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MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty

SUBJECT: Clarification - Scholarly Engagement

Confusion seems to exist among some members of the faculty regarding distinctions between the cadet development and the scholarly engagement domains in the Statement on Faculty Expectations with respect to undergraduate research, and what constitutes scholarly engagement generally.

The Statement on Faculty Expectations was approved by the Academic Board in August 2002 during BG Brower's tenure as Dean. As a member of the faculty, I was involved in the original application of the Statement on Faculty Expectations when serving as Chair of the Institute Merit Pay Committee in 2003. Since becoming Dean, I have consistently stated my support of the Statement on Faculty Expectations and that my interpretation of it does not vary from that of the previous Dean. Thus, since its adoption by the Academic Board in 2002, the Statement of Faculty Expectations and its application in the processes associated with annual evaluations, tenure, and promotion have remained consistent.

In the minutes of a meeting of the Undergraduate Research Initiative Committee on 9 May 2006, BG Brower is credited with the following explanation:

> "Undergraduate research is infused through the Statement on Faculty Expectations and faculty members can provide evidence to support undergraduate research as a component of each of the four assessment areas: Teaching, Scholarly Engagement, Cadet Development, and even Professional Citizenship (e.g., editing the undergraduate research journal). There is, however, a distinction between **supervising cadet research** (which can be applied to teaching and cadet development) and **conducting research with cadets** (which can be applied to scholarly engagement). In order to be considered scholarly engagement, there must be compelling evidence that the research conducted with the cadet(s) has been 'brokered' to other venues by the faculty member, not just the cadet. In other words, the Dean is looking for evidence of **research partnerships**, so the faculty member must have contributed to joint presentations, joint publications, or produced his or her own presentations and publications based upon the research conducted with the cadet(s) (this includes presentations on the scholarship of teaching). The 'burden of proof,' as the Dean said, lies with the applicant to demonstrate that the undergraduate

> research project went beyond the cadet's own presentations and publications and contributed to the faculty member's own scholarship as well." (Emphasis in original)

My view is the same. Undergraduate research that is not vetted with peers in the discipline outside of VMI is cadet development (or, in some instances, teaching). Scholarly engagement, whether associated with undergraduate research or not, requires that work be "brokered" by presentation, in some form, to one's peers in the broader professional community. This is and has always been the distinction.

What constitutes scholarly engagement is a matter for individual faculty members to decide in consultation with their department heads and with reference to the types and levels of engagement described in the Statement on Faculty Expectations. The key point is that the work be vetted in the professional community external to VMI.

Finally, I also agree with BG Brower's other statements about undergraduate research recorded in the 9 May minutes:

> "Participating in undergraduate research projects is **NOT REQUIRED** for T&P; however, the argument that since undergraduate research may not 'count' for Scholarly Engagement is not an argument for non-participation." (Emphasis in original)
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> "The Dean also wanted to ensure that the faculty realizes that he understands that VMI is not an R1 research school, but he believes that using the argument that VMI is a 'teaching school' to deny the importance of scholarly engagement is a 'red herring,' because he believes that classroom teaching must be informed by faculty engagement in their areas of scholarship and teaching."

Consequently, as I stated above, although the form of faculty evaluations has recently changed, the criteria and how those criteria are understood have been constant since the Statement on Faculty Expectations was adopted by the Academic Board in August 2002.