Meeting, January 27, 2004

Student Commons Forum Room

Agenda

For Action:

Approval of December minutes
Election of Nominating Committee

Information/discussion

- President's report
- Threat Assessment Policy -- Vice President Timmreck
- ORP update -- Vice President Timmreck
- University Retention initiative -- Vice Provost Brodd
- Legislative Update -- Vice President Gehring
- Bylaws update -- Dianne Simons
- Legislative Committee Report -- Pat Cummins, Bob Andrews
- Revision to Rules and Procedures -- [below] Bob Andrews
- Quality Enhancement Plan (December 18 draft distributed to senators)

Announcements

February Full Faculty meeting with President Trani

Minutes

Present: Abbott, Adera, Adyemi, Anderson, Andrews, Bogacki (Healy as alternate), Boothby, Brookman, Carpenter, Certosimo, Cooper, Corey, Cramer, Dery, Dewey, Guidarelli, Hague,
President Judy Lewis called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

1. The minutes of the December 2 meeting were approved without revision.

2. The nominating committee was elected- Bob Andrews, Martha Moon, Wes Poynor, and Lynne Turman. Wes Poynor will convene the group. A report is expected at the March 2nd Senate meeting.

3. President Lewis reported that the Data Policy committee meeting scheduled for January 26th was canceled due to weather closing the university.

4. The Research Faculty proposal will be discussed at the March Senate meeting.

5. John Ulmschneider will be coming to address the “State of the Library” at the March Senate meeting.

6. All VCU faculty will receive an e-mail tonight (January 27th) inviting them to attend the February 3rd meeting with President Trani. Questions for Dr. Trani can be sent in advance to Judy Lewis at jalewis@hsc.vcu.edu. Index cards will be available at that meeting for anonymous questions. President Trani will be discussing faculty demographics as impacted by the FASO early severance option.

7. Cynthia Andrews of Employee Relations and VCU Police Chief Willie Fuller presented a “Threat Assessment Policy”. It was suggested that a section be added to this document advising VCU employees to notify VCU Police if and Order of Protection exists that involves them.

8. Bill Dowd and Cathleen Burke presented an ORP (Optional Retirement Plan) update which involves a change in Optional Retirement Plan vendors available. VALIC, T. Rowe Price, and MetLife participants will need to select a new vendor. Open enrollment runs from March 1-April 2, 2004. Paul Timmreck and Cathleen Burke will be sending e-mails to all faculty about this in upcoming weeks. The TIAA
Social Responsibility Fund will no longer be an option. This was decided by a university committee based upon performance measures. Mike Pitts of the Faculty Senate was a member of this committee.

9. Donna Brodd, Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, presented a University Retention Initiative. Several questions were raised, such as whether there would be financial incentives to grade students easier?; and, can we retain students without engaging in “social promotion”? Senator Jim Hague noted that faculty have no control over class size, who is admitted to a class, and have no authority to change these factors. Thus, how can teachers be held accountable for retention?

10. Don Gehring, VCU Vice-President for Government Relations, provided the Faculty Senate with a Legislative Update. The charter universities proposal from UVA, William & Mary, and Virginia Tech has been carried over to next year. The state government will want something in return for any freedom granted through the charter schools proposal. VCU will wait and see how the first three universities fare on this before proposing anything similar for itself. The VCU Health System is the precedent for this charter universities proposal. The Monroe Campus proposal is getting very favorable feedback from the General assembly, partly because the state is only being asked to fund 15% of the cost, with VCU finding the other 85%. Underfunding of VCU now is at about $55 million according to the legislature’s own formulas, placing VCU ahead/behind most state-assisted universities. It was noted that faculty can educate others about legislative issues—but not advocate—in their roles as state employees.

11. Chair of Faculty Senate Credentials and Rules Dianne Simons reported that the web form for all VCU faculty to vote on each Bylaw revision is now ready to go and a broadcast e-mail to all faculty will go out next week to initiate 30 days of voting. Faculty will need to login to the site to vote, but their votes will not be recorded with their login ID numbers. Faculty will not be counted as having voted until they hit the submit button at the end of the voting process. Jimmy Ghaphery of VCU Libraries designed this web-form voting tool. Only 5% of the entire faculty is needed to have a quorum on this bylaws vote. Adjunct faculty are not eligible to vote. The voting form has been tested with Netscape, IE, and Mozilla browsers and functions with all three.

12. Faculty Senate Legislative Committee Co-chair Bob Andrews reported on lobbying activity at the legislature by the Faculty Senate of Virginia. Bob encouraged faculty to contact their legislators about the “Faculty members on Boards of Visitors” bill, about base adequacy funding for higher education, and about changes in state employees’ health plans.

13. A change in VCU’s Rules and procedures was discussed. If a VCU student is
convicted of a criminal or civil offense, then VCU may choose to take additional punitive action. The Senate will vote on this proposal at the March meeting.

14. Wes Poynor discussed the implementation of a VPN (Virtual Private Network) that was scheduled to be implemented February 2nd (and has since been delayed). This new network presents several problems to Mac and PDA users. Few in the Senate were aware of this implementation, as Poynor expected. The current wireless network lacks security, and while the VPN provides this, it presents other new problems for Mac and PDA users particularly.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

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Dan Ream, Secretary

Proposed changes to the Rules and Procedures document

*Change/additions are in red and italics*

I. Application

This document governs the conduct of all persons on University premises; that is, on the campuses of VCU, and other property or facilities owned, controlled, or being used by the University. The provisions of this document are applicable to all members of the University community composed of faculty, administrators, staff, and students, as well as licensees and invitees. Statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia, city or county codes, and federal laws apply on University premises, and violators of such laws will be subject to the provisions thereof, in addition to the sanctions of this document. In general, it is the policy of Virginia Commonwealth University not to become involved in adjudicating off-campus conduct of members of the University community. However, the institution also has a commitment to protect its own welfare and that of its members. Thus in those circumstances where the off-campus behavior
of a member of the University community significantly impairs the University-related functioning of another member or gives rise to serious danger to the University community, the provisions of this document will apply to off-campus behavior of members of the University community. Such conduct may subject the violator to the provisions of law, in addition to the sanctions of this document. Additionally, in cases where off-campus conduct of a student has resulted in a criminal conviction or an adjudication of civil liability by a court of law, the University may exercise the right to impose the sanctions of this document even though the off-campus conduct does not significantly impair the University–related functioning of another member of the University community or does not give rise to serious danger to the University community. Any decision to exercise this right will be at the determination of the Provost or his/her designee.

Add Section III.C with the current (C.) changing to (D.)

C. Student Off-Campus Conduct

When determined to be detrimental to the interests of the University by the Provost or his/her designee, certain off-campus conduct by students, that does not involve another member of the University community or otherwise does not give rise to serious danger to the University community but which results in a conviction of a criminal offense or an adjudication of civil liability by a court of law, may subject the convicted or adjudicated student to the penalties of this document. Such offenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Theft, destruction, defacing (e.g., graffiti) or damaging (e.g., vandalizing) land, buildings, equipment or property of others.
2. Possession, use, sale or distribution of illegal drugs or substances or the underage possession and/or consumption of alcohol.
3. Assault and/or battery, sexual assault, threats, stalking or domestic violence or other offenses causing personal injury or death.
4. Breach of the peace (e.g., disorderly conduct, public drunkenness, unlawful assembly, etc.)

Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention Policy and Implementation Procedures

Highlights

Type of Policy: Administrative Policy

Responsible Vice President: Paul W. Timmreck
Responsible Office: VCU Human Resource Division and VCU Police

Purpose of the Policy: To encourage an environment that is safe, secure and free from threats, intimidation and violence.

Requirements: The major requirements of this policy are as follows:
· Acts of violence are prohibited as well as explicit and implicit or implied threats.
· All threats and violence must be reported to ensure safety and management of threatening situations.
· The Threat Assessment Team will operate to address violence or threatening situations, to include the following tasks:
  o Determine, on a case-by-case basis, what action to take against violators.
  o Coordinate recommended actions with applicable laws and policies (for example, Standards of Conduct, Faculty Promotion and Tenure, and University Policy on Administrative and Professional Faculty).
· Prevention and recognition training for managers and employees will be encouraged.

Background Information:
· Complies with requirements of State Policy 1.80, Workplace Violence (effective May 2002), that VCU “communicate a policy statement prohibiting workplace violence” and develop “procedures for addressing such situations.”
· Drafted by VCU Police and Human Resources in response to situations that needed clearer policy guidance and to increase awareness by all faculty and staff.

Governance Groups to Review Policy Prior to Approval: President’s Council, Faculty Senate and Staff Senate, University Council

Reviews/Approvals: Vice Presidents ____________________
    (meeting date approved)

    President ____________________
    (signature/date)

Notifications Required: Communication to all faculty and staff by e-mail and for inclusion in all new employment orientations. (In addition, VCU provides web access to University policies and procedures.)

Administrative Toolkit: ________________