Minutes of the Faculty Senate

April 4, 2000

Meeting in Lyons Student Lounge


Absent: Abbey, Abubaker, Alder, Burton, M. Contos, Corey, Henry, Jackson, Klinker, Malloy, Merchant, Nixon, Peel, Philipsen, Shoaf, Turner, Weaver, Webb, Ivatury

Faculty Senate President Wes Poynor opened the meeting at 4:05.

The minutes of the March meeting (February 29, 2000) were moved, seconded and approved unanimously as sent.

- Faculty Senators were asked to fill out the blue survey on the condition of classrooms and teaching environment and turn it in before they left. The yellow packets were to be distributed to colleagues in your college/school and mailed back to Dan Ream by April 21, 2000.
- The most recent minutes to University Council had been emailed to Senators. While minutes of the December meeting were posted on the University Council Website, this semester's minutes have not yet been published.
- We will have to reschedule Delegate Panny Rhodes for the May 2nd meeting. She called and canceled her
Faculty Senate President Wes Poynor went over the budget results from the General Assembly. The legislature allocated $1.8 for the Life Sciences initiative. No money was allocated to the Library Funding initiative; however, $100,000 will be taken from the Life Sciences Initiative. The Legislature allocated $1.9 million for the Library capital budget; this plus $400,000 from the Facilities Management will be used to refurbish both libraries. Next year we will continue to ask for funds for the library.

- The Year Round Programming report is not on the University Council agenda.
- The Disruptive Student Policy revision from last May has been revised and is making its way through University channels.
- The Board of Visitors will meet in mid-April in a special meeting to review the University budget for the next biennium and again on May 12 for its regular meeting.
- The Governor’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Higher Education report is still not in print. [HOT FLASH: The Final Report (129 pages, pdf format) of the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Commission is now available at the SCHEV website. Also, an Interim Report by MGT America to the Joint Committee on Higher Education Funding Policies was posted April 17th on the Blue Ribbon Commission review webpages.]
- The University Executive Budget Committee has been meeting. The Committee's minutes are available on-line at http://www.vcu.edu/provost/acadadmin/comm_eb.html.
- Please remind your Deans to put the election of Senators on the Spring Faculty meeting agenda..
- The Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERIP) has been approved by the state’s Attorney General. Those folks eligible for early retirement have been contacted.
- The Staff Senate is spearheading a "Hello VCU" campaign which will kick-off in the fall.
- President Trani will address the April 25 Senate meeting. Dr. Poynor is sending him a memo about the topics that we would like him to address.
There will be an Open Forum on the Student Computer Initiative on April 5 (Noon – 1:30 Business Auditorium) and on April 11 (1-2:30 Medical Sciences building).

Faculty Senate President Wes Poynor opened the floor to further nominations for leadership of the Faculty Senate in 2000-2001. There were no additional nominations. A secret ballot was passed out, and Senators voted. The results were:

- President Wes Poynor
- Vice President Sue Brilliant
- Secretary Dianne Simons
- Representative MCV Campus Laura Meeks Festa
- Representative Academic Campus Dan Ream
- Elections were also held for the Chair of the University Grievance Panel. Steve Price was elected.

Vice Provost for University Outreach Sue Ann Messmer discussed enrollment and recruitment, which are two of her responsibilities.

She noted that in 1990s, VCU was falling short in enrollment, especially freshman. Admissions was moved to her portfolio and now for four straight years, VCU has been exceeding its freshman enrollment projections with increasing quality of GPAs and SATs. VCU has made a big effort to recruit in Northern Virginia and the Tidewater area. They monitor the results by region and by high school. VCU partners with the high school counselors to bring students here.

This year the big effort has been to recruit out-of-state students. For some time, VCU has been hovering at about 7-8% out-of-state students. The university is moving towards 15% within five years. President Trani has offered 70% of the increased funds from out-of-state students to the academic units that bring them in: approximately $6,600 for every additional out-of-state undergraduate and $5,500 for every additional out-of-state graduate student. She also noted that if a student changes major, the money from out-of-state tuition differential will follow the student into the new major. This is only Year 1 of a five-year campaign.

Vice Provost Messmer stated that she looks at the admissions data daily and went over the latest report on recruitment for next fall. The goal
is 2,550 freshman and we are 71 students ahead of where we need to be if we are going to make that number for fall 2000. There has also been a big push to get more scholarship money.

Dean Jack Haar of the School of Graduate Studies talked about the electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) proposal. Dean Haar mentioned that Virginia Tech started five years ago allowing electronic thesis and dissertation and now requires it. At the latest count, some 70 universities are doing this, usually as an option. The electronic format allows the student to be more creative – using video clips, audio clips, hypertext for poetry and so forth. Another reason for going electronically is that the cost of printing is reduced. The department can still require a bound, hard copy for keeping. One of the problems is the fast developing software and whether we will be able to read it in later years. A group is going to Virginia Tech to see how the system is carried out. Dean Haar said he wanted a sign of encouragement for the project. There are lots of details still needing to be worked out.

The following motion was made, seconded and approved. The faculty Senate enthusiastically encourages Dean Haar of the Graduate Studies to develop a formal proposal to allow for an optional Electronic Thesis/Dissertation, provided the Faculty Senate is allowed to review and approve such proposal before it is introduced to the University Council.

Phyllis Self, Vice Provost for Academic Technology announced the first University Technology Award went to Dr. Don Forsyth for having incorporated assessment tools into the classroom. He will be invited to present his work at the 11th Congress and also is our candidate for at $5,000 award. Dr. Forsyth’s name goes on a plaque that hangs in the Academic Technology office on the 4th floor of Cabell Library.

Senators pointed out that the IRB disaster has been a total fiasco for research, and especially for untenured faculty. Faculty Senate President Wes Poynor said he had made a statement expressing these sentiments at the President’s Council and also at the Senate. He restated that we need to be proactive and identify those folks whose research has been impacted. The decision to slow down or stop the tenure clock is a decision that is
made at the department Chair and Dean’s level. Provost McDavis and Vice President Kontos are aware of these concerns.

Junior faculty are encouraged to contact their school/college Promotion and Tenure committee to find out how to get the tenure clock stopped. Junior faculty also need to be aware of the grievance procedure should they be unable to get satisfactory responses. It was suggested that the IRB sent out a notice about this topic to all faculty, however, a number of faculty stated that they don’t read all the IRB notices. *These notices are archived at the IRB Website.*

It was moved and seconded that "The Faculty Senate President will send a letter to all faculty advising them of the possibility of suspending the tenure clock and of the process in place to do this." After a successful amendment, the final motion reads "The Faculty Senate President will send a letter to all faculty whose research has been suspended or grant applications delayed, advising them of the possibility of suspending the tenure clock and of the process in place to do this." The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55.

*Margot Garcia*
Secretary to the Faculty Senate.

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*Neil W. Henry, web editor*
*May 2, 2000*