Meeting, October 1, 2002
Lyons (Dental) Student Lounge, MCV Campus

Agenda

1. Approve September Minutes
2. Opening Remarks - Senate President Bob Andrews
3. Election of University Grievance Panel Chair
   Nominee: Wes Poynor
   This is a replacement for a term that is scheduled to expire in August 2003.
   (Michael Smith replaced S. Price who was elected for 3-year term starting
   8/15/2000)
4. President Eugene Trani will speak and respond to questions from senators
5. New Business
6. Standing Committee meetings

Minutes

Present:
Adera, Adyemi, Alder, Andrews, Beardsley, Bigbee, Bilyeu, Boothby, Briceland, Byles, Cash,
Certosimo, Chessin, Corey, Costanzo, Cramer, Crouch, Cummins, Davey, Dery, Dewey, Fuller-Seeley,
Guidarelli, Hague, Harvie, Heuman, Holmes, Hutchinson, Huvard, Jeter, Johnson, Karchmer,
Kirkpatrick, Kuemmerle, Lamb, Lewis, Lloyd, McCay, McCreary, McKelvey, McMahon, Nicholson,
Olds, Pitts, Poynor, Pyles (Alt. Delafuente), Ream, Rife, Sarkozi, Sawin, Schmeelk, Sholley, Simons,
Tepper, Turman, Turner, Walsh, Weaver, Welleford, Separ.

Absent:
Dilworth, Hodges, Seago, Ward, Whitehead, Wood

September Minutes were approved.
Election of University Grievance Panel Chair.

At the September meeting the Nomination Committee put forward Wes Poynor as its nominee for Chair of the University Grievance Panel. Bob Andrews made a call for additional nominees, and with no further candidates’ names coming from the floor, nominations were closed and seconded. Wes Poynor was unanimously elected. The election will need to take place again next year (next spring) since Wes is filling out the last year of an on-going term. **His current term will end on August 15, 2003.**

Recapping the budget situation.

Bob Andrews recalled the comments made by the Provost at last Faculty Senate meeting where the budget was the main subject of discussion. Bob, Wes, Dan Ream are on advisory committees about the budget. The University is now waiting on the Governor’s final decision. Some of the decisions already made by the University include: limited intersession course schedule, closed buildings during the holidays and discontinued free service for VCU students with GRTC. The Governor has been setting the stage for his speech which will be in two weeks with comments in the local paper. There could also be a tuition surcharge. This however would have to be approved by the Board of Visitors. The student counseling center will have to shift its source of funding to now be paid out of student fees. The Athletic Department will also be shifting budgets from one section to another.

New Business Items.

The Chairs of all Senate Standing Committees have contacted the members of their respective committees. For those committees which have not already met, there will be an initial meeting of committees following today’s Faculty Senate meeting. Concerning the status of the Research Data Policy and Conflict of Interest and Intellectual Property documents, Bob’s conversation with President Trani confirmed that there would be proper review in order to make sure cases like what happened on the Computer Use Policy are not repeated. In regards to the Bond bill, Bob indicated that non-passage of the bill would send an unwanted message to delegates at the State Legislature if not improved by the public. **Chris Turner and Nora Alder** mentioned that if individuals are not comfortable about talking in class on the bill then it is suggested that they could send out a letter or a message on blackboard that introduces the bond initiative. Chris and Nora also urged faculty to make sure that students are
registered to vote when talking about the bond bill. Chris has registered more than 500 students to vote. The deadline for voter registration is next Friday and the deadline for absentee ballot voting is approaching. The AAUP is promoting support for the Bond bill as is Faculty Senate of Virginia.

President Trani answers Senators’ questions.

Bob indicated that President Trani comes to interact twice a year with Faculty Senate. Dr. Trani will also be meeting with all faculty members in February. The floor was given to Dr. Trani. The President indicated that he did not have any prepared remarks. He has already sent out several emails to University faculty and staff on the budget situation “which is awful.” The University did submit to the State plans for 7%, 11% and 15% cuts on September 20th. He predicted that cuts will come in at 11% but could be at the full 15%. However, Dr. Trani warned, even if cuts were at 15% for all non-mandated agencies this will still not raise the necessary monies. Dr. Trani stated, “We can get our own destiny into shape. Next time, we should not be as state dependent. We should make sure the academic and medical centers are alive and well. I don’t sleep at night figuring out what to do. And you, the faculty, have increased duties.” With no further comments to make, Dr. Trani preferred to use the time to respond to faculty senators’ questions.

Kathryn Fuller-Seeley asked what the time frame would be for implementing the budget cuts after the Governor makes his speech on October 15th. Dr. Trani: The figure will be a whole year figure. From November 1st, we have 7 months left to do 12 months of cuts. The University will change consulting services for students from being state funded to being student funded, representing a cut by at least $650,000 in that state service. There will be a new student fee. The University will make a $275,000 savings by discontinuing the agreement with GRTC. The University will close from December 20th to January 2nd. Certain research and music buildings will remain open. A smaller intersession will be held in those buildings that will be heated. The leadership of Faculty Senate is aware of other measures that will need to be done.

Chris Turner asked for more information concerning the student surcharge. Dr. Trani: I will be recommending a surcharge to the Board. They have not yet been presented with it; I do not have a figure. But I will do it and other universities in Virginia will be doing it. In the paper, the Governor was clear that any revenue enhancements were not to be in the budget plans that were submitted. The student counseling center money needed will not come from the surcharge but will come from a fee.
Judy Lewis asked the question if professional staff and 12 months employees will have to take annual leave.
Dr. Trani: Yes, and we need to get this news out quick since November and December is around the corner. The word needs to get out about the possibilities relative to annual leave.

Gary Sarkozi asked how the budget cuts would impact funding for indigent care.
Dr. Trani: The State could decide on reductions. If reduced, we will have to reduce our services. 60 years ago, there were separate clinics for Blacks and Whites. There were poor and rich clinics; AD Williams clinics were then instituted. We are merging our clinics. Our residents are trained in indigent clinics yet they will not practice in an indigent group. It will take up to two years to phase in this change. All AD Williams clinics will be shut down. We had a meeting with thirty state officials and we told them what we will do. If we do not get money we will not keep on going and bankrupt the system of the University. Last night on television, a report indicated that 14% (42 million) Americans do not have medical insurance. One-half of the one million of non-insured Virginians are treated by MCV.

Jason Rife asked, “What do you project personnel cut levels to be?”
Dr. Trani: At a couple hundred positions, of which, half are not filled now. The University has four currencies: FTE currency, space currency, money currency and lines currency. At Virginia Tech there was an incentive program (for people 30 years in the VRS system and 55 years old or older) that worked. We will look at that and will take it to the Board in November. Bob Andrews saw this. It worked at VA Tech; if here, it could free up lines to replace and to recruit.

Roy McKelvey asked how the budget reductions will impact the work on accreditation.
Dr. Trani: I just came from a meeting with accreditors in two programs. Some standards for 2002 that were set in 2001 will not be able to make it. There is systematic disinvestment across the US - ACSB standards, AASA standards. This is everywhere in the country. It’s bad here but even worse in other states. The chancellor at the University of Nebraska said these are the worst cuts since the Great Depression. Imagine. I do not know what the accreditors will do. They cannot play the resource game of program A over B. What does it say about a push away from Tenure/track faculty to more adjunct? These are serious questions. If we wait for the state to straighten out the mess we will be overrun. We need to be proactive. I have not heard from one legislator who is interested in a tax increase. Accreditation is not just an issue for VCU but all universities because the financial base has changed.

Judy Lewis asked how can the University still protect junior faculty members, i.e, faculty travel money for conferences. She voiced concern that the University cannot
Dr. Trani: The VCU faculty teaches more courses, a higher percent, than any other faculty within universities in Virginia. We do not make use of graduate student teaching. We don’t do it. At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, it was said by a student that he “could not pick out a professor from a lineup because he never has seen one”. We build buildings in which we have classrooms that can only have 50 students. We graduate about 125 Ph.Ds a year. What if we grant 250 Ph.D. degrees a year and give these graduate students instructional duties? These are issues that certain schools with PhD programs should look at. This has to do with doubling the research budget. We have people on 12-month salaries who are not funded. The University of Pittsburgh funds only 50% of faculty salaries. We need a system where we keep the best. How do we use technology? Do we have two secretaries in a department and are they absolutely necessary? The answer can’t be simply that “we have had them since 1975.”

Iris Johnson asked what is in store for us in the upcoming years, 2005-2007. Dr. Trani: My remaining days as president will focus on changes. I have 4 1/2 years to my term and during this time we have to have more out-of-state students. We have to find more private funding. We must preserve the teaching and research infrastructure as much as possible and also bring in as much outside funding as possible.

Dan Ream asked if Motorola’s recent decision to stop projects in Richmond would have an impact on the University. Dr. Trani: It is sad they are not coming to Virginia. It would have been a handy place for student internships and jobs. If Motorola had not made the initial announcement that it was planning to come, we would not have the Center and the 2 billion dollar structure that has employed students. Motorola is keeping their commitment to us (we are one of their twenty partners, the other in Virginia being Virginia Tech). They will keep their commitment to our School of Engineering.

Chris Turner indicated to the President that Faculty Senate has been on top of the information campaign about the Bond bill. Dr. Trani: With the budget situation, the Bond bill is the only thing that higher education has right now. I think you will see me and others before and on November 5th saying that this is a good step. If the vote is successful, the Hibbs building, West Hospital, Franklin Terrace, the Music Center and others will benefit. I believe that Virginia’s policy for higher education is short sighted. If the Bond bill does not go through, I do not see Hibbs being renovated in the next decade. But, it does not look as if there is opposition to the Bond bill. The Governor will be at a business council meeting tomorrow. All but ten members of the House of Delegates have endorsed the Bond bill.
A faculty senator restated what the Provost said at the previous Senate meeting where emphasis during these tight budget times would be placed on “Instruction and Research”. **How will the library be impacted by the cuts?**

**Dr. Trani:** We have attempted to limit the cuts to the library. There is concern among students about hours. I listen to students. We do track students and their use of the facility after 9 o’clock. We are going to feel the cuts even more so than say how UVA will feel them because they have other funding. We will need to have growth in our out-of-state enrollment.

**Dan Ream** asked if there was any hope that state legislators would be changing their views about Higher Education.

**Dr. Trani:** Not in the next two years. I want to change the moorings of the University. 2,000 out-of-state students is 2 million dollars a year. We need to grow the research budget by 100 million dollars. I hope you understand the importance of those activities. That is our future.

**What about worse economic projections in July?**

**Dr. Trani:** Who knows? It is a real possibility and if we just sit here it will happen. I will not just sit. It will not be fun to be in our positions for the next 5 to 6 years if we do not do something. Who says we cannot have graduate students teaching and 75 students in a class. What is in your control as faculty members…what can you do?

**Wes Poynor** asked a question that he already brought up at a Faculty Council meeting concerning the position for Vice President of Health Sciences.

**Dr. Trani:** A new VP for Health Sciences and CEO of VCU Health Systems was appointed and will come in when Dr. Kontos retires. The Hunter group came in with personnel recommendations. Donna Benzentsky received an offer to go to Iowa. We had a vacancy there and they recommended that the VP of Health Sciences be filled before filling the two other positions. The Hunter recommendation was that Sheldon Retchin be hired. I have known him for 25 years. The Health System is a 75 million dollar system and could go bankrupt. I talked to deans and chairs about the Hunter recommendation and both Boards unanimously elected him. I accept full responsibility for that nomination. The three key positions would have been only acting and we could not have filled them without first filling the VP position. We do not do this usually. We usually have national searches. Sheldon has an impeccable resume and has been here for 25 years.

A senator asked if the cuts coupled with student surcharges could impact the goal of attracting out-of-state students.

**Dr. Trani:** I think we are very attractive and have appeal if marketed correctly. The School of the Arts is very attractive compared to the Rhode Island School of Design.
Life Sciences provides extraordinary opportunity with six five-year master programs there. What an opportunity for students! We should be able to recruit up and down the East Coast. There are twenty-five out-of-state students in the Master of Forensics program. We have not taken our out-of-state recruitment seriously. Everyone knows about Virginia because friends apply to UVA. We just want to add our name to that list of colleges that people look at when thinking of studying out of their own states.

**Wes Poynor** brought up the document called **Policy on Policies** and stated that, as he reads it, the policy does not say that the faculty can be bypassed when making university policy.

**Dr. Trani:** To make sure that this does not happen is one of the reasons the Faculty Senate President sits on President Council.

**Wes Poynor** underlined the fact that on July 22nd the **Computer Use policy** was put into place without faculty input and therefore a group in faculty senate will be looking at the document, especially the area concerning email privacy of faculty communications. The bar for being able to search through faculty email should be higher than what is currently in the policy.

**Dr. Trani:** We cannot bypass state law. I should also point out that very few presidents of faculty senates sit on President Councils.

In concluding his discussion with faculty senators, **Dr. Trani said, “I need your help to take control of our destiny. First, lets get the bonds and then move forward with cuts and then enhance the resources of this institution.”**

With no further business, Bob Andrews presented the Chairs of the Faculty Senate standing committees so they could meet with their members. The Faculty Senate meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Peter S. Kirkpatrick
Faculty Senate Secretary-Treasurer

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*Posted by Neil W. Henry  
November 4, 2002*