DRAFT Minutes

MEETING OCTOBER 5, 1999

Student Commons Forum Room


Absent were: Canavos, Coffman, Contos, Fauri, Liberti, Malloy, Nixon, Olbrisch, Ripley, Schmitt, Szari

The meeting was opened at 4:00 by Faculty Senate President Wes Poynor

The Minutes of the September meeting of the Senate were approved as posted on the web page.

President Poynor reminded Senators of the attendance rules, which state that senators may be removed if they miss more than 3 consecutive meetings. The relevant sections of Section V of the Standing Rules are:

2. Should any Voting Senator fail to be represented by a substitute twice in any academic year, or fail to be present at three consecutive regular meetings, the Senator shall lose his/her Senate seat. The Credentials and Rules Committee may grant exemptions to these regulations under unusual circumstances.

3. Senators who foresee that they will be unable to attend Senate meetings for an entire semester may, for up to two semesters during
their term, request special permission from the Credentials and Rules Committee to have an Alternate Senator serve as Acting Senator for them during that semester. Once a Senator has lost his/her seat, the Credentials and Rules Committee Chair shall request the Senate Secretary to notify the appropriate department and school governance organizations of the existence of a vacancy, which shall be filled as specified in the Bylaws.

He has arranged for senators who do not have campus parking stickers to obtain a visitor's parking pass to attend specific meetings of the Faculty Senate. Contact him if you need a pass.

A Faculty Senate Task Force is being formed to look into issues concerning the implications of distance education on intellectual property. For example, what is the status of course materials created by an instructor that reside on university computers? Senators who would like to serve on this task force should contact Sue Brilliant.

Recreational Sports needs a representative from the Faculty Senate on its advisory committee. Any one who is interested should contact President Wes Poynor.

Report on the September University Council Meeting

President Trani told the University Council that enrollment goals for the fall had not been meant. The budget for this year will therefore be in a shortfall position, by approximately $1,000,000. While freshman enrollment was up to a record level, graduate enrollment fell far short of the goal. The Provost noted that some 450 students with GPA above 3.0 had failed to return this fall, which is a major concern of his. Improving the retention rate of students who are in good standing is "everybody's business". Poynor and Vice President Sue Brilliant are on the University Retention Committee, and the issue remains on the Council's agenda.

Council approved the formation of a Division of Music and Theatre within the School of the Arts which will combine the administration of the Departments of Music and Theatre. There was serious discussion of this change in the Council, resulting in an agreement to have this change reviewed after two years, in the fall of 2001, by a Provost-appointed committee.

Proposed Revisions to the University Policy on Alcohol Drug Abuse

At the September meeting the proposal to amend the university policy statement on alcoholic drinking and other substance abuse was presented to the Senate by Kathleen Scott and discussed. (See the September minutes for a summary.) At that
time the Senate voted to send the policy to the Academic and Professional Status Committee for further study. **Alan Briceland** reported back to the Senate for the committee. He distributed a revised proposal that reorganized the document substantially, taking into account the issues raised in the previous meeting, and emphasizing the educational mission of the university. After lengthy discussion the following motion was moved, seconded and passed unanimously:

The Faculty Senate thanks Alan Briceland and his committee for its careful review and revision of the proposed changes in the alcohol and drug abuse policy. The committee shall make additional changes consistent with corrections and suggestions made by senators at this meeting, and deliver the resulting document to the University Substance Abuse Committee. The Faculty Senate recommends that this alternative draft be the basis of any amendments to the present policy.

**Iris Parham**, who also is a member of the Substance Abuse Committee, stated that the committee welcomed input from the Senate, and would carefully consider the Senate's alternative draft in fulfilling its charge to update the university policy.

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**Legislative Contact Tips**

**Lisa Shoaf** and **John Rossi**, co-chairs of the Senate's Committee on State Legislative and Statewide Relations, distributed advice on how to best contact state legislators. They emphasized that they are working very closely with Vice President for **External Relations Don Gehring**, **Mark Smith**, Executive Director for **Governmental and Community Relations**, and others whose job it is to represent the University's position to legislators, their staffs, and the general public. They urged senators to write to and meet with their legislators. Our attitude should not be that of lobbyists but rather one of constituents who are able to communicate what goes on at VCU in areas of research and service as well as classroom teaching. The committee will be reporting on other activities in future meetings.

The web pages of the External Relations Office (http://www.vcu.edu/exrel/govt.htm) contain many useful links to policy developments that affect VCU.

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The meeting was adjourned at 5:45.

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**Our next Senate meeting will be on November 2, 1999, at 4 pm, in the Student**
Lounge of the Lyons Dental Building on the Medical Campus. The Senate Executive Committee and Committee Chairs will be meeting with President Trani and Provost McDavis on October 26th at 4 pm in the President's office.