

Trip Report on Visit to Universities in the State of Virginia

I. Travelers

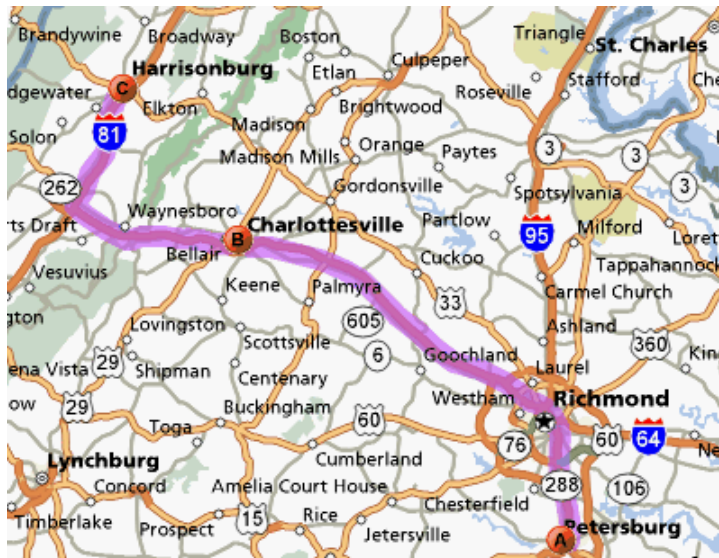
Rick	Grant
Stevie	Henry
Dr. Lonnie	Hudspeth
Dr. Noreen	Michael
Verna	Rivers
Jay	Wiltshire

II. Date of Travel

January 29 – February 2, 2008

III. Location of Trip

- A. Virginia State University, Petersburg, VA (approximate enrollment 4,600)
- B. University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA (approximate enrollment 20,000)
- C. James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA (approximate enrollment 18,000)



IV. Source of the Funding

University of the Virgin Islands, Office of the President

V. Purpose of Travel

Observe and discuss with representatives of the respective universities their practice and experience with shared governance.

VI. Summary of Visit

Members of the team observed similarities and differences between the selected universities. We were observers at the UVA and JMU faculty senate meetings. There were presentations on the implication of their Governor's budget on the university's budget. The UVA presentation was made by the President of the University who also serves as the President of the faculty senate. The JMU presentation was made by the Vice President for Business and Administration. During the Q & A for the JMU budget presentation, faculty asked for the opportunity to provide input when the budget is being developed. This indicates that the budget committee of the faculty senate only provides feedback.

In addition to questions produced by the UVI team, questions used during interviews were selected from questions submitted by members of the Shared Governance committee. The table below has seven questions which were asked at each university.

January 30 Dr. Randy Holmes former Vice Chair of the Virginia State University Executive Council coordinated the UVI team visit and provided hard copies of background information on the development of that institution's structure of shared governance.

January 30 Ricardo Padrón Chair, Faculty Senate of University of Virginia

January 31 Dr. David Owusu-Ansah, Professor of History, Co-Chair, Africana Minor Program coordinated the UVI team visit to the Faculty Senate meeting and discussion of shared governance with faculty and SGA representatives. Lee Brooks, Student Body President at James Madison University (JMU) and the members of the SGA Executive revealed during their interview that there is a presence of "*Shared Governance*" at JMU though not referred to as such. They indicated that they have an active voice with respect to social and political issue as well as patriotism to school and state. They have frequent dialog with Administration and Faculty on issues pertaining directly to student success. Overall they seem to maximize all opportunities to ensure that a line of communication is present between and among all stakeholders at James Madison University.

VII. Lessons learned

The visit to the three Universities in Virginia provided and/or reinforced three major lessons on the practice of shared governance.

Lesson 1: The University President plays a pivotal role in the operation of the representative body and the executive representative body recognizes its role as advisory to the President (advocacy is more a function of the general representative bodies – Student Government Association, Faculty Council and Staff Council). At the University of Virginia there is not a University Council. The Faculty Senate serves as the advisory body to the President. The UVA President serves as President of the Faculty Senate and a Chair is selected from among the members of the Senate. At Virginia State University, the University Council is comprised of representatives from the student, faculty and staff representative bodies and the University President serves as the Chair of the University Council. A Vice Chair of the University Council is selected by the members of the Council. This University Council meets every two weeks. Based on comments of a faculty member, VSU's Univeristy Council does not have a problem with quorums. This was attributed to the commitment of the President to the shared governance process at the University and to the President's presence at Council meetings in the capacity of Council Chair.

Lesson 2: Work on gathering information and getting input on policies and other issues are done at the committee level and not at the University Council level. An active and committed general membership to serve on committees is vital to sharing in the responsibility of making decisions. This practice was mentioned by representatives in interviews at all three universities visited.

Lesson 3: The adoption of a structure for shared governance does not occur overnight nor does it end with the approval of a final document. It requires continuous communication between decision makers and stakeholders. At Virginia State University, the then Faculty council was dissolved by the Board of Visitors (Board of Trustees) in 2001 and this Council was not reestablished until 2003 as the Faculty Senate along with the establishment of a University Council. Work continued on shared governance at VSU even after the establishment of the Faculty Senate and the University Council.

	VSU	UVA	JMU
1. What system do they use to obtain input or provide feed back to faculty, staff and students?	University Council is comprised of representatives from the faculty, staff and student general representative body http://www.vsu.edu/pages/125.asp	Governance structure with functionally independent Faculty Senate Model http://www.virginia.edu/facultystaff/ Student Government Association Model; if an issue surfaces necessitating one group's need for input interaction is facilitated by the campus organizational culture	Functionally independent Faculty Senate Model and Student Government Association Model; if an issue surfaces necessitating one group's need for input interaction is facilitated by the campus organizational culture
2. When was the council/ senate established	2003	1971	1967
3. What is their Senate's function?	The University Council is an advisory body to the President. The Faculty Senate, Staff Senate and Student Government Association advocate for the interest of their members.	The Faculty Senate is an advisory body to the President and Rector (chairman) of the Board of Visitors (Board of Trustees) The General Faculty Council is the advocacy body for the faculty.	Based on the comment of one Faculty Senate member, the faculty senate is advisory to the President. This is the stated purpose of the senate in their bylaws. (<i>Note: The member did not think this purpose was being well served since he indicated that as chair of the Budget Committee for the Senate he was not part of the University's budget development process.</i>)
4. Do they have difficulty obtaining a quorum?	NO	NO	NO
5. How often do they meet?	Every two weeks	Monthly	Monthly
6. Are the committees ad hoc or standing, active or passive?	Both Standing & Ad Hoc with authority to establish and discontinue	Both Standing & Ad Hoc with authority to establish and discontinue	Standing committees
7. Are any of the employees of the university members of a union?	NO VA is a "right to work state" Faculty use representatives from the AAUP as consultants in negotiating compensation	NO VA is a "right to work state"	NO VA is a "right to work state"
8. How does the Senate communicate with the university as a whole? Email, newsletter?	Well organized, clearly delineated processes between the major stakeholders—faculty, staff and students	As the need arises; loose affiliations; no direct or clear paths to students and staff.	As the need arises; loose affiliations; no direct or clear paths to students and staff.
9. Membership of the Senate	22	80	45



Above: UVI team with members of the Virginia State University (VSU) shared governance task force of the VSU University Council



Left: Interview with University of Virginia (UVA) Ricardo Padrón Faculty Senate Chair and Edmund Kitch, Chair-elect

Right: Dinner with Dr. William Harvey, University of Virginia Vice President and Chief Officer for Diversity and Equity





Above: UVI R. Grant with members of James Madison University (JMU) Student Government Association



Left: UVI R. Grant with Lee Brooks President of JMU SGA at the JMU Faculty Senate meeting

Right: UVI Dr. N. Michael and Dr. L. Hudsbeth with Dr. David Owusu-Ansah, Professor of History, Co-Chair, Africana Minor Program

