

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA  
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
March 20, 2023**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

Dr. Schexnider called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m., at Kyle Hall, MBA Reading Room (Room #333), Radford University in Radford, Virginia. Committee members present: Alvin Schexnider, Ken Ampy, Jason El Koubi, Jeff Smith and Cheryl Oldham.

Committee members absent: Mirza Baig and William Harvey.

Staff members present: Peter Blake, Joseph G. DeFilippo, Sandra Freeman, Kirstin Pantazis, Paula Robinson, and Kristin Whelan.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE January 10 ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING**

On motion by Dr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Ampy, the minutes were approved unanimously (5-0).

Dr. Schexnider introduced and invited staff to present information on the following topics:

**ACTION ON PROPOSED DEGREE PROGRAMS AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

Dr. DeFilippo described the background of the proposed Associate of Fine Arts in Music degree program at Northern Virginia Community College as well as its curriculum. This program will take the place of the Associate of Applied Arts in Music and the Associate of Arts in Music. Administration and resources from the old program will be redirected to this program. The new degree program is intended to align with transfer to BFA programs in music. Dr. DeFilippo acknowledged Dr. Dan Lewis from the Virginia Community College System, Dr. Barbara Hopkins from NVCC, and Dr. Paul Smith, SCHEV staff, and thanked them for their work on the proposal.

The following resolution was approved unanimously (5-0) to be forwarded to the full council:

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to Northern Virginia Community College to initiate an Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.) degree program in Music (CIP code: 50.0901), effective fall 2023.**

Dr. DeFilippo described the background of the proposed Master of Education in Education at University of Virginia's College at Wise (UVA-W). This will be the first graduate program offered at the institution. Dr. DeFilippo noted a change to be made to the resolution as the CIP code should be 13.0101, not 45.9999. The program will not add teachers to the workforce, instead focusing on assisting those who are provisionally licensed or working in administration. Letters of support from regional superintendents

were provided and UVA-W attests to pay increases that a master's degree generates for working teachers.

Dr. Andy Cox, Chair of Teacher Education at UVA-W remarked that students are excited to begin the program. Dr. Jeffrey Smith expressed support for the proposal, noting that curriculum is the core of education and programs like this assist in building an educated population.

The following resolution was approved unanimously (5-0) to be forwarded to the full council:

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia grants approval to The University of Virginia's College at Wise to initiate a Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree program in Education (CIP: 13.0101), effective fall 2023.**

### **ACTION ON REVIEW OF PROPOSED DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM**

Dr. DeFilippo described the background of the proposed Doctor of Education in Education degree program at James Madison University (JMU). Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and Virginia Tech (VT) had objected to the proposal based on duplication of an existing degree program, so the item is before the committee for adjudication of the duplication issue. If approved, the program would be permitted to proceed to a full review. Dr. DeFilippo answered questions from committee members.

Dr. Mark L'Esperance, Dean of the College of Education at (JMU), addressed Council noting that full review is an opportunity to address concerns and that the proposed program aligns with the governor's educational objectives. He then responded to questions regarding curricular differences with existing programs.

In the course of discussion Dr. DeFilippo explained duplication is one part of SCHEV's evaluation of proposed degree programs and that concerns about duplication are presented to Council under its statutory duty to review and "approve or disapprove" any new degree program proposed by a public institution of higher education. A discussion of the significance of duplication followed. Mr. Curt noted that pitting institutions against each other is detrimental, particularly when facing declining enrollment. Dr. Schexnider added that national trends are moving away from blatant competition over new programs. Ms. Oldham requested that more rigorous data be collected on the alignment of the program with position requirements. Mr. El Koubi suggested establishing principles for adjudicating the duplication issue. Dr. Smith noted that duplication concerns should balance saturation with demands of the profession and that in this case duplication in itself should not stop the review process from continuing.

On motion by Dr. Smith and seconded by Dr. Ampy the following resolution was approved unanimously (5-0) to be forwarded to the full council:

**Be it resolved that the Academic Affairs Committee approves continuation of a full review of the proposal from James Madison University to initiate a Doctor**

**of Education in Education degree, to include an exhaustive analysis of the data as a part of the full review.**

### **REVIEW OF PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

Dr. DeFilippo introduced the agenda item, presenting “Program Announcements” for new degree programs that public institutions plan to submit for SCHEV approval. The Program Announcement is a feature of the SCHEV program approval process in accord with Council’s duty to “review and approve or disapprove all new undergraduate or graduate academic programs that any public institution of higher education proposes,” Code of Virginia § 23.1-203 (5).

Dr. DeFilippo spoke about the purposes of listing program announcements related to alerting staff, Council members and other institutions about institutions’ programmatic plans, and noted that the process affords input regarding duplication. Dr. DeFilippo provided descriptions of each proposed program and factors that may affect approval of such programs. Committee members offered comments and received information from institutional representatives.

### **ACTION ON PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AT A PUBLIC INSTITUTION**

Dr. DeFilippo introduced the background for the organizational changes proposed by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU): establishment of a School of Population Health, Department of Epidemiology, Department of Health Policy and Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences; in addition the School of Population Health would include a Department of Biostatistics Dr. DeFilippo noted that this move is a prelude to VCU’s continuing efforts to creating an accredited School of Public Health and is a required step by the public health accrediting body, the Council on Public Health Education (CEPH). The establishment of the School of Population Health would take effect on April 1, 2023.

Dr. DeFilippo acknowledged the complicated process for accreditation and the commitment of the institution in working through required steps in the process. This is a non-trivial investment with rationale and details of the reallocation of more than 51 million dollars from the School of Medicine and the hiring of new personnel detailed beginning on page 103 of the agenda.

Dr. DeFilippo thanked Dr. Monica Osei for her work on the proposal. Dr. Schexnider concurred, noting that a proposal of this magnitude is quite an undertaking and will benefit both the university and the state.

The following resolution was unanimously approved (5-0) to be forwarded to the full Council:

**BE IT RESOLVED that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia approves the establishment of the School of Population Health at Virginia Commonwealth University; and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia approves the establishment of the Department of Epidemiology within the School of Population Health; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia approves the reorganization of the Department of Health Behavior and Policy to establish the Department of Health Policy and the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, both within the School of Population Health; and

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that the establishment of the School of Population Health and its constitutive Departments of Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Health Policy, and Social and Behavioral Sciences, shall take effect on April 1, 2023.

### **DISCUSSION OF PRIVATE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SCHOOL CLOSURES**

Ms. Freeman provided a presentation with an overview of legal requirements and logistical challenges associated with the closure of regulated postsecondary schools in Virginia. She noted that this was a follow-up to a presentation from a year ago. School closures are of particular concern recently as there has been an uptick in closures which always result in student confusion and victimization. SCHEV staff assist with damage control in abrupt closures and with planning in orderly closures. Further, SCHEV staff is responsible for record keeping and providing transcripts to alumni of closed institutions with a 200% increase in the number of transcripts requested in recent years.

Dr. Schexnider inquired about staff workload and commended Ms. Freeman and staff for their work. Mr. Ampy likewise acknowledged staff's efforts and suggested a feasibility study of switching to electronic record keeping.

### **RECEIPT OF REPORT FROM ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE STAFF LIAISON**

Dr. DeFilippo commented on the recent activities and accomplishments of Academic Affairs staff.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Schexnider adjourned the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

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Alvin Schexnider  
Chair, Academic Affairs Committee

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Kirstin Pantazis  
Staff, Academic Affairs