

**Minutes of the Academic Affairs Committee Meeting**  
**1315-1445 hours**  
**17 September 2024**  
**Smith Hall Board Room**

Present:

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>VMI Alumni Association</b>
Mr. Edgar	BG Moreschi	Dr. Gupton
Mr. Fain	COL McDonald	
Mr. Garcia	COL Luna	<b>VMI Foundation</b>
COL Inman (via Zoom)	LTC Eskam	Mr. King
Mr. Janis	Mrs. Fowler	Ms. Cathcart

COL Inman called the meeting to order at 1314.

The minutes of the 3 May 2024 meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee were unanimously approved (Attachment 1).

**1. Approval of Graduates**

The Academic Affairs Committee considered the Graduation List dated 27 August 2024 for September 2024 graduates. The Committee approved this preliminary list of graduates and granted to the Deputy Superintendent for Academics and Dean of the Faculty the authority to delete the names of cadets who do not meet the requirements for graduation and to add the names of graduates who may fulfill the requirements for graduation. The Committee further recommended that that the final lists of graduates in May 2024 be filed with the minutes of this meeting (Attachment 2).

**2. Changes in the Faculty**

The Academic Affairs Committee considered the Changes in the Faculty dated 27 August 2024 (Attachment 3). The Committee approved those Changes in the Faculty.

**3. Approval of Changes to the Faculty Handbook**

BG Moreschi briefed the Academic Affairs Committee on a proposed change (Attachment 4) to the *Faculty Handbook – May 2024*. The proposed change would permit the extension of the probationary period for Teaching & Research faculty up to two additional years due to medical or parental leave. The Dean could authorize additional extensions in extraordinary circumstances.

The *Faculty Handbook* with the proposed changes is renamed the *Faculty Handbook – September 2024*.

#### **4. State of the Academic Program**

BG Moreschi reported on the following:

##### Admissions Standards and VMI Standardized Testing Policy

Last year, the Academic Affairs Committee decided to delay finalization of a standardized testing policy for admissions until at least two years' worth of data was obtained. Currently, 80% of higher education is test optional for admissions, which includes some of VMI's main competitors. VMI admissions is test optional; however, applications from incoming cadets for Merit Scholarships and ROTC scholarships require standardized test scores. Admissions uses a ranking rubric with a total of 44 possible points. The rubric previously had been based on a total of 46 points with two points being awarded to legacy applicants until being a legacy was no longer allowed as an admissions consideration under state law. Legacies are still tracked by the Alumni Agencies but not included in the Admissions score. VMI's current admissions practice is to factor standardized test scores into the admissions ranking if they help an applicant's chances, but if they hurt the ranking, then they are not considered. Applicants are encouraged to submit test scores if they have already taken the tests. Some parts of the application are not required but encouraged, such as a personal statement and an interview with Admissions. These components can help Admissions make the case to the Superintendent for approving acceptance of a student with a lower GPA. Math placement tests are required for incoming matriculants, and an effort is currently underway to have applicants complete the tests earlier in the admissions process.

Prior to the February 2025 BOV meeting, the Academic Affairs Committee will review the current Admissions Standards, which were last updated in 2006, as well as the requirements of VMI's competitors to determine if VMI's current standards are sufficient or if changes are needed. In addition, BG Moreschi will make a recommendation as to whether additional time is needed to evaluate the standardized testing policy.

##### SACSCOC Reaccreditation

The Institute is beginning the 2+ year reaffirmation window. In fall '24, an ad hoc committee is being formed to develop ideas for the Institute's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). In spring '25, QEP development will begin, the responsibility delegation matrix developed, and we will begin to gather data and write compliance certification narratives. Ongoing revisions to the Institute Strategic Plan could pose complications with reaccreditation. Care will need to be taken to ensure compliance certification narratives reflect "Forging 21st Century Leaders."

##### AACSB and ABET Reaccreditation

In October '24, the Economics and Business Department will have its on-site visit from its AACSB reaccreditation team. In November '24, all three engineering programs will have the on-site visit from the ABET reaccreditation team.

### Teaching & Research (T&R) Faculty Compensation

We are in the eighth year of executing a plan to bring the average full-time T&R faculty salary into the top 5 amongst VA's public colleges and universities. VMI's current average T&R faculty places us at #6. The average T&R faculty salary has increased 60% in eight years with the funding for these increases about evenly split between public and private funds. On average, 22% of each faculty member's salary is private funds - about \$3.6 million in total funding.

### Administrative & Professional (A&P) Faculty Compensation Guidelines

the Institute Compensation Committee developed guidelines for A&P Faculty salaries, which were approved by The Superintendent. The Executive Team is working on a proposal for salary adjustments to address A&P faculty salaries based on these guidelines.

### Peay Academic Excellence Fund

During the 24-25 AY, we have eight cadet Peay Scholars; three Peay Scholars have graduated. Currently, there are four Peay Fellows; two are currently serving as instructors on the VMI faculty and two are in graduate school. There are six Academic Excellence chairs and five Jackson-Hope Chairs. Overall, there are 29 named faculty chairs/professorships.

### SCHEV Grant to Support Student Internships

Career Services received a \$100K grant from SCHEV to support cadet interns with financial need. During summer '24, 38 cadets were supported by this grant with each cadet receiving an individual grant ranging from \$500 to \$4,000.

### **Adjournment**

The Committee adjourned at 1445 hours.