

Board of Visitors Meeting

Sept. 9-10, 2011

Report to Faculty

[Corrected 10/17/2011]

Two opening caveats:

1. I am told that this was a fairly “light” meeting, as these things go—no fireworks, not much directly related to faculty. I have thus used a rather permissive sieve in determining what to include in and what to exclude from this report.
2. I have deliberately tended to use “agentless prose” throughout since the positions being outlined generally derive not from any particular individual but from specific offices or committees.

I. President’s Report

President Finnegan provided an overview of major infrastructural initiatives on campus including the new heating plant and the Bedford renovation. He also made note of a variety of accomplishments and changes from the past year, including

- The success of the Summer Solstice program
- The newly renamed Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- The Oppenheimer donation to the LCVA

The President mentioned several initiatives that will begin this year, including

- The creation of an ESL non-credit program in the International Studies office
- The conducting of a salary study to identify more precisely those areas (and positions) needing adjustments

Finally, the following statistics were provided as part of the President’s Dashboard Indicator:

- 2010 freshman class satisfactory rate (25 or more credits and GPA 2.0 or above): 71.77%
- University-wide annual average retention rate: 85.1%
- 2009 freshman class second year retention rate: 80%
- 6-year graduate rate for 2004 cohort: 59%
- Full-time faculty turnover rate: 4.21% (excludes retirement, death).

The BOV had few questions—we spent a goodly amount of time discussing the recent fire at the golf course.

II. Audit

In the course of developing an Enterprise Risk Management program for Longwood, executive management identified faculty retention as a top-12 risk to the future wellbeing of Longwood.

III. Presidential Reports

1. *Report on Intercollegiate Athletics:*
 - Our student athletes have a combined GPA of 2.94—as compared to 2.85 for the student body at large. One BOV member wondered if the student-support model used for student-athletes could/should be applied across the university.
 - We continue to pursue admittance into the Big South conference; our candidacy is slated for discussion at the November meeting.
2. *Report on Student Housing:*

The BOV approved a support agreement for financing the construction of North Campus Student Housing in the Lancer Park area.

IV. University Advancement

- Dr. Bryan Rowland, Vice President for University Advancement, stressed the importance of constructing a new Student Union (on the site of the Cunninghams) in order to enhance the relationship between Longwood and its student organizations. Members of the BOV expressed support for this initiative.
- Total giving to Longwood during 2010-11 was \$6,128,889, which exceeds the previous record total of \$6,045,270.

V. Administration, Finance, Facilities and Technology

- After a lengthy discussion, the BOV approved replacing outdated (and expensive to maintain) athletic scoreboards by “tapping into reserves.” Total cost: \$445,000.
- The BOV approved the fee schedule associated with the creation of an English Language Institute, which is slated to begin operation in January, 2012 (seven-week session: \$2300; ten-week session: \$3500). Dr. Bob Frank, Director of International Affairs, explained that the non-credit courses taught during these sessions will assist international ESL students in making the transition to university-life in the United States. If all works as planned, some of these students will return to Longwood as full-time students, thereby increasing diversity on campus and providing a further financial return on investment.
- Two significant “risks” to the financial health of the university were identified:
 1. The potential for a \$10,000,000 decrease in overall education spending by the General Assembly. It is unclear what portion of this cut, if it were to be enacted, would fall on Longwood specifically.
 2. State regulation of tuition increases.

VI. Academic and Student Affairs

Fall 2011 Admissions:

- We accepted 77.2% of applicants, with 1093 choosing to enroll (a 20% increase in enrollment over 2001).
- We accepted 43 more students in the 900-99 SAT range (relatively low scores, for us). On the other hand, we decreased the number of students with GPAs below 2.9; had 13% more applications from the 1000-1100 pool; and accepted more students than ever into the Honors College. Both ACT and GPA scores for incoming freshman are up slightly from the previous two years.
- Summer-school enrollment was up from 2138 to 2298, with off-campus summer enrollment ballooning from 231 to 924 (mostly online).
- Members of the BOV wondered what had become of our initiative to attract out-of-state students, but this discussion petered out quickly.

Student Affairs:

- Crime is down (for instance, 10 burglaries in 2008 vs. one in 2010; 62 liquor law violations in 2008 vs. 25 in 2010).
- Judicial cases dropped in 2010-11 by 82 (from 311 to 229) and Honor Board cases dropped by 23 (from 67 to 44).
- With respect to housing, we are currently at 103% capacity (the large incoming freshman class contributes significantly to the overage). Problems associated with overcrowding are, it would appear, being managed effectively; 40% of juniors and seniors choose to retain housing on campus.

VII. Longwood Foundation:

Although the foundation budget will not be decided until the March, 2012 meeting, it was noted that the current support agreement for Hull Springs Farm expires this year. We will learn more about plans for Hull Springs Farm at the December BOV meeting.

VIII. Alumni Relations:

- Plans were announced for hosting alumni events in major metropolitan areas around Virginia.
- Board members shared a number of ideas for increasing Longwood's visibility within the Farmville area (e.g., t-shirt stand at Green Front? Longwood paraphernalia at Charlie's?)

IX. Faculty Report:

I offered a synopsis of the Academic Strategic Plan. In general, members of the BOV were very supportive. One member admitted some surprise at the high level of faculty involvement in the process, another urged us to stay true to the "learning-through-doing" model embodied in the internship requirement, another wondered why we hadn't specifically

mentioned teacher-preparation in the Vision Statement or Goals. I explained, respectively and I hope respectfully, that

- The President has made clear to us that this process “matters”—i.e., that the ASP will not be another empty document gathering dust on a shelf—and thus the faculty is committed to trying to get this as “right” as we can;
- Many of the strategies and action items currently being generated do indeed stress the importance of learning experiences outside of the classroom;
- The ASP encompasses the entire university; to single out one particular area of study in the Vision Statement or Goals would thus be unnecessarily deterministic and limiting.

X. Six-Year Plan:

President Finnegan explained that the General Assembly had voted to require a six-year plan from all Virginia institutions of higher learning, with primary emphasis in three areas:

1. STEM
2. Retention
3. Access and Affordability

The President stressed the degree to which those involved in creating the six-year plan remain in the dark regarding implementation, funding, and oversight for the initiatives listed in the plan—he compared the process to “flying a helicopter while building it.”

The full report is available at [Six Year Plan Priority Ranking](#). The initial eleven initiatives deal with STEM related matters and will be funded with money already earmarked for such programs in the operating budget. Barring an increase in general funds, the extra funding for the remaining twenty-one proposed initiatives will come from tuition increases of 9.6% and 9.7% in successive years.

Near the top of “remaining” initiatives (15) is “Faculty Equity, Retention and Promotion pool.” The BOV asked about the possibility of implementing across-the-board (instead of targeted) pay increases; in response, the President noted that SCHEV commended our draft proposal for selectively (and, they seemed to imply, wisely) directing funds to address the most pronounced inequities.

The BOV voted to approve the plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Derek Taylor

