

College expects to name new Business VP by December

More than 140 apply for top administrative position vacated after the resignation of Robert Norfleet

By ERIK SWANSON
Staff Writer

In August, college administrators began a search to find a replacement for former Vice President of Business and Finance Robert Norfleet, who stepped down last summer to pursue other interests.

With the applicant screening process nearing its end, the candidate pool has been narrowed, and the new V.P. should be selected by December, said college President Bobby Vagt.

The recruiting involves both telephone and on-campus interviews with more than 140 applicants led by an in-house committee—Clark Ross, V.P. of Academic Affairs & Dean of Faculty; Verna Case, Biology Department Chair; Nancy Cable, V.P. and Dean of Admission & Financial Aid; and Carl Sorenson, Director of Human Resources—and by national recruitment agency A.T. Kearney.

While the in-house committee and search agency A.T. Kearney control the screening process, "ultimately the decision rests with the trustees," according to Vagt.

"They will be engaged [at the point of making the decision]."

While the administration initially hoped the process would be completed by November, the delayed culmination reflects the overall size of the applicant pool.

Case said, "There are a number of highly qualified candidates, each of whom would bring a unique perspective to Davidson College."

The position vacated by Norfleet is a challenging role to fill. The V.P. of Business and Finance reports directly to the president regarding business, finance, information technology, and administrative services.

In the advertisement placed to elicit applica-

tions for the opening, the college emphasizes the role the new V.P. would play in the Davidson community: "Along with five other members of the College's principal management group, the Vice President for Business and Finance reports directly to the President, and, as such, participates with this group and the President in formulating broad strategic and managerial policies and decisions, across all areas of the College, for the direction and future of the institution."

In addition to these broad goals, Vagt stresses the importance of growth in endowment, information technology, and physical infrastructure, among various other needs.

"This is a good job, and I'm not talking just salary."

- President Vagt

As the search for Norfleet's successor comes to a close, the administration outlines the

advantages of the position.

"This is a good job, and I'm not talking just salary," said Vagt.

He accentuated the benefits of the position, both professionally and personally, such as the community in which the individual would work and live.

Norfleet, who graduated from Davidson in 1970, served the college at this position for over a decade, bringing about several positive changes and innovations to the Davidson community.

Most notable of these in recent memory was his role in the construction of the crew team's boathouse in 2000. He was particularly sympathetic to the biology department, supporting many of their projects and valuing the importance of recycling.

Currently, Norfleet is serving the college on an interim basis as the Sr. Executive Director of I.T. and Investments, focusing primarily on endowment enrichment and Information Technology Services.

Ghosts, from page 1

student. Around the turn of the 20th century, a medical college was established on campus. The dissection lab changed buildings several times – first a house called "Old Danville" across from the President's home, and eventually an old wooden building in the forest behind Chambers. A quick check of campus geography reveals that the dissection lab rested where the library is today.

Hardworking students would have no reason to fear studying in their carrels late into the night had the dissection lab been a normal, decent, scientific facility. Not quite so.

A local teenager, Sam Thompson, knew that the medical college dissection lab would need cadavers – and he knew where to find them.

After a funeral, he would visit the old cemetery, now behind the golf course, and dig up corpses.

Once when Thompson was delivering a body back to the lab, some folks caught sight of the canvas-covered bulk in his cart. Shaking the body, he whined, "Come on, you're not THAT drunk!" and escaped accusation.

Thompson's schemes were eventually uncovered. Someone in the lab recognized his cadaver's prominent gold tooth and realized he was a man who had just died in town. The college was sued for a few thousand dollars, but Davidson's self-admitted "gravedigger" continued his crimes. He later attended the College

and graduated with the class of 1904.

Blodgett suspects that the unsettled spirits of stolen cadavers may be haunting the site of their injustice. "The conditions are right," she advises. Seniors—the new class of '04—are especially cautioned to avoid the library this Halloween.

Pranks from the past

The "roaring '20s" was a decade of spooky campus hoaxes.

On Halloween of 1922, some students decided to enthrone the Biology department's favorite skeleton by the Old Well. As they worked, they noticed a dark cloaked figure approaching. The students were spell-bound with fear until one of them sneezed. The students seized the opportunity to run. The faculty member just chuckled.

Not to be outdone, the students of 1923 orchestrated a Halloween decorating frenzy, converting Phi Hall into a "fire hall" and hanging furniture like piano stools and stoves in the trees on Chambers Lawn. They decorated Main Street as well, changing its sign to read "Fifth Avenue" and Depot Street to "Wall Street."

Halloween 1924 saw streamers hung from trees and some classrooms and offices littered with hay and populated with cows and rams.

Though it's been awhile since these elaborate schemes occurred, Davidson's ongoing ghost tradition attests to the age-old Halloween spirit that still lingers on this campus.

Vandalism, from page 1

residents living in the target areas.

She warned that residents are charged for damage to the lounges and bathrooms of residence halls if no one agrees to take the blame.

Marsicano said, "All residents are responsible for unclaimed damage in the common areas of the building. For example, all Knox residents shared the \$275 fee for an inappropriately discharged fire extinguisher when no one acknowledged setting it off."

Those guilty of vandalizing property are taken before the Judicial Committee, which proceeds to determine an appropriate punishment for their specific offense.

Walker is taking several steps to prevent future acts of vandalism. His plan includes increasing the number of officers on duty during the weekend and encouraging community involvement in protecting campus property.

Some students think that the sporadic nature of the vandalism makes it difficult to inhibit.

Chuck Ostendorff '06 said, "I don't think vandalism can be prevented because the incidents are so random; they can't try to protect everything."

Walker recognizes this obstacle but hopes to overcome it with collective student participation.

"As an agency we are addressing the issues as best we can; unfortunately, it is more of a reactive response because the acts are random...Our agency would like to take a more proactive approach which would mean the Davidson College community would have to help."

This proactive response will include a crime prevention program that is based on students aggressively looking out for crimes around campus and consistently reporting incidents.

Vandalism incidents from this year as well as last year have impacted the future of various projects on campus.

Because of the consistent mistreatment of the community "Red Bikes" in the past, bikes are now being assigned according to freshmen hall. Each hall will receive one bike and will be

responsible for its maintenance in order to instill a sense of ownership and discourage future damage.

Several SGA plans have been affected by vandalism as well.

In response to the KKK graffiti, SGA intends on doing some sort of project, such as a mural near the site of the graffiti, to send a message of peace and unity.

SGA is also considering funding more of the popular green lawn chairs for the upcoming spring, but because of students' past abuse of the chairs, it is now attempting to put out a heavy-duty porch swing instead so that students will not be able to harm it. SGA expects to dedicate the swing in memory of Katherine Costa '03 and hopes that, as a result, students will have a sense of respect for the swing and be less inclined to damage it.

The reopening of the Belk computer labs as 24-hour labs is also contingent on students' treatment of the facility (see SGA column). The labs were previously closed because students did not respect them, and if future vandalism occurs, it will resume its earlier hours.

Students have expressed varied reactions in response to the recent vandalism. Some students are not interested in the incidents at all.

Pat McConville '06 said, "The administration cares more about vandalism than students because they are more concerned with the school's image and appearance."

Students also debated about the root cause of the vandalism. Graham Hunter '06 said, "When parties are forced to end at 2 a.m., I think some people become aggravated and bored and start taking out their frustration on school property."

The administration encourages students to accept responsibility for their actions concerning vandalism and report anyone they know who has mistreated campus property.

Marsicano criticizes students who have failed in the past to report certain acts of vandalism, saying, "It is a bit disturbing that Davidson students are not taking responsibility for their actions and that their neighbors are not holding them accountable."

"I hope we can work on that."

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