

**STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
July 15, 2025**

MINUTES

Dr. Taylor called the meeting to order at 11:16 a.m., at the Woodrow G. Bolick Building, Room 110, Piedmont Virginia Community College, in Charlottesville, VA.

Committee members present: Steven Taylor (Chair), Jason El Koubi, Lindsay Fryer, Cheryl Oldham, and J. Doug Straley

Committee members absent: Dr. William Harvey

Staff members present: Joseph G. DeFilippo, Alan Edwards, Jodi Fisler, Kirstin Pantazis, Emily Salmon, and Bob Spieldenner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 17 COMMITTEE MEETING

On motion by Mr. El Koubi and seconded by Ms. Fryer, the minutes were approved unanimously (5-0).

DISCUSSION OF MODIFICATIONS TO SCHEV'S PROGRAM PRODUCTIVITY POLICY

Dr. DeFilippo introduced and described the background of the proposed modifications to the program productivity policy, the details of which can be found beginning on pg. 12 of the agenda book. Dr. DeFilippo noted the modifications are presented in response to council's direction and, if approved at or before the October meeting, can be in effect for the upcoming productivity review scheduled for the 2025/2026 academic year. In response to a query by Ms. Oldham, Dr. DeFilippo remarked that the Code of Virginia (§ 23.1-203. Duties of Council) does not include explicit language about return on investment. In response to a query by Dr. Taylor, Dr. DeFilippo stated that under the current policy, an academic program that meets student enrollment and graduation standards but does not deliver high return on investment to students would not necessarily be considered for discontinuance.

Dr. DeFilippo presented a recommendation to shorten the productivity review cycle to occur every three years instead of every five years. In response to a query by Dr. Taylor, Dr. DeFilippo noted that while the initial review under the new policy is expected to be staff intensive, subsequent reviews may not require additional staff support. In a response to a query by Mr. El Koubi about defining return on investment, Ms. Fryer suggested flexibility in allowing institutions to show graduate earnings compared to what students pay for a program. Dr. Taylor concurred with Mr. El Koubi and Ms. Freyer on the need for an operational definition of return on investment and commented on the committee's responsibility to ensure students are presented with fiscally responsible academic options.

In response to a query by Dr. Taylor, Dr. DeFilippo stated Academic Affairs staff will work with Policy Analytics staff to prepare a presentation on available wage and debt data in relation to academic program data for the September committee meeting. In response to a query by Mr. El Koubi, Dr. DeFilippo will consult with institutional representatives on the developing policy and its effect on institutional operations.

DISCUSSION OF SCHEV RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO VIRGINIA WORKFORCE NEEDS

Dr. DeFilippo introduced the discussion and reviewed SCHEV's responsibilities in addressing workforce needs as detailed in the Code of Virginia. Dr. Taylor remarked that in light of stakeholders across the state highlighting the importance of talent development, the committee should consider a focus on defining and overseeing alternative pathways to workforce credentials. Mr. Straley concurred with Dr. Taylor and noted the importance of definitional work by the committee before detailing initiatives to improve alignment of academic programming with workforce needs.

In response to a query by Mr. El Koubi, Dr. DeFilippo noted the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) offers both a High Demand Occupations Dashboard and a High Value Index Dashboard, neither of which fully encapsulate the range of data identified by the committee as necessary for determining alignment with workforce needs. Dr. DeFilippo requested committee support for outside analysis of labor markets and academic program alignment in Virginia. Mr. El Koubi noted an intent to assist with the project.

RECEIPT OF REPORT FROM ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE STAFF LIAISON

Dr. Taylor acknowledged the recent activities and accomplishments of Academic Affairs staff.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

Steven Taylor
Chair, Academic Affairs Committee

Kirstin Pantazis
Staff, Academic Affairs