELL. The Education Division is making acceptable progress towards initial accreditation through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The Business Division is preparing for a possible self-study in the 2008-2009 academic year through the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). CELL anticipates a response in early November 2007 from the American Council of Education (ACE) as a result of their site visit.
Resolution of 2006-2007 Faculty Grievances
There were five individual grievances filed against three administrative chairs and a “vote of no confidence” filed against the Education Division’s Chair by the majority of the faculty members in that Division. Both the faculty and administration agreed on a process for resolving these grievances which involved an independent UVI employee at the first step and the Faculty Grievance Committee at the second step. Four of the five grievances were resolved at the first step and the other grievance was resolved at the second step. Mediation was recommended in an effort to help the Education Division work together.

C. Other Business

In other Committee business, the President provided copies of two letters to the Committee. The first was a resolution from Dr. David Gould in his capacity as Faculty Chair to uphold the authority of the faculty for changes to the curriculum. The second was the President’s response to the resolution, which reaffirmed the faculty’s responsibility to address curriculum development. Copies of both letters are included in the Board book.

Ad Hoc Human Resources Committee…………………………… Juanita M. Woods

A. Tuition Remission Policy

Committee members discussed changes to the Tuition Remission Policy that were approved by Cabinet, posted on the web, and communicated to the University community with an effective date of June 25, 2007. The changes were not well received by faculty and staff. At question was whether the change could be made without approval by the Board of Trustees. Legal counsel reported that policy review and passage reside with the Board and if there were a transfer of this authority it would have to be written into the Board’s by-laws. The President agreed to rescind the implementation of the policy change and forward the proposed changes to the faculty and staff Shared Governance committees for input.

B. AON Human Resources Consultant Report

The President provided an overview of the state of affairs within the Human Resources (HR) Department that necessitated the hiring of AON consultants to conduct an assessment of HR policies, practices, procedures and capacities. The report was completed in December 2004. The results contributed to the development of VISION 2012 Strategic Plan objective # 2.B.5 to “Enhance service delivery to stakeholders in the areas of recruitment, orientation of new staff, and responses to grievances and complaints by 9/30/2007 through implementation of process improvements, selected training and policy review in the Human Resources Department.” The HR Director and Liaison to the AHHRC updated the committee on procedural changes that had been implemented since his arrival in 2006. (It is assumed that the resignation of the HR Director in July 2007, has resulted in this objective being moved to September 30, 2008 for completion.)
C. Human Resources “Best Practices” in Higher Education

Following a discussion of “best practices” applicable to the composition and chairmanship of search committees and HR operations, the Committee agreed that the AHHRC Chair, legal counsel, and the HR Director would report back to the Committee on the specificity of “best practices.”

Buildings and Grounds Committee……………………….Attorney Henry C. Smock

A. Approval of the May 7, 2007 Minutes

The May 7, 2007 Minutes were approved unanimously.

B. Merchant’s Market

It has been determined that the Merchant’s Market location is not a viable one for the University to move forward on with respect to the location of the Wellness Center. This was communicated to the Executive Director of the Port Authority.

C. Wellness Center

The University had considered utilizing the Merchant’s Market location to house the Wellness Center as a cost saving measure. Because this option no longer existed, the Wellness Center Project has not moved at the original timeline anticipated. University officials went back to the Department of Interior and were told that work on the Project needed to commence shortly or the $1.1 million in grant funds would be withdrawn. The University is in the process of finalizing the CZM permits for the site originally approved by the Board. The Department of Interior has given the University a deadline of March 2008 to break ground or the University could lose the funds for the project.

D. Capital Projects Report

Gerry Buggy gave a comprehensive update on projects completed and on-going on both the St. Croix and St. Thomas campuses. The report is included in the Board book.

E. Capital Projects Progress Report

A special meeting of the Building and Grounds Committee was held on Monday, September 24, 2007, at 4:00 p.m. in the Faculty Resource Center to review and discuss the report.

F. Feasibility Study

Dr. Ragster stated that in VISION 2012 one of the objectives moving into 2007-2008 is to determine the feasibility of having a hotel on the St. Thomas property in the area known as Xanadu. A feasibility study was initiated and work was done with financial managers to develop some options. Dr. Ragster suggested a joint meeting of the Buildings and Grounds Committee and the Finance Committee so a presentation could be made.
G. Joint Meeting of the Buildings & Grounds and Finance Committees: Hotel Feasibility Presentation

Consultants from Oxford Lodging and G-Entry Principle firms made presentations on the feasibility of a hotel project on the St. Thomas Campus to the joint committees. The joint committees agreed that they were presented with a draft feasibility study that appears to present an opportunity for the University to explore further.

After discussions, a motion to direct the Administration to develop the next steps in addressing the feasibility of a hotel project on the St. Thomas Campus was made by Dr. Ragster and seconded by Attorney Watlington. The members of both committees voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Committee on Trustees...............................Mr. Alexander Moorhead

A. The annual filing by trustees of a disclosure form as required by Section VII of the Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy for the Board of Trustees.

The Committee received an update from the Liaison to the Board, Ms. Gail Steele indicating which Trustees had submitted their Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Forms. The forms are required by Section VII of the Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy for the Board of Trustees. Ms. Steele stated she will send a reminder to those Trustees from whom forms had not yet been received. It was noted that the forms should be notarized prior to submission.

B. Report on the orientation received by new trustees.

The Committee reviewed a report prepared by Ms. Steele on the orientation that has been given to new Trustee, Mrs. Jennifer Nugent-Hill. Dr. Ragster reported that the election for the new student Trustee, who will come from the St. Thomas campus this year, was delayed due to the issue of the residency requirement for a student trustee. She explained a new election is scheduled to take place on October 17, 2007. Mrs. Nugent-Hill has completed the first phase of the orientation process and arrangements will be made for her to complete the Orientation along with the new faculty Trustee, Dr. Ededet Iniama and the new Commissioner of Education.

C. Vacancies on the Board of Trustees for trustees appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Legislature.

The committee reviewed one remaining governor-appointed vacancy on the Board and discussed possible candidates for the position for recommendation to the Governor by the Board. The Committee deferred a decision on a recommendation until its next meeting to solicit additional candidates from Board members. It was noted that terms of four Trustees will expire next year. After a discussion of the matter, President Ragster agreed to have the Legal Counsel determine whether Ms. Deanna Rogers, whose term of office as Alumni Trustee has expired, should continue to serve in that capacity until a new
Alumni Trustee is elected from another active chapter of the Alumni Association. (In response to this inquiry, the University’s legal counsel issued an opinion that Ms. Rogers should continue to serve as Alumni Trustee until her successor is elected.)

D. Board Outreach to Faculty and Other Stakeholders

Board Chairman, Dr. Auguste Rimpel, asked the Committee to explore possible outreach activities the Board could have with faculty and other stakeholders. There was discussion about efforts that had been made under previous administrations, including presentations made occasionally by component heads, and other practices at other institutions. The Committee agreed to give the topic further consideration after Ms. Gail Steele researches practices at other institutions of higher learning.

Development Committee………………………….. Dr. Wesley S. Williams, Jr.

Information to be Provided at Board Meeting

Executive Committee………………………………..Dr. Auguste E. Rimpel, Jr.

A. Performance Incentive Plan

Based on outcomes of the June 16, 2007 Board of Trustees Meeting, the Executive Committee was directed to finalize and approve the Performance Incentive Plan, to consider suggestions made by Board Members and to craft a document that would allow the administration to move forward with a month to meet the necessary deadlines. The Executive Committee met on July 2, 2007 and July 30, 2007 and the document was finalized on July 30, 2007. The document was approved with the condition that the program would be reviewed in the spring and will be subject to revisions.

B. Crown Bay Bookstore Proposal

The Committee was asked to assign the review of a proposal to establish an extension of the UVI Bookstore to the Finance Committee for further discussion and review. After Discussions, the Committee agreed to forward the issue to the Finance Committee for a full evaluation of the concept, financial and other aspects and to make a recommendation to the Executive Committee and/or the Full Board when the review has been completed.

C. Appointment of Technology Park Board member

Chairman Rimpel reported that the Board needed to address the issue of replacing Dr. Noreen Michael on the Research and Technology Park Board. He stated that along with him, President Ragster and Mr. Moorhead served as an Ad Hoc Nominating Committee. Attorney Debra Watlington, Chair of the Board of Education was selected to replace Dr. Michael. The vote on the selection of Attorney Watlington to the Research and Technology Park Board was unanimous.
D. Presidential Search Committee

Acknowledging the two year period prior to the end of President Ragster's current contract, Dr. Rimpel indicated the need to begin the Presidential Search Process. He suggested to Committee members the formation of a pre-search committee, comprised of Executive Committee members, to begin the research process until such time a formal Search Committee was established.

Finance Committee……………………………………………………… Mr. Roy D. Jackson

A. Update on the Local Government Appropriation – Fiscal Year 2007

Of the $33,026,000 in approved allotments to the University through the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2007, the sum of $30,049,167 has been received as of September 21, 2007. The University received the allotments requested for October 2006 through August 2007.

B. Review of Budget to Actual Performance through August 31, 2007

Total actual revenues through the period ended August 31, 2007 was $39,131,620 representing 96.3% of the budgeted amount of $40,630,168. Actual expenditures of $38,528,461 were less than the amount budgeted of $38,686,664. Total actual revenues and total actual expenditures were $35,751,681 and $35,928,617, respectively, for the same period last year. Total revenues increased by 9.5% from last year and total expenditures increased by 7.2%.


The University submitted seven proposals totaling $756,942, and was awarded fifteen grants totaling $4,352,566 in the third quarter of FY2007. Compared to the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal year, proposal dollar volume declined by 73%, while the dollar volume of grants awarded increased by 3%.

D. Proposed Tuition Rate Increase

The University will present an overview of the process to bring forward a tuition and fees increase proposal at the Spring 2008 to be effective Fall 2008.

E. Status Report on Internal Auditor

The University will present a verbal status report on the selection of an Internal Auditor.

F. Other Business

a. Capital Projects Report

The University will present a budget status report on the Capital Projects as of September 25, 2007.
G. Joint Meeting of the Buildings & Grounds and Finance Committees: Hotel Feasibility Presentation

Consultants from Oxford Lodging and G-Entry Principle firms made presentations on the feasibility of a hotel project on the St. Thomas Campus to the joint committees. The joint committees agreed that they were presented with a draft feasibility study that appears to present an opportunity for the University to explore further.

After discussions, a motion to direct the Administration to develop the next steps in addressing the feasibility of a hotel project on the St. Thomas Campus was made by Dr. Ragster and seconded by Attorney Watlington. The members of both committees voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Planning Committee …………………………………… Dr. Bernard Paiewonsky

A. Update on Title IV Program

Mr. Vincent Samuel provided the Planning Committee with a summary report on the work that Todd and Associates did for UVI with respect to issues identified by the U. S. Department of Education Federal Student Aid and the U. S. Office of the Inspector General. Because of this work, the University implemented corrective measures in its Title IV program and among other benefits was able to continue its participation in the Department of Education’s Federal Student Aid Program and obtain a 2006 Single Audit that contained no findings.

B. Cost Information for Consultant Reports

The cost of services provided by consultants to the University was presented to the Committee. The sources of funds to pay for consultants’ services and the process for selecting consultants were discussed along with the tasking, the nature of the work, recommendations and any reports delivered. The principal consultants- companies and individual consultants - under contract during the time period from October 2005 to the Sept 2007 are: Ben Dixon, Milburnie Associates, New Image Foundation, SBI, Todd and Associates, Orion Consultancy, White Star, Walzcad Tech Consultants, Ray Grant Consulting, Aaron Cohen Assoc. LTD, Ryan Anthony, Ramsay, Abney & Assoc, AON, Huron, Elyzabeth Holford, Bob Bontrager, Dr Howard Simmons.

Note that some of the consultant contracts are for the Board of Trustees or are pass-throughs for the convenience of the Government of the USVI or related entities.

The committee members were interested in any actions taken that flowed from recommendations or findings contained either in these consultant written reports or in their briefings to the UVI Administration.

A table showing the problems addressed by the consultants and the costs of the consultants will appear in a page for the Executive Session of the Board.
C. Status of Tuition Deferment Plan Program

A report on the Deferred Tuition Plan showed that student participation in the plan has increased since the plan was implemented in spring 2006. Over the past four semesters participation has grown from 200 students per semester to an average of 302 students per semester. The current overall default rate is 4.3%. It is not possible at this time to state definitively that the implementation of the Plan has resulted in an increase in student enrollment in the University.

The Committee stressed the need for a clear and consistent process for defining “enrollment” and “determining enrollment figures” for the University. This matter will be addressed further by the Committee.


Dr. Haldane Davies reported on the progress made by the University in meeting the FY 2006-07 objectives and measures of accomplishment as specified in VISION 2012. This annual VISION 2012 Close-out Report indicated that satisfactory progress has been made on the majority of the objectives and measures of accomplishment with six measures being significantly behind schedule.

• **1.B.2** Achieve ACBSP (Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs) accreditation for undergraduate business program by Fall 2007
• **2.A.6** Establish periodic measurement of faculty and staff satisfaction utilizing national best practice criteria and instruments by 12/31/06
• **2.B.5** Enhance service delivery to stakeholders in the areas of recruitment, orientation of new staff, and responses to grievances and complaints by 9/30/2007 through implementation of process improvements, selected training and policy review in the Human Resources Department (*moved to September 2008*)
• **2.C.3** Redesign UVI website to enhance identified internal and external communication needs by 9/30/2007
• **3.B.1** Hire an Internal Auditor by 9/30/2006
• **4.B.1** Develop a plan of action to strengthen K-12 science, technology, engineering and mathematics education in the Territory by the VI-EPSCor Governing Committee by 12/30/06 (*Behind schedule and moved to June 2008 due to changes at the Commissioner of Education level*)

The Committee reviewed the 2006-2007 Close-out Report in detail, sought clarifications on some items, requested more specificity in some of the entries and suggested the addition of footnotes that would assist later in following the progress being made with VISION 2012.

The Planning Committee noted that there appears to be a trend towards high occupancy of dormitory halls foreshadowing future problems for the UVI in providing housing for students if the goals for increasing student enrollment are approached or achieved during the vision period through 2012.

The same observation applies to classroom space and faculty and in effect is an early warning call for Board attention with respect to the effects of increased enrollment on infrastructure and faculty.
E. Key Performance Indicators

The Fall 2007 KPI’s usually present year-to-year UVI student enrollment, student and employee profiles and their comparisons with the peer institutions and the strategic objectives in VISION 2012. Due to undocumented changes in the operational definition of “enrollment” in 2007 compared with 2006, those KPI’s having to do with enrollment were removed and will not be presented until the issues are resolved.

The KPI’s consequently are focused on dormitory occupancy rates (which appear to show an increasing trend), staff and faculty profiles, and annual giving.

Looking at the contributions by trustees to date, October 1, 2006 to August 31, 2007, the average trustee's gift has increased in size while the percentage of trustees making gifts has declined 1%.

The alumni total contribution has decreased slightly to date (August 31 2007). The average individual contribution from the alumni has also decreased in size. The number of alumni who gave to the UVI doubled in this time period. This is the reason for the reduced average gift size.

F. Framework for review of consultancies

This item will be considered in a subsequent Planning Committee meeting.