Minutes of the Faculty Senate

October 2, 2001
Room 114 MCV Alumni House, MCV Campus

Present:

Absent: Dilworth, Heuman, Konechne, Moon, Peng, Rife, Seither, Tepper, Weaver, Wood

Opening Remarks by the President

Faculty Senate President, Dr. Bob Andrews, called the second Faculty Senate meeting of the 2001-2002 academic year to order at 4:05 p.m.

The September minutes were approved as distributed in the Senate e-mail communication distributed on 09-27-01.

Committee Chairs were introduced and a sheet distributed of committee assignments.

Action Items

Dr. Michael Smith was elected University Grievance Panel Chair by unanimous assent.
Senate Executive Committee Resolution

Senator Alan Briceland presented the Senate with a resolution proposed by the Senate Executive Committee. Following amendments by Judy Lewis, Jim Hague, and Elizabeth Hodges, the Senate passed the following resolution:

The Faculty Senate of Virginia Commonwealth University wishes to affirm the belief that freedom from abuse and harassment are among the most important and prized of our American freedoms. As a university community comprised of a large number of students and scholars of diverse backgrounds, we, therefore, are particularly conscious of the need to prevent thoughtless or mean-spirited acts and speech. We endorse Dr. Eugene Trani's sentiments that "One of the things we prize most as an academic and health-care community is our diversity. It is especially important that we demonstrate sensitivity to all members of our community as we attempt to absorb the events of ... [September 11]. The issue before the nation involves terrorism, not nationality or ethnic background, and tolerance and respect for one another are essential."

The resolution passed unanimously. Dr. Andrews will share the resolution with the Provost and President Trani and Senate Secretary, Dianne Simons will contact the Commonwealth Times to share the resolution with the student body.

Provost McDavis Responds to the Faculty Senate Resolution on the VCU Libraries and the Honor System Review Process

Provost McDavis began his presentation to the Senate by commending the faculty on their response to the events of September 11, 2001. He acknowledged the numerous efforts demonstrated by the VCU faculty, including the "Teach-in" held the week before. He then stated that he was appearing before the Senate in response to the library resolution that the Senate had passed in May, which requested that the administration update the Senate in October on the progress of the five-year plan for improving the University Libraries.
ARL Status
The Provost reported that a document had been presented to the Board of Visitors in August that laid out a vision for improving academic quality at VCU. Included in that document were plans to seek a top 100 ranking amongst the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and that the document had been confirmed by our Board. The Provost stated that this was "more than a commitment of words. It is a commitment of resources." In order to accomplish this goal additional funding for the libraries would be necessary. VCU Libraries has received $3.3 million for library upgrades. The Provost indicated that the Administration was in the process of formulating budget requests for the coming year. He informed Senators that there are 3 sources of funds that are being targeted for this increased funding -- tuition, specifically the increased revenue for recruitment of out-of-state students, base adequacy funding, and general funds. The Legislature's study indicated that Virginia universities were $200 million dollars short of the funding that they needed to operate. VCU's portion of that base adequacy funding is $10 million and the Administration is anticipating that $2.5 million of that sum will be made available to VCU over the next couple of years. We are asking that $778,300 be committed to VCU Libraries in the first biennium (2001-2002) and that an additional $1,006,007 be committed for the second biennium (2003-2004), for a total of $1.7 million dollars over the next 4 years. The Provost stated that, "While that is not enough to get us where we want to be, it is certainly heading us in the right direction."
Increasing the quality of the Libraries is one of 13 priority items that the University has set. In addition to public funding, the Provost reported that VCU was currently in the "quiet phase" of a major University fundraising plan. He indicated that work is being done behind the scenes to identify prospective private donors and that VCU Libraries would be one of the beneficiaries of this private fund raising effort. Funds received from the private sector can be used more flexibly than can monies from state funds.

Honor System Review
The Provost announced "We will not be ready to submit to the Board of Visitors in November the revisions to our Honor Code as was hoped for in the spring." He informed Senators that the document had been distributed widely and that his office had received feedback on the suggested revisions. He stated that the document would
be revised based upon the feedback that is received and that it would be put back out
to allow time for further comments. He stated, "It looks like February will be a more
appropriate time for the document to be submitted to the Board of Visitors. … We are
going to push back to allow for more time for conversation and discussion because the
Honor Code is something very, very important to our University." He hopes that a
revised document could be developed by the end of the month, so that it could be
brought back to the Senate in December.

Dr. McDavis also announced that the University was in the process of developing 7
new academic programs that would hopefully be approved before the end of the year.
They include: 4 Baccalaureate Programs (B.S. in Forensic Science, B.S. in Financial
Technology, B.A. in African American Studies, B.A. in International Studies), 1
Masters Program (M.S. in Environmental Studies), and 2 Ph.D. Programs (Ph.D. in
Life Sciences, Ph.D. in Material Science). Dr. McDavis told Senators that "These
programs will broaden the array of academic programs for our University and will
change the flavor of academics at VCU."

Questions of the Provost

Dr. McDavis entertained questions. Dr. Judy Lewis asked the Provost to confirm that
the monies targeted for the Libraries is "additional new money" and he confirmed that
the funding that he had discussed was funding "on top of" current funding.

Dr. Wes Poynor asked for clarification that the document approved by the Board of
Visitors targeted VCU becoming a member of ARL and to be ranked amongst their
top 100 members. The Provost stated that "It is a tall mountain to climb" but that the
document had set a vision and that "the bar" of ARL membership had to be set as a
goal.

Dr. Lucy Harvie asked the Provost how the administration could tell whether
comments/feedback came from an individual opinion or representation of a larger
group.

The Provost's response was that "Faculty are not of a like mind." He indicated that his
office would revise the document in response to the feedback that was received. The
Review Committee would then review the revised document that reflected the
feedback. After review by the Committee, the revised document go back to the
appropriate channels, including the Faculty and Student Senates.

The Provost was asked who had the "bottom line" given that there appeared to be two
very different philosophies being presented. He responded that the Committee was
charged with guiding us through this process, but ultimately the Board of Visitors had
the final say and they could say "We don't like what you have proposed here."

Dr. Wes Poynor asked whether the University had decided what priority that the
University will give to Library funding. The response from the Provost was that the
only priority that had been established to this point was Life Sciences. He said that
there would be no 1-10 type of process this year. He said "We have asked for pots of
money that can be distributed rather than asking for specific funding for particular
projects or areas from the funds that come from General Funding." If we get the
general funding, the base adequacy funding and the additional tuition funds that will
fund the $778,000 targeted. The Provost acknowledged that if we don't reach our goal
for recruitment of out-of-state students that portion of the Library funding would not be
available.

Senator Briceland asked the Provost to identify which of the seven programs that the
Provost mentioned would be reviewed for approval by Committee on Academic
Affairs of University Council within the following 2 weeks. Dr. McDavis responded
that one proposal had been sent to committee members by his office just the day
before. That was the BS in Forensic Science proposal, which was approved last year
but had some revisions to the proposal. The B.A. in International Studies had also been
approved the year before but was being sent through the process again prior to be sent
to the Board of Visitors. Once University Council has approved these proposals, they
will be scheduled for approval at the February or May Board of Visitors meeting.

Dr. Poynor asked the Provost if he knew why the BOV minutes were not made
available on the VCU Website. The Provost did not know why but pledged that he
would find out.

Dr. Blue Wooldridge asked the Provost about university plans to increase the number
of fulltime faculty. The Provost responded that in addition to the $10 million that VCU
will receive if the legislature acts on the base adequacy study that VCU would receive
an additional $2 million in funds to move collateral faculty into fulltime faculty
positions. This "$2 million would be committed totally to that and that only."

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**Faculty Senate of VA Forum**

President Andrews announced that the Faculty Senate of Virginia would be holding a
forum that would be focused on issues of Higher Education. Information was
distributed to all Senators. Both gubernatorial candidates had confirmed that they
would speak at the forum. Registration forms are available on the Web for interested
persons.

**Senator Bev Koerin**, Chair of Faculty Senate EEO/AA committee, informed
the Senate that the Committee planned to bring a resolution endorsing
implementation of the 5-year diversity plan developed by the university
EEO/AA advisory committee at the request of the former Provost, Dr.
Grace Harris and the current Provost, Dr. Rod McDavis.

Senators will receive the information
in advance of the meeting. Senator Koerin asked that all Senators read the materials prior to the meeting. Senator Koerin reiterated that the Diversity Plan was drawn up by the EEO/AA Advisory committee and not the Senate EEO/AA committee so the plan would not be open to changes from the Senate, simply endorsement.

**Dr. Pat Cummins** shared that diversity was one of the top 25 priorities on the Institutional Performance Agreement and that she was aware that monies had been designated (~$500,000), on the Academic Campus, to assist Dean's in their efforts to diversify the faculty.

Senate Secretary Dianne Simons announced that parking had been arranged for those Senators who work on the Academic Campus and who do not subscribe to university parking to have parking available in the N Deck when the Senate meets on the MCV Campus. Parking passes were distributed to those who requested passes.

**Honor System Review**

**Dr. Bob Clifton**, Dean of Student Affairs for MCV Campus and advisor to MCV Honor Council for 20 years and Lisa Wallace, co-chair of the MCV Honor Council, addressed the Senate in regard to the proposed changes to the Honor System.

Dr. Clifton shared his very positive experiences with the men and women of the MCV Honor Council and a brief explanation of how the completely student run system operates. He informed Senators of a bit of the history of the MCV Honor System that has operated on the MCV Campus since 1895. The systems on the two campuses remained completely separate until 1991. At that time the VCU Honor System became somewhat combined but the Honor Council processes remained completely separate. The Committee appointed last year to review the Honor System was charged with looking at:

- Single sanction
- Bringing the two systems closer together

Following comments by Dr. Clifton, the Senate began debate on the Honor System Review recommendations.

A motion was made and seconded that:

*The Faculty Senate of Virginia Commonwealth University recommends that all proposed changes to the VCU Honor System document be referred to the Honor System Review Committee for consideration, before changes are adopted by the Provost’s Office.*

The motion failed to pass. However, the following motion was made and did pass:

*The Faculty Senate of Virginia Commonwealth University requests that the Provost ensure that the Honor System Review Committee that reconvenes to consider feedback to its recommendations includes the full faculty complement, as originally*
Senator Alan Briceland, Faculty Senate observer on MCV Campus, addressed the Senate. His critical review of the recommended changes had been sent out to all Senators prior to the meeting. Senator Judy Lewis, spoke in defense of the full student run system stating "The system has worked for us. Feedback from my colleagues has been unilaterally positive."

Senator Maike Philipsen presented the resolution passed by AAUP calling for Section 2.g. and Section 3 of the recommendations to be deleted on the basis of infringement of academic freedom and concerns about micromanagement. She proposed that the Faculty Senate support the recommendation made by AAUP. The following motion was seconded and passed. 

*The Faculty Senate of Virginia Commonwealth University supports the resolution of the VCU chapter of the American Association of University Professors that states “that Section 2.g. and all of Section 3 of the recommendations of the Draft of the Honor Code are unnecessary and inappropriate, are micromanaging and a poor means to address the issues, undermine professors’ ability to exercise professional judgment, and therefore, should be deleted.”*

Past President Wes Poynor expressed concern of the move to reduce faculty input. He stated that he felt that the Faculty Senate needed to go on record of supporting faculty involvement in the Honor System. He said "Faculty have a vested interest in honor and academic integrity." He introduced a motion to add 4 faculty to the MCV Honor Council to bring it in line with the configuration of faculty on the Academic Campus but it failed to pass.

Senator Nora Alder spoke in support of increasing faculty involvement

Dr. Lucy Harvie, representative of retired faculty, with 50 years experience with the MCV Honor System, spoke in support of the student run system on the MCV Campus

Senator Judy Lewis spoke in opposition to the motion pointing out that a part of the professionalization process was teaching peer review and personal responsibility

Senator Teresa Nadder also spoke in favor of the student run system. Senator Jim Hague, stated that he was not convinced that the two systems need to be alike and that there may be an inherent error in the assumption that faculty would be better at finding the truth. If both systems as they are currently operating are working reasonably well, that there was no real reason to change one to match the other just for the sake of consistency. Senator Joyce Lloyd spoke in favor of the combined Graduate and Professional Honor Council and the student run system.
After lengthy discussion and opposing views being expressed, the following motion was proposed and passed:

*The Faculty Senate of Virginia Commonwealth University recommends that item 2.c. of the Committee Recommendations be changed to read “The name of the Academic Campus Honor Council will be changed to the Academic Campus Undergraduate Honor Council” and that the composition of the Academic Campus Undergraduate Honor Council should not be changed from its current composition of four faculty members and three student members.*

Senator Dianne Simons introduced a motion that read: *Recognizing the similarities of graduate students on the two campuses, the Faculty Senate supports the inclusion of graduate students enrolled in programs of study on the Academic Campus in the proposed Graduate and Professional Honor System.* It did not pass.

Senator Nora Alder commented in the ensuing discussion that faculty do not want to be written out of the Honor System.

Senator Chris Turner made the following motion that was seconded and passed: *The Faculty Senate of Virginia Commonwealth University recommends that the proposed change of wording in II. 2.b. from “customary or proper citation” to “acknowledgement of the source” be returned to the original language.*

After a final comment from Senator Briceland charging Dr. Bob Clifton with looking at "what protections we have in place for international students," the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Dianne F. Simons, Ph.D., OTR*

Faculty Senate Secretary-Treasurer 2001-2002