Minutes of the Faculty Senate

December 4, 2001
MCV Alumni House, Room 114

Present:

Absent:
Bilyeu, Burton, Coffman, Kirschbaum, Koerin, Konechne, Nicholson, Peng, Philipsen, Roberson, Seither

Opening Remarks:
The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm. The minutes from November 6, 2001 Faculty Senate meeting were approved as distributed via e-mail to the Senators and posted to the Web.

President's Report:
Dr. Andrews reported that the University Calendar Committee had decided that Labor Day holiday would not be changed to a day when classes would be held. The Committee has been looking at the feasibility of the Academic and MCV campuses starting classes at the same time. They are still considering the scheduling of a Thursday and Friday Fall break. They are also considering not scheduling classes on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

Dr. Andrews reported that the committee examining Retirement Programs had asked him to recommend several faculty members from each campus to serve on this group. Faculty members who have an interest in serving on this committee were asked to contact Dr. Andrews to volunteer.

The report from University Council was that this group was considering by-law changes.

Mentoring Task Force

Dr. Charles Byles, Chair of Faculty Senate Mentoring Task Force, introduced members of the committee and announced that again this year that mentors would
work with students attending the VCU 102 class in the spring. This class is offered to students who are having academic difficulty. Students are not required to take this course. It is offered to students having problems to help them learn ways to improve their academic performance. There has been some concern regarding the lack of evaluation of the effectiveness of this course. Peg William's class will develop an evaluation instrument for this program as part of their spring course. Senator Alan Briceland asked about the time commitment required to serve as a mentor. Dr. Byles responded that the maximum would be weekly or biweekly meetings for the 10 weeks that the course is offered. The first meeting is generally held within the first three weeks of the start of classes. The length of the meeting times is not specified and reflects a negotiated process between the mentor and the student. Dr. Byles added, "They (the mentoree) let you know how much time they would like to meet with you." Senator Suzee Leone asked whether there was any chance to match mentors and mentorees by discipline. Dr. Byles indicated that students now have a choice in selecting their mentors and can choose faculty in their particular schools or programs of interest. Dr. Byles was asked what time the class met. He responded that for the spring semester there will be 5 different sections scheduled at a variety of times. The program will be evaluated by looking at 10 classes, 5 of which will be involved in the mentoring program and 5, of which, will be used as a control group for comparison purposes.

Presentation by the Provost
Professional Programs Committee
Provost McDavis shared with Senators that the University was proposing the formation of the Committee for Professional Program Review. The proposal was distributed to all Senators as an e-mail attachment prior to the meeting. The Provost explained to the Senate that the Graduate Council is set up to review graduate programs, but not professional programs. This situation became apparent when the Clinical Doctorate in Physical Therapy program came up for review and approval, and there was no established University body to approve it. The University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCCC) reviews undergraduate courses and programs and the University Graduate Curriculum Committee (UGCC) reviews graduate courses and programs. The current Committee for Professional Program Review proposal is in its second draft. In this draft the proposed Committee is structured a great deal like the UCCC and UGCC. The Provost indicated that the reason or the formation of this new committee is "To fill a faculty governance vacuum." The thinking behind making the proposed committee separate from the UGCC was that graduate faculty have less familiarity with the courses and programs in the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Allied Health. The degree resulting from the course of study of the program will serve as the determinant for the committee that will review any course and program changes. Undergraduate programs result in Bachelor of Arts and
Bachelor of Science degrees. Graduate programs include those programs whose students graduate with a Master of Science, Master of Arts, or Doctor of Philosophy degree. Professional programs include those programs whose students earn a Doctor of Physical Therapy, Medical Doctor, Doctor of Dentistry, or Doctor of Pharmacy degree.

Dr. Wes Poynor, Immediate Past President of the Faculty Senate and a member of University Council, expressed his belief that an Ad Hoc Task Force Group through Graduate Council would be sufficient to review and approve professional courses and programs. He stated that course review and approval "is a faculty issue!" He asked Senators to consider whether the University should have a committee in place to review courses and programs in our professional programs or form an ad hoc committee when necessary.

Dr. Alan Briceland commended the administration for responding to the concerns that faculty members of the Academic Affairs Committee of University Council made to the initial proposal, which had a large group of administrators listed as committee members. Dr. Briceland stated "What we want is reasonable oversight." He said that the current proposal places faculty back in control of the curriculum, but he noted that there remains a need in the current proposal to spell out the specific duties and responsibilities of the committee.

When asked about whether the Deans Council had reviewed the current proposal, the Provost reported that he met Deans that very morning and that they had “blessed it.” MCV Campus Representative, Dr. Judy Lewis likewise commented that as a member of the Academic Affairs Committee of University Council she was pleased that "faculty input was heard by the Administration." Vice-President Chris Turner also spoke in support of the current proposal that includes two elected faculty members from each school with professional programs (Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Allied Health Professions) in addition to the Chair of the Committee on Programs and Courses of the University Graduate Council and the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, who will serve as the non-voting Chair of the Committee.

Dr. Lewis moved for the Faculty Senate to support the proposal to create a University Curriculum Committee on Professional Programs as presented to the Senate by the Provost's Office. Dr. Poynor amended the motion by inserting the statement "the Curriculum Committee on Professional Programs will be charged with initially developing by-laws and that these by-laws will require approval by the faculties of each of the professional schools, University Council and other pertinent University governance bodies." The amended motion passed with one opposing vote.

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2002 Report On Institutional Effectiveness (ROIE) Measures

The Provost went on to share with the Senate that the University had been asked by SCHEV to add institution specific measures to the list of measures that SCHEV was reporting on all Virginia colleges and Universities. The measures, the ROIE that were
submitted to SCHEV reflect the direction suggested by the VCU Board of Visitors for VCU to be recognized as a "comprehensive research university." The first set of measures included: The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) ranking of the VCU Libraries, research productivity as defined by the National Science Foundation report of research expenditure, the percentage of medical and nursing students passing the US Medical Licensure Exam on their first attempt, the six-year graduation rates and one-year retention rates for lower division community college transfer students, the professional program acceptance rates, the standardized test scores for medical and dental students, the first year retention rates for students in professional programs, the average time to degree for professional program graduates, and the percent of professional program alumni contributing to the University.

SCHEV has asked for these measures to be "easy for the public to understand." These measures will appear on the SCHEV Website for prospective students, parents, policymakers and employers to compare institutions. The data will be updated each spring.

The Provost informed Senators that faculty and the administration should have conversation about the next set of ROIE measures. They should be discussed and feedback provided. These measures are:

- Nationally Ranked Graduate Programs
- Health Sciences Programs – Graduation Rates
- National Ranking of Degrees Awarded to Minority Students
- VCU Life Sciences
- Sponsored Research
- Digital Library
- Community Engagement
- Student Diversity
- Total Enrollment
- Transfer Students
- Bond Ratings
- Economic Impact

Dr. Blue Wooldridge stated that he would like to see "something about number of fulltime faculty" and "something about class size" included among the measures. Dr. Poynor indicated that he was pleased to see something about the library amongst the measures, since improvement in the VCU Libraries is a Senate priority. A discussion followed about the politics of these types of measures and whether they served as indicators of "what we aspire to be or what we are currently." The view of the Board of Visitors is that it is better to present measures that we can "brag about." Dr. Wooldridge stated that he hated not to see something about faculty included in the measures. He felt we could brag about the diversity of our faculty. Senator Michael Pitts added that VCU could brag about the number of evening classes. The consensus of the group was that VCU should present itself proudly as an Urban Institution with
diversity. The Provost said that he would be open to further dialogue with faculty about the ROIE measures. Dr. Andrews offered to convey comments from faculty to the Provost and encouraged Senators to contact him.

**Revisions to the VCU Honor System**
The Provost told Senators that he would return in January for Faculty Senate discussion of the Supplemental Report from the Honor System Review Committee. The Provost commended the committee stating that he recognized that they had taken the work of reconciling differing philosophies very seriously. He recognized that the committee had a philosophical stance to which they were committed after a large number of meetings over many months. The Provost recognized that not all parties saw eye-to-eye on all of the issues, but he encouraged Senators to examine the recommended changes and ask themselves "Have we taken a step forward to bringing two very different honor systems and two campuses more closely in line with one another?" The Provost indicated that there would be no need in January for a long debate.

**Final Comments**
The Provost informed faculty that the Promotion and Tenure Review Committee had approved a change that would allow collateral faculty to serve on committees reviewing collateral faculty for promotion. The Provost thanked the faculty on behalf of students and administration for all of the tremendous efforts that had been demonstrated in the wake of the tragic events of September 11th. He reminded faculty that VCU would hold its first fall commencement and that over 500 students would be graduating. The ceremony will take place in the Segal Center on December 8, 2001.

**Report on Legislative Issues**

**Mr. Don Gehring,** Vice President for Government and Community Relations, spoke next. He began his presentation with "There is no money," but “the good news is there will be a bond bill or bills.” He said that the approval of bonds is likely to occur because "both Republicans and Democrats want to do it." Mr. Gehring told Senators that "The only good news in the state budget was the Legislative Study." He said that the General Assembly "take themselves very seriously." He said that it is likely that "Something will be done about base adequacy funding." He expects that all higher education will see some money out of this initiative by the General Assembly. Gehring informed Senators that the General Assembly established the Joint Subcommittee on Higher Education Funding Policies in 1998 to create funding guidelines and policies for institutions of higher education. The guidelines indicated that VCU was
underfunded by approximately $10 million. VCU’s top three base adequacy funding priorities include funding for Life Sciences, Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) and enhanced campus Safety and Security.

Mr. Gehring stated "Salaries also rank up there" but it was difficulty to figure it out at this point whether there would be any money in the budget for raises. The University was also asking for money for converting part-time faculty to fulltime and financial support for the creation of the VCU School of Medicine-INOVA Division. The Division is to be operated cooperatively by VCU and the INOVA Health System. VCU will also request legislative approval to establish, operate, and govern a VCU branch campus in the State of Qatar.

Mr. Gehring stated that the new Governor-Elect, Mark Warner, has a vision for education and recognizes that "you have to have dollars for action." Mr. Gehring warned faculty that the increased securities that have become a part of life post-September 11th will definitely impact the kind of access citizens have enjoyed in the past in regard to meeting with legislators or attending a committee meeting. Mr. Gehring stated that Governor-Elect Mark Warner will be in a good position to shape policy and that he expected him to take a "good balanced approach." Mr. Gehring said that it works to our favor that Mr. Warner "buys into base adequacy funding."

He warned faculty that there would likely not be a retroactive pay raise, but that raises would, hopefully, be included in the next biennium budget.

Dr. Wes Poynor informed the Senate membership that he had challenged President Trani at University Council that the libraries had dropped off the legislative initiative list. Dr. Trani indicated that the VCU Libraries improvements were still a high priority at the University, but that funding for these improvements would be accomplished in other ways.

Senator Margot Garcia asked about the plans for renovation of Franklin Terrace. She was referred to the Six-Year Capital Plan should be available online under Mr. Timmerick’s web site (See http://www.vcu.edu/finance/2002_04BudgetDevelopment.htm )

Report of the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign

Senator Suzee Leone announced that the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign deadline had been extended through December and encouraged faculty to participate.

Senator Alan Briceland gave a report on the proposed changes to the University Council bylaws mentioned at the beginning of the meeting. The bylaws state that they are to be reviewed every five years. No resolutions were passed but the Senators verbally provided support for general expressions relative to the issues raised by Dr. Briceland. These included:

- Change the word chairman to chair throughout the bylaws.
- Add first professional students to the categories requiring representation on Council
New Business

Senator Peter Kirkpatrick asked about what happened in regard to the new facilities for the Honor program in the former hospital site on Grace Street. It was reported that the faculty don’t have offices they have cubbyholes and there are no plans for renovation. The question was asked "Does this accomplish what we want in terms of convincing prospective honor program students and parents to select VCU from their choice of schools?" Other senators shared the sentiment stating that "There is no nice entry way to the program. Entry is in back of the building in the former ER entry past the incinerator." The "honors folks are really upset."

There was also a question in regard to the formation of a new committee to review the University's General Education requirements. President Andrews indicated that a new committee had been formed and that they would look at putting something forward. He assured faculty that no "underground process" was taking place. It was his impression that the administration was putting a committee together to look at proposals and put something out for review.

Hearing no further new business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne F. Simons, Ph.D., OTR/L, Faculty Senate Secretary-Treasurer

posted January 29, 2002

Neil W. Henry